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Homme-Insecte: Form, Typus, Fetish

In this article, I am concerned with the form and composure, countenance or cramp of the ‘human,’ as it is implicated in the other, notably the insect. In the resulting formation—*homme-insecte*—the insectile, often associated with that which slips, with the trace or, in Lacanian terminology, the stain of absolute difference, is deployed as radical departure from such movements to instead operate as a dream of armouring. It accrues consistency and form, in other words, and, rather than indicative of a becoming, it renders a fantasy of being, more specifically the fantasy of the insect body. I derive the figuration *homme-insecte* from Joyce Cheng’s article on surrealism’s engagement with mimetic metamorphosis which, among others, considers Roger Caillois’ essay on insects and mimicry, which he published in *Minotaure* in 1935. In her article, she cites one P.E., who contributed a poem called ‘Un Visage dans L’Herbe’ [A Face in the Grass] to the journal in 1933, which describes the redistribution of a face in grass: ‘après l’insecte-feuille, l’homme-feuille’ [after the leaf-insect, leaf-man].¹ The unknown face launches an investigation into figures like Caillois’ mimicking insects or Salvador Dalí’s ‘êtres-objets’ that, according to Cheng, ‘serve as means for the surrealist circle to recuperate forms of passivity’.² She is, as such, demonstrating the link between the phenomenon of metamorphosis and passivity, corresponding to a process of becoming, substantially and involuntarily rearranging the subjective makeup: becoming is not a decision the ‘I’ can take. By contrast, the way it appears here, *homme-insecte* is the figuration of an ideal hatching out of a fascist and fascinated imagination: my focus is, first and foremost, the German writer and entomologist Ernst Jünger (1895–1998), whose considerable oeuvre illustrates the *Verwandlung* I want to map out here.

Rather than Kafka, it is Jünger who constitutes the main concern of this essay, even if it still converges on what Christopher Hollingsworth calls the ‘self as insect,’ a topos pioneered by Kafka to represent the ‘crushing effect’ of an unloving and regimented world on the subject, its regression in the face of a ‘crisis of belonging’.³ The argument below, however, is not intent on observing alienation but, rather, on witnessing the assemblage of a subject fortified, armoured, assuming an ideal-I as coleoptera. Lacan’s term for this image or for the subject’s transformation into a specular fiction during the mirror stage is *imago*, itself pertaining to the entomological, to the final stage of an insect’s metamorphosis. This *imago* or *Gestalt* is a well-built figure: frozen stature in a symmetrical arrangement, Lacan speaks of it as an ‘orthopaedic form,’ the ‘armour’ of a body that, fragmented, fantasises the mantle of a total, shell-like form.⁴ The subject, according to Lacan, exists discordantly in relation to its own identity, always insufficient, hallucinating its broken body-image into a vision and form of totality. The fragmented form returns in dreams, Lacan continues, although it is the totality-form—Lacan speaks of it in terms of a fortress or a stadium—that really is the dreamwork: the dream of the insect body is the fantasy of the fragmented subject wishing to be armoured, total form.

Following Deleuze and Guattari, to map means to allow the circulations of intensities, to be open to exteriorities, principles of connection that are not necessarily evident at first sight: maps are linked to rhizomes, tubers, decentred dimensions.⁵ To approach the subject, Jüngerian *homme-insecte*, I perform Deleuze and Guattari’s practice of reading and writing, while further using a methodological conceit borrowed from Madeleine Dewald and Oliver Lammert’s rhizomatic 2002 documentary film *Vom Hirschkäfer zum Hakenkreuz*, gathering an associative chain between stag beetle [*Hirschkäfer*] and swastika [*Hakenkreuz*]. This chain is assembled by a machine, the *Historionaut*, evoking a space/time explorer and archivist,

trawling through databases to show a dimension where the stag beetle is rooted to Nazi and, more generally, fascist ideology. Insects put into relations with fascism—including from the perspective of satirical anti-fascist critique or fear of fascism ‘among us, [...] in the heart of England’—is an entanglement more broadly in the air in the 1930s; it appears, for example, in Virginia Woolf’s 1938 *Three Guineas*, in which the fascist dictator is figured as insect, at first ‘curled up like a caterpillar on a leaf,’ threatening to develop into imago.⁶ John Heartfield’s *Deutsche Naturgeschichte Metamorphose*, a photomontage published in *AIZ* (*Arbeiter-Illustrierte Zeitung*) in 1934, similarly depicts the three stages of development into fascist imago in the history of the Weimar Republic: Friedrich Ebert, the first president of the Republic, begins the caterpillar stage; Paul Hindenburg, the second *Reichspräsident*, who proclaimed Hitler *Reichskanzler* on 30 January 1933, hangs in a cocoon at the chrysalis stage; finally Hitler emerges in the shape of a Death’s-Head hawkmoth whose abdomen is emblazoned with a luminous swastika.

The *Historionaut* is a framing device—as well as conscious-making memory machine, remembering forgotten associations—which dispenses the need for linearity or a conventional narrative logic, instead arranging material allusively. The connections between the images in the film often have to be conjectured, subjected to a reading akin to an interpretation of dreams. The result is a generative work, whose ‘anti-form’ in and of itself already protests the rigid formality of its subject matter, that is, the structuration of desire according to fascist thought. The *Historionaut*—we could call it a folding machine; it folds one text into another—is endogenous to this article, setting up a rhizomatic string of associations, an assemblage composed, often latently, through the psychoanalytic writings of Freud and Lacan. *Historionaut* behaves ‘psychonautically’ or, to give salute to Alexander Trocci, as cosmonautic explorer-machine of inner space, tracing a *Typus*.⁷ Jünger’s term for

the form of a subject that exceeds the manifestation of an individual entity, *Typus* arises, as Dan Gorenstein explains, out of entomological practice. It is a designation that, at the beginning of the 20th Century, was used to ‘refer to individually prepared insects, specimen descriptions, recognised but marginal specimen [*Seitenstücke*] in scientific collections, or also particularly immaculate finds in private collections’.⁸ *Typus* is paragon, a model or standard that is made, put into place, all the while remaining fantasy form: it is representation, ideal, ‘affirmation of a certain being’⁹ beyond the subject.

The rhizome is anti-genealogical, but my methodology nonetheless seeks to bring into focus a genealogy of a being that is ‘entomo-oneiric,’¹⁰ the product of an entomological fascination and fetishization, as well as fascist creature. The skin, in this dream of the insect, functions as shell, polished, hardened. The transformation into *homme-insecte* is not to be understood as a becoming-other but, instead, as a forming of the ego as exterior armour, making reference to Wilhelm Reich. The organism’s surface layer, Reich argues, is composed in response to pressures—arriving from the exterior world as well as from the libidinal forces of the unconscious—shaping the subject, whose structure, as a result of these pressures, has over the years congealed into a defensive mechanism that he calls ‘character armour’. The formation and the preservation of this armour—a process of form; it determines how a subject formally behaves or reacts—establish the subject’s economy, maintaining her (neurotic) balance. Character armour, the form mobilised against pressure, accumulates across time and is embedded in the psyche but stored in the musculature of the body: it is ‘moulded expression’ of psychic, narcissistic defence,¹¹ a permanent ‘cramp’ defining a particular subject-hood. The subject, seen in this light, is ‘matter of muscle cramping,’¹² an embodied defensive form.

Homme-Insecte is, thus, a project about form, the fetish of form, in the sense of a particularly exalted and resplendent (adjectives that recur) *Typus* of ‘man’. I am, further, attentive to systems of classification—Jünger, after all, had an impressive collection of coleoptera amounting to 40,000 specimens—and the taxonomy of writing, both of which attest to processes of formalisation that similarly appear under the sign, as it were, of the armour. The first part of the essay (‘Form’) explains the territorialisation of becoming-insect through a turn toward Reich and the media and communications theorist Vilém Flusser’s reading of Reich; the second (‘*Typus*’) is concerned with Jüngerian assemblages as armourings, particularly in his *Käfertagebücher*; the final part (‘Fetish’), placing Jünger in relation to, and as secret subject of, *Vom Hirschkäfer zum Hakenkreuz*, reflects on the ‘irreducible materiality’¹³ of the insect body as fetish. Especially in *Subtile Jagden* (1967), Jünger’s impressions of his fascination with coleoptera, he produces the insect as fascinating and fetish object, vehicle of (fascist) desire, articulating the exoskeleton of an aspired subjective form.

Form

In ‘Waspish Segments,’ Jessica Burstein analyses the nexus of fictions surrounding the soldierly body prosthetically reworked, after World War One, into new, harder, form. Her focus is largely Wyndham Lewis, though her essay further encompasses Ezra Pound, as well as Caillois and Jünger, noting that ‘most of the characters in the story [she’s] been telling were fascinated by insects’.¹⁴ She continues that ‘the public taste for entomology was not born with war,’ but that the militarisation of life ‘was concurrent with the fascination for culture’s carapaces, for things with “the works on the outside”: French locomotives, insects, soldiers’.¹⁵ As such, she discusses the lines of communication between the ‘human’ and the

insect or, at any rate, a particular dream of the insect, an investigation that informs my own, standing at odds with the displacements often attributed to becoming-insect.

As Burstein demonstrates, there is a different story to be told about the propinquity between insects and ‘man,’ which has to do with totality and Being instead of becoming and dispersal. Nonetheless, my study departs from Burstein’s argument in that the insect-subject, here, exists uneasily between the desire for total form and its impossibility, bearing in mind that totality is a fantasy, an imago to counteract what Lacan calls a ‘dehiscence at the heart of the organism,’ the trauma of incompleteness, of premature birth.¹⁶ The armour is designed to radically deny that trauma as well as the subject’s ties to the other, coded as feminine and, in the context of insects, as multiple, in terms of the ‘liquidity’ and formlessness of the swarm. *Homme-insecte*, consequently, in this piece about order, about how things are placed into systems, also has to be understood in terms of a critical relationship between form and formlessness, the latter abject, while the former is exalted.

The ‘cartography’¹⁷ I draw up, as such, concerns processes of formalisation and the valorization of form. Jünger, as I will show, was a prolific writer obsessed with form: ‘*Form und Fassung*,’ the latter translating as composure, countenance, cramp.¹⁸ I am using Jünger to consider how the ‘human’ (the *Gestalt* of ‘man’) implicates itself, or is implicated, in the insectile as fascist fantasy assemblage, determined by a fetishization of total form and gestating out of an entomological imagination. To cast an eye or ear across to the other does not automatically, as it were, mean that the prevailing logic (of the Same) is broken or disrupted. Just because new figurations have the potential to emerge, that which is other/ed might well become part of, assimilate into, or be stamped out by, the ossature of a harder, frozen subject. *Homme-insecte*, emergent out of Jünger’s writings, is enthralled by *Form und*

Glanz, the shine [*Glanz*] of a fetishised form which corresponds, to recall, to a valorization, rather than destruction, of form that defines Jünger's oeuvre.

In *Vampyroteuthis Infernalis*, a piece about the discovery of a hitherto unknown cephalopodic creature living in the depths of the South China Sea, Vilém Flusser (1920–1991) performs a mirror stage of sorts, intending to bring us to confront the vampyroteuthian trace in 'our' constitution. He writes that 'we are not attempting to vault out of the world but to relocate into another's' and conceives of his effort as a fable,¹⁹ the genre with which Foucault starts *The Order of Things* to discuss, by way of a different system of thought, the limitations of our own.²⁰ Flusser's 'diabolical' deconstruction of the 'human'—diabolical derives from '*diaballein* = to cast across to the other side, into disarray'—is a metaphorical enterprise, so as to acknowledge and recognise something of the other in 'us'.²¹ What is apparent in his article is the operation of a psychological motor, if you will, which more generally informs Flusser's proposal for a non-anthropocentric viewpoint and establishes the correspondence between biology and psychology (there already in Freud's work) through Reich, for whom the organism is palimpsest, its 'stratified memory' like 'geological formations'.²² Flusser's article, even though focussing on a transformation of a different order—the rationale for setting up this game of reflection is a critique of 'our' vertebrate existence from the 'perspective of the mollusc'²³—prepares us for another correspondence ('human' ← → insect) as well as for an engagement with the form of the 'human'. It offers a hinge I can use to pry open an analogous sociability, namely between the 'human' and the insect, which has a faint presence in Flusser's text. Notably, it emerges in his discussion of Reich, specifically in relation to a subject's character armour, which 'unexpectedly' leads to the impression that the insect body is 'the paragon of all organisms,' arrived at through Reich's decision to segment every organism into three parts: head, thorax and abdomen.²⁴

Each animal life form is, hence, an annulated being, cut into multiplicities. Etymologically, Derrida reminds us, insect comes from *inseco*, to dissect, to be ‘divided into small strangulations by so many annuli’.²⁵ In *Character Analysis*, Reich writes that a subject’s ‘muscular armour is arranged in segments,’ a structure found in ‘a much more primitive form of living functioning,’ like that of ‘ringed worms,’ but which nonetheless determines ‘our’ own nervous system.²⁶ He proceeds to analyse each armour segment in more detail in order to, ultimately, break it down—the point, after all, of undergoing psychoanalysis—and which itself derives, in a first instance, from a study of the facial musculature:

rigid forehead and eyelids, expressionless eyes or bulging eyeballs, mask-like expression, and immobility on both sides of the nose are the essential characteristics of this [particular] armour ring. The eyes peep out as from a rigid mask.²⁷

Reich does not predominantly give bearings to the insect body as model for the ‘human,’ or any other animal organism, even if he mentions the caterpillar. The armour segments have a horizontal, circular structure through which ‘orgonic’ energy—pulsations that loosen the segmental armour rings—flows lengthwise; they recall a worm. As Reich notes: ‘In the segmental arrangement of muscular armouring, we meet the worm in man [sic]’.²⁸

Accordingly, it is Flusser who perceives the insect in the armour rings, a body that remains unidentified but whose presence is nonetheless locatable there, even if Reich does not mention it (by name). It is indeed rather subtle, to be found, *viz.* Derrida, in the etymology of the word insect: it ‘means *cut*, it names the cutting’.²⁹

In a curious inversion, the endoskeleton is associated with rigidity and being locked into patterns of thinking and behaviour—the endoskeleton ‘buttresses our bodies and attitudes

toward life’—prompting Flusser to doubt the insect model’s ‘applicability to the human psyche’.³⁰ In other words, the insect is here coded as formless or in relation to its potential for formlessness, because it can divide, multiply, thus has little resonance with the cramped, endoskeletal ‘human’. In this iteration, the insectile fits, much more closely, to vampyroteuthis, which already ‘belongs to a branch of life that derives from annelids,’ for which ‘segmentation is ingrained in its “collective unconscious”’.³¹ And yet, the insect remains allied to the ‘human;’ it is as if Flusser can’t quite divest himself of the hold of its image, more specifically and finally its exoskeleton, returning in a particular ‘form’ or trajectory of orgonic energy. Concentrated in annelids, orgone nevertheless ‘exploded’ into two directions, including ‘the direction of the armour, of militant rigidity and death,’³² the realm, that is, of the insect conceptualised in terms of its shell, or what Rachel Murray calls ‘ideas of enshellment’.³³

The meaning of the insect body has changed considerably and unobtrusively: the fixed rigidity of the ‘human’ endoskeleton suddenly coincides with the insect’s exoskeletal structure. Instead of associated with the ring-shaped, the *insecta*, that which cuts and swarms, it now designates *thanatos*, the ‘militant, [...] moribund and firm’.³⁴ On the one hand, then, the insect or insectile marks the formless, its etymological origins already giving a clue to its continuous dislocations, metamorphoses, the differences from ‘itself,’ etc. This, if you wish, is its ‘molluscan’ or vampyroteuthian function, defined by incessant movements of becoming resistant to form. On the other hand, it is indicative of the opposite, that is, total form: not segmentation but consolidation, armour, carapace, Hitlerian emergence, ‘militant rigidity and death’. What we find in Flusser’s work is the unresolved and unresolvable, as well as unremarked, tension between the two. Whereas he concentrates on tracing the former (vampyroteuthian) aspects of the insect/ile, which allows him to explore an eccentric,

orgasmic experience of the world, I let the thanatoid perspective dictate and dominate the proceedings below. There is, as such, one rendition of the insectile that is not linked to becoming, to a dynamic, fluid, form-resistant subjectivity, but one that is, on the contrary and evident in Jünger's work, linked to a purely static figure. I'm interested in finding out what happens if processes of crossing over into the dimensions of the other, rather than yielding an estrangement from form, enable its integration, its crystallisation.

Disgust, repulsion, expulsion: these affects can be engineered, organised as products of historical and/or political forces, as Jünger in fact notes: the scarabaeus is not invariably a 'repelling creature,' and functions differently in different contexts.³⁵ What Jünger does, across his oeuvre, is stabilise the insect as form and, more so, as a form of mythic speech (to refer to Roland Barthes), in which it is valorised, not negated. The valorisation itself might not appear as overly problematic, considering the disastrous global loss of insect populations, but, as a form of attention, it presupposes utility: 'useless forms' of life are still condemned to extinction. Above all, we need to interrogate how Jünger makes his insects mean, which is an endeavour that is not structured in terms of the other. The 'intolerable,' that which insists on difference, is thereby neutralised, and integrated into the system of meaning and desiring trajectory of the phallic 'I'. This system revolves around the function of the *Typus*, in many ways an eternal form or, at the very least, exceptionally robust, able to withstand considerable pressure against that which arrives from outside, the namelessness [*das Namenlose*] as yet not captured by discursive language, categories of order:

When we address a particular animal, such as an insect, as 'scarabaeus,' this is preceded by the encounter with a transient entity. We set and designate it as *Typus*: the name [scarabaeus] now delimits a category in which we can easily accommodate all

other specimen of this type, whether we encounter them in nature or not, even if they are only experiments in thought. Legions fit into it. *Typus* is the model by which we take measure.³⁶

For Derrida, genre ‘invaginates,’ but such an imagination, characterised by mobility, impurity and exuberance, is inconceivable for Jünger: invagination presupposes that very namelessness or formlessness he is determined to control.³⁷ While the concept of accommodation might suggest some elasticity, the willingness to include ‘legions,’ the predominant focus clearly is delimitation, the policing of borders, the safekeeping of a ‘purity’ of identity and classification. *Typus* sets standards; it thrusts out of the obscene, into the *Glanz* of total form.

Typus

By total form, I direct attention to Jünger’s ‘ethos’ of ‘total mobilisation,’ the ‘marshalling’ of all energies into a process of armouring that penetrates, and subsequently qualifies, the ‘deepest marrow’ [*eine Rüstung bis ins innere Mark*]³⁸ of the subject. The resulting impression of such a ‘type’ is a dense, in the sense of fully present, absolutely coherent figure, whose ego is exterior machine. The revolution of the *Gestalt* that Jünger imagines in *Der Arbeiter* [*The Worker*] (1932), as well as elsewhere, is rooted in entomology, itself pushing against that which is nameless and without order [*das Ungesonderte*]. In the space of his exhaustive writings and re-writings, the product of obsessively returning to earlier versions of his texts, he develops a distributed but no less consistent narrative about *Typus*, *Name*, *Gestalt*, to cite the title of one of his essays. *Typus* drives Jünger’s conception of the worker, engendered as model species-subject and embodying a new will to power, total

mobilisation and ‘race-building’ [*Wille zur Rassenbildung*].³⁹ *Typus*, an exalted form of entomological origin, is shaped by coleopteran resplendence.

In his diaries, ‘convolutes’ describing his insect collecting, the places he found particular specimen as well as their numbers, Jünger lists the creatures he encounters and preserves. On 11 March 1961 in Damascus, for example, he registers Tenebrionidae (darkling beetles); Carabidae (ground beetles); Scarabaeus (dung beetles); Cerocoma (blister beetle); Ichneumonidae (parasitoid wasps); Zophobas (a species of darkling beetle); Cymindis (a genus of ground beetle).⁴⁰ His *Coleopteren* are teeming things, integrating various textual, visual and material elements or remnants: newspaper reports, postcards, stamps, dried leaves and flowers, the occasional mutilated specimen—squashed or missing limbs underneath pieces of tape; the formless *par excellence*—, drawings of the coleoptera he observes on his travels. They are impressive documents, products of a taxonomy, an order of visibility as ‘camera di morte.’⁴¹ The recording eye, killing machine, renders ‘nature’ as immobile, even more striking when considering that the objects, here, often fascinate because of their transformations, their ability to appear other than what they were before and will be after. In *The Order of Things*, Foucault notes that with ‘Tournefort, [...] Linnaeus or Buffon’ a ‘new kind of visibility [was] being constituted in all its density,’ by which he means a way of discovering and arranging forms, patterns, etc., ‘handed on down the centuries while preserving [a] strictly defined identity’.⁴² The maintenance of form is, in many ways, the most important element: it is according to a *Typus* that all variables of description are measured, captured in a ‘system of names’.⁴³ As Foucault writes: ‘the naturalist is the man [sic] concerned with the structure of the visible world and its denomination according to characters,’ that which distinguishes one specimen from another, and which must be confirmed in detail, at once providing a ‘certain *designation* and a controlled *derivation*’.⁴⁴ It

is a ‘well-constructed language,’ characterised through precision and precisely departing aspects subsequently assigned to an ‘area of adjacencies’; natural history, in short, operates as ‘possibility of a constant order’.⁴⁵

The setting of desire for the collector, should she indeed deviate from the natural historian, similarly is order, precision, the idea of the ‘proper’: the ‘proper’ name of a specimen, located in its designated place. Manfred Sommer, in his study on collecting, argues that a collector is interpellated as such through adopting the formal pattern—which bestows meaning onto each and every scene of collection—of a classificatory system.⁴⁶ This system, once taken up and rigorously practiced, sets rules to be heeded and obeyed. There is pleasure in such an activity—a dimension missing in Foucault’s account—in the study of form and the diversions of form, though it also manifests a certain element of compulsion, of being under a spell, itself not necessarily distinct from the experience of pleasure. Sommer establishes language, the *fourmillement*—a swarming or multiplication of elements occurring around a particular term [*Begriff*]⁴⁷—as site of pleasure. If a term constitutes the standard according to which things are held in place, with respect to a *Typus*, it further functions as an area where the adventures of reading and interpretation, of minute deflections, can emerge.⁴⁷ The system finally always turns out to be incomplete; the desire for, and impossibility of, totality determines the art of collecting. It is this paradox which provides an explanation as to the ‘*tremendum*,’ which Sommer concurrently calls the ‘*fascinosum*,’⁴⁸ that accompanies the practice, absolutely marked, according to Lacanian algebra, by *objet petit a*, the ‘punctiform, evanescent function’ of desire.⁴⁹

Fascination, as Lacan reminds us, is central to the organisation of the subject, which ‘gains its unity in so far as it is fascinated’.⁵⁰ In other words, fascination is structured by fantasy (or

desire), itself dependent on *objet a*. At once an event of surrender where the ‘gaze gets taken in,’⁵¹ is lost in an object, fascination concurrently is the scene where the phallus arises to ward off the threat of dissolution of form. In *The Space of Literature*, Maurice Blanchot, concerned with the tantalising promise of being taken in, observes that fascination is blinding, absent presence ‘fundamentally linked to [a] neutral, impersonal presence, to an indeterminate They, the immense, faceless Someone’.⁵² The subject sinks into the light of this milieu, whose neutrality and impersonality emanate from a multiplicity or from some mysterious, immobilising entity: think, for example, of Dr Mabuse, the terrifying voice without body in Fritz Lang’s *The Testament of Dr Mabuse* (1933). My stake, here, unlike Blanchot’s, is to turn the gaze towards the defensive reaction, the stiffening phallus as emissary of form: the phallus announces form, the *Gestalt* of the ‘proper’ subject.

In the context of the collector-subject (though no different for anybody else, following Lacan), the field of desire is impelled by a ‘well-ordered whole,’ a ‘plan, pattern, scene, matrix,’⁵³ so that the fascinating object, intervening into the system of the ego, is set up as a ‘deceiving and idealised image’ giving the subject its identity.⁵⁴ Sommer writes that the collector succumbs to the spell of a universe of order, upholding at its centre—what Derrida calls ‘the point of presence’⁵⁵—an evocation of form, of *Typus*, as *arche*: immaculate specimen, it is origin and destination/destiny, the past and future form towards which all other forms refer.⁵⁶ The body in pieces assembles or collects itself as/into the image of the subject of mastery by handling—the word *Begriff* speaks to the importance of grasping [*greifen*; *Griff*]*—*objects to be arranged into a coherent structure, in turn organising the structuration of the subject. Fascination, consequently, is a structural relation, rather than a property attributed to specific elements (stamps; insects; records; coins; clippings of Marco Reus, etc.); that much is in fact already clear when considering that Sommer talks about a

philosophy, not simply an object, of collecting. It is an art, then, all about processes of forming: linguistic, conceptual, concrete. An entire environment, including archives, filing systems, libraries, indexes, inventories, is devoted to the regime and maintenance of form and the enclosed play it enables.⁵⁷ The moment the subject-collector, discovering her unity in the very act of collecting, starts gathering objects, these must be held together in some form or other. The *Begriff*, more than anything else, is indicative of the scene of formalisation that is also taking place, in a room somewhere, in a glass case, in diaries that break the linearity and two-dimensionality of their pages.⁵⁸

According to Heike Gfrereis, Jünger disturbs the logic of writing in his diaries, at times approaching the aesthetic of a landfill; she further describes his manuscripts as palimpsests, in various conditions of aggregation [*Aggregatzustände*].⁵⁹ She considers dreamwork the procedure by which Jünger accumulates things on the page which constantly redefine the order or pattern of his manuscripts: layered, accrued, expanded upon in disappearing margins. These are themselves part of a collection occurring in the realm of writing, which, in the very process of assembling and ‘revising’ an order, always seems to threaten falling into chaos, to be overcome by, and turn into, kipple, Philip K. Dick’s *novum* for objects degrading into trash. Gfrereis argues that, for Jünger, authorship does not mean obtaining mastery over his corpus of writing [*Werkherrschaft*],⁶⁰ but that instead it records, even allows, encounters. This is a compelling perspective, one that, perhaps, resonates with a reader who, for her part, is first encountering Jünger’s *Käfertagebücher*, keeping track of iridescent Tenebrionidae, ‘chronicling’ their passage along paths crossed. Yet it is an approach that, though aware of how his writing stands in relation to the act of collecting—writing as collecting—, fails to see how the diaries are committed to or strive for order [*um Ordnung bemüht*], and hence how they function as ‘enormous order-machines.’⁶¹ An entire apparatus of formalisation is at

work, which, over the course of a century—Jünger lived to be over a hundred years old—also mobilises the myth of ‘total authorship,’⁶² a lifetime of productivity undertaken by a worker-subject, authorizing his life as pure work, the ‘gigantic labour process’⁶³ marshalled in *Die Totale Mobilmachung* (1930).

It is difficult to see all this in terms of a *Werklandschaft*, a network of extensively correlated writings, that is not, at the same time, precisely a *Werkherrschaft*, an act of command, of being in command over worlds of labour, not least because Andreas Huyssen interprets the obsessive rewrites of Jünger’s early work, especially, in terms of the concept of the armour. Palimpsests, at any rate and as Reich teaches us, can be indicative of armouring, rather than of the world turning to kipple. Reflecting on the amended versions of Jünger’s *In Stahlgewittern* (1920; by 1934, fourteen editions had been released), Huyssen observes:

All of Jünger’s writing of the 1920s, including the revisions of *The Storm of Steel*, are marked by the attempt to forget that tiny, fragile human body, or rather to equip it with an impenetrable armour protecting it against the memory of the traumatic experience of the trenches. Forgetting as an obsessive rewrite project, with each additional layer of text another repression, another exorcism, another piece of the armour.⁶⁴

The strategic function of writing, here, indeed concerns assembling: the assemblage of an armoured subject distinguished through his—because it is, without a doubt, a phallic subjectivity—‘metallic coldness’.⁶⁵ There is, however, something else to comment on, considering the figure galvanised throughout Jünger’s oeuvre, erecting itself in opposition to that which is vulnerable, formless, has the potential to disintegrate. The latter, of course, is the precondition for a new form to arise, an event Jünger repeatedly describes in *Der*

Arbeiter, where he often also uses a vocabulary deriving from hard labour in conjunction to the deployment of an entomological gaze. There is a constant switching between these two formalisations, one ‘natural,’ the other the result of *technē*; in either case, form is the privileged condition. A *Typus* arises out of a *Gestaltwandel*, a metamorphosis which entails a melting out of those aspects that prevent the purity of a metal, a transformation that is naturalised later on in *Der Arbeiter* and linked to the image of ‘life consum[ing] itself’.⁶⁶ The transformative process is likened to a caterpillar’s evolution into the imago: a caterpillar, after a phase of rapacious consumption elongating and swelling its body, repeatedly moults, sheds its skin, before digesting itself inside the chrysalis it forms. The metamorphosis that occurs passes through various stages of form and formlessness, the caterpillar’s tissues dissolving to leave only ‘imaginal discs,’ cells that contain the data for the imago, the future form.⁶⁷ The *Gestalt* of the worker—emergent after a period of loss, the melting or moulting of the ‘impure,’ which in turn resembles the sculpting of a statue, losing the mass of stone out of which it is cut⁶⁸—clearly derives from the caterpillar’s biological journey, even if continuously slipping into *technē*. What is discarded, in this worker-imago, is the formless, that which resists the character impression of the new *Typus*, which distinguishes itself, above all else, in the face:

The face staring back at its observer from under the steel helmet or the pilot’s cap has [...] changed. The range of its expressions has diminished in its multiplicity and thus in its individuality, as can be seen in a gathering or in group photographs, while it has gained in the precision and specificity of its singular features. It has become more metallic, galvanized on its surface, so to speak; the bone structure is prominent, the features sparse and taut. The gaze is quiet and fixed, trained in the observation of objects apprehended under conditions of high speed. This is the face of a race which

has begun to develop in response to the particular challenges of a new landscape and which the individual represents not as a person or as individual, but as *Typus*.⁶⁹

The face-mask, recalling Reich, announces a much more extensive *Verwandlung* into cold figure, to refer to Helmuth Lethen's work, 'operating under the spell of total mobilisation'.⁷⁰ These appearances—mask, *Typus*, *Gestalt*—are aligned despite the divergences Jünger elaborates on elsewhere, in that they overwhelmingly resonate with what Elias Canetti calls the 'stereometric figure'. In *Crowds and Power*, Canetti describes this figure as an angular subject, a 'soldier like a prisoner who has adapted himself to the walls enclosing him' and are 'affect[ing] his shape'.⁷¹ It is, similarly, a figure evoked throughout Klaus Theweleit's *Male Fantasies*, where it is synonymous with a singularly finished form, going under different names: *Stahlgestalt* [figure of steel], a utopian totality-component because at once whole in, and fully present to, itself and frictionless part of the troop; 'child of the drill-machine'; fantasy-man whose 'physique has been machinized, his psyche eliminated' or 'displaced into his body armour,' realising a 'machine-like periphery'.⁷² The ego, as Theweleit demonstrates, is a 'muscle-physique' stabilised against collapse through work, or, rather, as Werner Hamacher argues, through a particular and pervasive conception of work intent on exterminating 'the nonhomogeneous, the nonassimilable, [...] the formless'.⁷³ Hamacher shows that as long as the 'endogamous fascism' of such an interpretation of work keeps evading analysis, it behaves as one of the many ideological, social and political continuances of the Nazi regime, a system that 'defines itself as the rejection of what is foreign to work and the foreignness of work "itself" through murder.'⁷⁴ What he means is this: work is form, and formalization; it corresponds to the imposition of form and the elimination of the formless, that which is coded as other, can't be gathered into form, might be form-resistant, has the propensity to deform. Work, in this sense, is anti 'anti-form,' never mind that the formless makes form possible. That disavowal, the ability to grant the formless the right to exist,

irrespective of whether it can be constituted into form, structures fascist ideology while persisting in organising the current capitalist mode of production or, more precisely, racial capitalism. Seb Franklin has analysed the ‘discursive maintenance of states of form and formlessness,’ which sustains an economic system, a racist-capitalist imaginary, predicated on the valorization of form.⁷⁵ This logic of form—a political and epistemological condition that remains ongoing—crushes the formless. Work pressed into the service of this logic is synonymous with murder, the absolute dispossession of rights or recognition of ‘forms’ of life that do not correspond to the ‘good form,’ the *Gestalt* of ‘man’ monumentalised against an abjected formlessness.

Gestalt, Typus, stereometric figure = the ‘good form,’ distinguished through pure, definite lines; a phallic, vertical I; an image of wholeness, a subject without remainder. Even though this figure requires constant maintenance—hence the enormous amount of fascist writing, behaving as mechanism assuring stability⁷⁶—it is a static subjectivity which, through endless processes of revision, attains its ultimate, ‘proper’ form. The economy of work, and at work, here, a process of assembling an armoured form, yields a *Gestalt* whose articulation despite or because of its constant reiterations is metallic, machinic, mythic, immobile. In this context, Jünger’s amendments of his own texts are indicative of such a process of forming, which he describes as a sloughing off, skin discarded after undergoing ecdysis.⁷⁷ What emerges or hatches is a fantasy whose name might be Legion—*Stahlgestalt*; stereometric figure, etc.—but whose form is that of the insect-body as *Typus*, prototype or paragon of the armoured (and gendered) subject. Metamorphosis, as such, only matters in terms of its final stage, the codification of Being as insect/ile: exoskeletal ego, hardened into a carapace; no secret interior; impassive face; ‘proper’ or total form that has reached completion and gained its imago. Jünger seizes the (idealised) subject as *homme-insecte*, whose metallic sheen is both

at the origin and the end result of a development that proceeds to fully incorporate what Deleuze and Guattari call a 'molar' entity, the single, identifiable, unified, authoritative subject.⁷⁸ In this respect, there is indeed a dreamwork expounded across Jünger's writings, even if it effectively banishes Freud (the subject, after all, is pure ego). It is dreamwork as wish-fulfilment, dependent on the functioning of writing as hatching, excoriation, or, following Connor, entomo-oneirism: a 'dream of the insect, according to which a confining outer skin must be split in order to give room for the new body to emerge'.⁷⁹ It is not simply, then, that the notion of *Typus* derives from entomology, but also that the very act of writing is entomophilic; it dreams of hatching an armoured self, all shining skin → a new resplendent mode of being.

Fetish

The fetish is a carapace: it is a fixed thing—it endures; it has an originating event—and a thing which fixes, has ordering power.⁸⁰ In the first section to 'The Problem of the Fetish,' William Pietz cites Michel Leiris, the French writer and ethnologist, who argues that fetishism is narcissistic love or infatuation projected outwards, where it hardens, takes on form. There, outside, the 'solid carapace [...] imprisons [this love] within the limits of a precise thing and situates it, like a piece of furniture which we can use in that strange, vast room called space.'⁸¹ A territorialised object, a piece of furniture in a room, the fetish is also sign of a displaced lack whose 'presence' elsewhere is surrogate or substitute phallus. In the final part of this annulated essay, I am tracing a trajectory of an inside (a narcissistic love; a lack) projected outside and crystallising as coleoptera, standing as 'memorial' to a 'perfectly finished' subject without 'hint of lack or loss'.⁸² To do so involves being alert to the stag beetle as fetish object mobilised by a discourse whose order-word is fascism, a logic

assembled or remembered in the experimental documentary film *Vom Hirschkäfer zum Hakenkreuz*, concerned with the use and manipulation of images. More specifically, it traces the cooperation between avant-garde filmmakers, often working on nature documentaries (*Kulturfilme*), a genre that despite its ‘conservative’ focus played with form, and the Nazi regime.

In *Subtile Jagden*, the auto-biographical account of his insect collecting, Jünger recounts the start of his obsession, bequeathed by his father. It is a heritage, passed down from father to son, that recurs: in *Vom Hirschkäfer zum Hakenkreuz*, a *Historionaut*—history machine, it is also an associative machine, a montage and dream machine, a search engine—gathers resonances between (grand)fathers, stag beetles and avant-garde cinema before leaping to cyberbugs and Dark Wave music of the 1990s. The film’s argument is implicit, its quasi-somatic method transposed and developed, using Jünger as decoding key, below. Its driving force or the machine’s command, which ‘dials’ itself into networks, is the production of the seductive image, even if the narrator-machine begins by giving voice to a silent 1921 film, *Der Hirschkäfer*, whose first intertitle sets the scene: a morning walk in an oak forest. Two men, sucking on pipes, are on the lookout for stag beetles, delivered in macro-optic close-ups, a technology which Ulrich K. T. Schulz, the director, was the first to use. The beetles are discovered in bleeding vaginal folds of oak trees; the narrative, both visual and through intertitles, calls attention to the enormous mandibles (read: the phallus) of the male stag beetle. A patriarchal, pseudo-Darwinian imagination is at work: female stag beetles can ‘justifiably be called the weaker sex;’ the beetles’ short life span, the summer months, frequently ends in battle: ‘*Sieg—und—Tod,*’ victory and death.⁸³

The *Historionaut* explains a tradition of beetle collecting trips to oak forests with ‘granddaddy,’ who also made educational films called *Kulturfilme*, initiated in Germany after World War One. Between 1918 and 1945, twenty-thousand *Kulturfilme* were produced; they were screened in cinemas as previews to main features, and their focus, especially in Nazi Germany, was the stag beetle in its struggle ‘in and against nature,’ an ‘inexhaustible, eternal subject’ in fascist thought.⁸⁴ *Der Hirschkäfer* is brought into connection with *Das Erbe*, a 1935 Nazi propaganda film using fighting stag beetles recruited to the discourse of ‘racial policy’ set forth by a ‘professor’ facing an idealised Nazi *Typus*, a beautiful, young, blonde woman: ‘in battle, everything weak is eliminated. [...] Otherwise, all life would collapse due to its own infirmity.’ *Vom Hirschkäfer zum Hakenkreuz* follows the stag beetle across its discursive iterations, from its occurrences in *Kulturfilme* to its functioning in the Nazi apparatus and, from there—the unspoken link is Jünger—to Dark Wave. Notably, coleoptera is mentioned in relation to a 1996 Leni Riefenstahl tribute album curated by Josef Klumb, a far-right German musician whose one-time band project, Von Thronstahl, incorporates the black sun—a wheel consisting of radial runes citing the swastika and the SS symbol—in its logo. The beetle also appears, more obviously, on a track titled ‘Käferlied’ [Beetle Song], a tribute to Jünger,⁸⁵ by the far-right Austrian band Allerseelen. An unremarkable, monotonous piece of about 6 minutes, the track’s spoken words only occasionally emerge out of a sonic force field that, in its opening stages, stirs an apparent multiplicity. There is, however, only one signifier here: a single entity, the ‘very last’ beetle, a sacred object apparently lost, which has ‘protected’ and ‘shielded him’—that other, commanding signifier—and must be recovered in the underworld:

so führte ihn die heilige Wissenschaft

thus sacred science led him

zum letzten, allerletzten Käfer

to the last, the very last beetle

in der Unterwelt	in the underworld
suchte er den heiligen Käfer auf	he sought out the holy beetle
der ihn so oft schützte	which protected him so often
so oft schirmte	shielded him so often
zu den dunklen Käfern	to the dark beetles
heim ins Reich	home to the empire [<i>Reich</i>]
dann nahmen ihn	then
die unbekanntes Käfer	the unknown beetles
in ihre Sammlung auf ⁸⁶	took him into their collection

Underworld-*Reich* and ‘home,’ to which ‘he’ returns, coincide in this curious ‘last man’ narrative, in which beetle and man exist in correspondence: the passage into the underworld turns ‘him’ into holy object preserved by ‘dark beetles,’ nameless creatures taking ‘him’ up into their collection. The accompanying video, by contrast, shows not ‘man’ but ‘woman,’ an irradiated dancing figure, whose veins and luminous triangle indicative of her reproductive organs are more distinctive than the contours of her body: fertile *Blut und Boden* of an interior corporeal landscape.⁸⁷ At times, two of these ghostly shapes arise to merge back into each other, roughly arranging into an x-rayed close-up of the over-sized mandibles of a male stag beetle, a coming together obscurely pointing back to the set of coordinates utilised by the Nazis: a nexus of ‘sacred’ and tragic being; ‘pure’ blood in unobstructed flow suggested by the insistent dance sequence; and instantaneously visible, fully present, phallic power.

A mythical (as well as mystical or occult) system is in operation, consisting of elements assembling the stag beetle into relations with the impression of arresting size, oak tree/forest, father figures, heritage, fertility, soil, blood, battle and victory, eternalising a message about nationhood, patriarchy, naturalness, strength. The order of signification above invokes the armour, the sheen of the insect's exoskeleton, further referenced, or incubated, in the musical genre, which Stéphane François describes as 'euro-pagan,' an identitarian, *völkisch* scene marked by esotericism and, in certain cases, 'SS-occultism'.⁸⁸ With minor key, low pitch and droning compositions, contiguous to things buried, close to, or below, earth, Allerseelen—whose name translates as All Souls' Day—are a neo-folk, euro-pagan, post-industrial and martial industrial band, a genre that, according to Anton Shekhovtsov, is often 'apoliteic,' an orientation closely associated with the European New Right (ENR).⁸⁹ The apoliteic is characterised through distance from the 'modern' world and its 'values' and hedges around Jünger's essay and notion of the *Waldgang* (1951), a walk and retreat into the forest. This 'interregnum' of sorts—awaiting the palingenesis of a highly mythologised Europe—is fascist, because a form of revolutionary ultra-nationalism dreaming of a new, spectacular temporality: a 'secret Europe' to be generated in the forest functioning as symbol of 'an enduring organic rootedness'.⁹⁰ It is not only the apoliteic, and/or the 'metapolitically fascist'—i.e., not engaged in violently implementing fascism as political system—, that is discovered, however, as intimately constitutive of this particular musical genre, because its laws are further, and as intimated above, cognate with the insectile, not least in terms of its semiotics. Industrial music renders static sounds and timbres—buzzing, hissing, the *zoē* of swarm 'noise'—that summon the insectile, the formless iteration appearing in the name/figure of that new, still occulted, Europe carried on the backs, also, of stag beetles as (crypto)fascist vehicles.

As a mythologised object or message—it is difficult to talk of entities when it comes to sounds and swarms, ‘bodies without surface’⁹¹—the stag beetle is a motif incorporating the curious ‘interregnum’ and the discourse of the organic + the technological (as well as form and formlessness) united in the same (cyborgic) organism/aggregate. Associated with earth, oak, burrowing, it is equally bound up with *technē* and armouring, not only with respect to the music analysed here, but also regarding the *Kulturfilm*, indicative of ‘style, taste, form and accomplishment [*Fertigkeit*],’⁹² itself a set of terms whose body of associations encompasses completion, immobility, perfection. The mode of presence of the beetle, condensed through the speech of myth in both genres—martial industrial, euro-pagan music and *Kulturfilm*—hence includes and gestures to the machinic, implied by sounds and/or glistening in close-up shots: exoskeletal ‘dark plates’ that, ‘wonderfully shaped’ and geometrically precise, to cite William Gass’ 1968 short story ‘The Order of Insects,’⁹³ become abstraction, arrestation, harmonious form. In Gass’ story, a suburban housewife becomes enthralled by dead bugs, whose features hold in death as they did in life: they are the epitome of form preserved eternally. This order—gracious and static—is moulded across the material discussed above, in which the stag beetle is abstracted from its ‘natural’ environment and deployed as ‘nebula,’ as it were, a ‘condensation’ of elements that intends to blind or rather that shines, is designed to seduce.⁹⁴ In other words, it is produced as object of fascination, inviting and commanding desire. On a fundamental level, the desire that the stag beetle, as image, myth, and invocation, compels is the desire for the phallus, the fantasy of power, of being in possession of *objet petit a*. In *What Do Pictures Want*, W.J.T. Mitchell argues that

the process of pictorial seduction [Michael Fried, an art historian and critic] admires is successful precisely in proportion to its indirectness, its seeming indifference to the

beholder, its antithetical ‘absorption’ in its own internal drama. The very special sort of pictures that enthrall him get what they want by seeming not to want anything, by pretending that they have everything they need.⁹⁵

The meaning that emerges from the image of the stag beetle—immune to our gaze, whose impotence is here exposed, often resulting in other displays of violence to crush the other’s utter indifference, its opacity—is one of completion, of being absolutely untouched by the trauma of castration. At the same time, it hails and maintains related desires, having to do with loss (the loss of a ‘true’ Europe, etc.), beyond this most arresting one, mesmerizing the beholder who, lacking, stands transfixed by a figure of plenitude.

In 1998, as part of a travelling exhibition, a glass case in the *Natur-Museum* in Luzern, Switzerland, displayed a cross-section of a beetle next to the arm guard of an armour; both are distinguished through their splendour, the *Glanz* of their armoured form.⁹⁶ The insect (not limited to the stag beetle) is brought into the light as armoured thing, as site of desire organised around its shell as fetish object. In his paper on fetishism, Freud notes that the fetish is not initially perceived by the patient as a symptom linked to suffering and severe injury, and that, through the case which opens Freud’s study, it is linked to light by way of the German word *Glanz*, wrongly lodged in his patient’s memory. Having moved from England to Germany, *Glanz* had to be understood in English, as glance, writes Freud: the nose, here, operating as fetish object resplendent with a ‘luminous shine’.⁹⁷ The fetish, Freud continues, is coupled to trauma, the ‘horror of castration,’⁹⁸ despite its resplendence, and is at once disavowal and affirmation of loss; it is designed to preserve from extinction, to protect the ego against the terror of lack. To be brought into the light, as such, frequently means to mobilise an object as fascinating and, concurrently, as fetish; as Connor shows, the ‘desire for

fascination is a desire for arrest, but of a certain enlivening kind, in which the subject of fascination is at once enthralled and aroused.⁹⁹ This particular phenomenon, of being ‘arrested into arousal,’¹⁰⁰ asserts the presence of the erect phallus (as well as the function of the fetish), intending to defend against threat. While Freud dismisses ‘scotomization’—by which a perception is totally wiped out, as if an impression fell on a blind spot in the retina—the play of light is something that remains, is retained in the fascinating relation between subject and object.

Accordingly, in *Subtile Jagden*, Jünger’s fascination—it is indeed articulated as such—with insects far exceeds his father’s predilection, noting that the ‘small objects gradually acquired a magical shine [*Glanz*].’¹⁰¹ In a lengthy passage, he explains the different affects emanating from, on the one hand, butterflies and, on the other, coleoptera, commenting on a ‘voluptuous’ sense of pleasure and delight generated by a butterfly’s beating wings. (Wolf Man comes to mind, seized not by pleasure but by an irrational fear at the sight of a butterfly, whose beating wings trigger the patient with impressions of a woman’s spread legs, thereby perhaps catching sight of, or suspecting, her ‘lack’.) Jünger remembers first beholding a *Morphos*, a type of butterfly, whose wings, when shut, shone like gold brocade; when open, they resembled a silver-coated mirror with a sky-blue base. The apparition increases its charm—Jünger emphasises the stillness of the scene, taking place under a burning sun—like the glance or gaze of an eye that, with each opening and shutting, is put more conclusively to sleep [*der Bann wurde stärker und stärker, wie der Blick eines Auges, der vom Lidschlag immer mächtiger, immer zwingender einschläfert*].¹⁰² Jünger sets up a correspondence between the blinks of an eye and the movement of the creature’s wings, both of which beat, eye mirroring wing and vice versa. The beating is shared, neither fully attributed to the one (subject) nor the other (object) but discovered in a radiant space in-between. Beauty, he

proceeds, robs us of the proper, of what is ‘proper’ to ‘us,’ an event explicitly formulated as threat and pleasure at the same time. Fascination, rather than a ‘transitive phenomenon,’¹⁰³ producing an agent and a recipient, a vessel, as it were, is that which shifts the ‘I’ into the spell and sphere of the other, but without ascribing all the power to an entrancing object. The subject, after all, is a desiring subject, whose gaze or glance projects *Glanz*.

Jünger opposes the materiality of the coleoptera to the gracefulness of the butterfly:

They are of harder matter [*stoffharter*], harder and, as jewels of the earth, aligned more obviously with fruit than petals, conches and crystals instead of being kindred to birds. They do not reveal their beauty all at once, which means that their admirers [*Liebhaber*] tend to be more constant [*beständig*] than those who value butterflies.¹⁰⁴

A vocabulary of hardness prevails: it insists through repetitions, the evocation of hard matter (jewels, conches, crystals) attracting harder lovers [*Liebhaber*], whose *Beständigkeit* not only codes constancy, but also the stiffened phallus, glimpsed in the word *ständig* and therefore *Ständer*—the erect penis. Coleoptera seem, at times, to be inanimate, less related to living beings like birds and more akin to shells, hardened, crystalline objects, things of the earth. Jünger keeps being drawn to their ‘metallic shimmers’ [*Metallglanz*], the ‘lustre of [their] armour’ [*Glanz der Rüstung*], commenting on the sheen of beautiful forms, subsequently arranged in his notations centring objects, giving them *Beständigkeit*.¹⁰⁵ Despite their brilliance, their emergence out of the *Ungesonderte*, these objects are and remain, or so the subject needs to ascertain, measurable, things to be captured. In *Typus, Name, Gestalt*, Jünger elaborates on the formation and formatting of the unformed. To give a name is to insert an object, ‘falling into a word’ out of the nameless [*das Namenlose*], into a framework: through

this act of restriction [*Begrenzung*], ‘we’ delimit and recover territory from the sphere of influence of an amorphous namelessness.¹⁰⁶ The nameless is that which awaits being made into form, yet which lurks beyond each image—the relation between form and formlessness is a dynamic one—and is to be counteracted by the phallus.

Projections of hardness occur, as such, in two places: at the level of the fascinating object—arising from ‘outside,’ the *Ungesonderte* out of which they grow, are hoisted¹⁰⁷—and the entranced subject, who, at the sight of said object, turns stiff with terror. In ‘Medusa’s Head,’ Freud notes that the stiffening ‘offers consolation,’ in that it reasserts the viewer of the presence of his penis: look, I am still here, I am standing up. ‘I am not afraid of you. I defy you. I have a penis.’¹⁰⁸ Medusa, of course, terrifies because she apparently, according to a devastating patriarchal logic, lacks. Coleoptera, as figures of plenitude and phallisized objects, on the other hand, return that lack where it belongs, testifying to the fact that the mesmerized subject does not possess the phallus, that the presence that manifests itself in response to their *Gestalt* is only ever ‘dubious,’ as Connor puts it.¹⁰⁹ They seduce, then, because they are in possession of the ‘eternally lacking object’¹¹⁰ from the perspective of the mutilated subject, always without *objet a*. But, rather than losing itself in this milieu, the scene or reminder of its own castration, the subject, bracing itself, supplements its iteration through the other, which it integrates as part of its armour. *Homme-insecte*, as it emerges in this space, is *homme fasciné* and *homme fasciste*, consumed by the obsession to re-member its ego-armour, the resplendent, mythic figure of the ideal-I.

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¹ Joyce Cheng, 'Mask, Mimicry, Metamorphosis: Roger Caillois, Walter Benjamin and Surrealism in the 1930s,' *Modernism/Modernity*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (January 2009), 61–86, 62.

² Cheng, 'Mask, Mimicry, Metamorphosis,' 64.

³ Christopher Hollingsworth, *Poetics of the Hive: Insect Metaphor in Literature* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2001), 195 & 200.

⁴ Jacques Lacan, 'The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience,' in *Écrits*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York & London: Routledge, 2001), 1–6, 3.

⁵ Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (London & New York: Continuum, 2004), 8.

⁶ Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1938), 80.

⁷ The German *Typus* translates as type in English. I keep it in German—which Bogdan Costea and Laurence Paul Hemming also do in their latest translation of *The Worker*—because I'd like to draw attention to it as site of pressure, as well as retain its speculative dimensions. Costea and Hemming further include the term in their glossary, explaining that *Typus* is as unusual in German than in English, and that it frequently recurs in Nietzsche's work, whose influence on Jünger's *The Worker* they wanted to highlight. See Ernst Jünger, *The Worker*, trans. Bogdan Costea and Laurence Paul Hemming (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2017), xiv, xv & xxvii.

⁸ Dan Gorenstein, 'Entomologische Horizontverschmelzung: Ernst Jüngers Hermeneutik der Käfer,' in Daniel Alder, Markus Christen, Jeannine Hauser, Christoph Steier (eds), *Inhalt: Perspektiven einer Kategorie Non Grata im Philosophischen Diskurs* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2015), 169–188, 177. [All translations mine.]

⁹ Jünger, *The Worker*, 75.

¹⁰ Steven Connor, *The Book of Skin* (London: Reaktion, 2004), 178.

¹¹ Wilhelm Reich, *Character Analysis*, trans. Vincent R. Carfagno (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1990), 115.

¹² Vilém Flusser, *Vampyroteuthis Infernalis*, trans. Valentine A. Pakis (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 28.

¹³ William Pietz, 'The Problem of the Fetish I,' *Anthropology and Aesthetics*, No. 9, Spring 1985, 5–17, 7.

¹⁴ Jessica Burstein, 'Waspish Segments: Lewis, Prosthesis, Fascism,' *Modernism/modernity* Vol. 4. No. 2 (1997), 139–164, 156.

¹⁵ Burstein, 'Waspish Segments,' 157.

¹⁶ Lacan, 'Mirror Stage,' 3.

¹⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 13.

¹⁸ Ernst Jünger, *Typus, Name, Gestalt*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, Zweite Abteilung, Essays VII, Band 13, Fassungen II (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1981), 85–173, 94. [All translations mine.]

¹⁹ Flusser, *Vampyroteuthis Infernalis*, 38.

²⁰ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences* (London & New York: Routledge, 2002), xvi.

²¹ Flusser, *Vampyroteuthis Infernalis*, 26.

²² Flusser, *Vampyroteuthis Infernalis*, 27.

²³ Flusser, *Vampyroteuthis Infernalis*, 10.

²⁴ Flusser, *Vampyroteuthis Infernalis*, 28.

- ²⁵ Jacques Derrida, 'Fourmis', in Hélène Cixous & Mireille Calle-Gruber, *Hélène Cixous Rootprints: Memories of Life & Writing*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (London & NY: Routledge, 1997), 119–127, 120.
- ²⁶ Reich, *Character Analysis*, 756.
- ²⁷ Reich, *Character Analysis*, 758.
- ²⁸ Reich, *Character Analysis*, 762.
- ²⁹ Derrida, 'Fourmis', 121.
- ³⁰ Flusser, *Vampyroteuthis Infernalis*, 29 & 11.
- ³¹ Flusser, *Vampyroteuthis Infernalis*, 29.
- ³² Flusser, *Vampyroteuthis Infernalis*, 29.
- ³³ Rachel Murray, *The Modernist Exoskeleton: Insects, War, Literary Form* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 13.
- ³⁴ Flusser, *Vampyroteuthis Infernalis*, 28.
- ³⁵ Ernst Jünger, 'Prometheus—Von Der Physik belehrt? Zu Wolfgang Wiesers Besprechung von *Typus, Name, Gestalt*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, Zweite Abteilung, Essays VII, Band 13, Fassungen II, 174. [My translation.]
- ³⁶ Jünger, *Typus, Name, Gestalt*, 99.
- ³⁷ Jacques Derrida, 'The Law of Genre,' trans. Avital Ronell, *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 7, No. 1 On Narrative (Autumn 1980), 55–81, 59 & 57.
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- ³⁹ Ernst Jünger, *Der Arbeiter*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, Zeite Abteilung, Essays Band 8, Essays II, Essays II Der Arbeiter (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1981), 3–153, 110. The English translation uses 'will to build a race' in this case. See Jünger, *The Worker*, 69.
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- ⁴² Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 144 & 145.
- ⁴³ Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 172.
- ⁴⁴ Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 151.
- ⁴⁵ Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 151 & 172.
- ⁴⁶ Manfred Sommer, *Sammeln: Ein Philosophischer Versuch* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1999), 24. [All translations mine.]
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- ⁴⁸ Sommer, *Sammeln*, 80.
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- ⁵⁸ Heike Gfrereis, 'Schreiben als Träumen: Die Einklebungen in Ernst Jüngers Tagebüchern und Manuskripten,' *Ernst-Jünger-Studien 7: Freiheit* (2015), 2–19, 3. [All translations mine.]
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- ⁶⁰ Gfrereis, 'Schreiben als Träumen,' 8.
- ⁶¹ Stefan Schlak, 'Ernst Jünger im Archive gelesen: Sechs Stereoskopien,' in Karlheinz Bohrer, Heike Gfrereis, Helmuth Lethen & Stephan Schlak, (eds), *Ernst Jünger: Arbeiter am Abgrund* (Marbach am Neckar: Deutsche Schillergesellschaft, 2010), 11–101, 25 & 26. [All translations mine.]
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- ⁶³ Jünger, 'Total Mobilisation,' 126.
- ⁶⁴ Andreas Huyssen, 'Fortifying the Heart: Totally Ernst Jünger's Armoured Texts,' *New German Critique*, No. 59 Special Issue on Ernst Jünger (Spring-Summer 1993), 3–23, 12.

- ⁶⁵ Jünger, *The Worker*, 69.
- ⁶⁶ Jünger, *The Worker*, 8 & 75.
- ⁶⁷ Ferria Jabr, 'How Does a Caterpillar turn into a Butterfly,' *Scientific American*, 10 August 2012. Accessible via: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/caterpillar-butterfly-metamorphosis-explainer/> [Accessed 10/07/2020].
- ⁶⁸ Jünger, *The Worker*, 75. The English version translates 'abschleifen' as 'eroding,' losing the aspect of labour, which recurs in the next paragraph and page, where Jünger mentions the 'sculpted' body [*gezüchteter Körper*]. For the German version, see *Der Arbeiter*, 125.
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- ¹⁰⁴ Jünger, *Subtile Jagden*, 34.
- ¹⁰⁵ Jünger, *Subtile Jagden*, 77, 74, 85 & 91.
- ¹⁰⁶ Jünger, *Typus, Name, Gestalt*, 88.
- ¹⁰⁷ Jünger, *Typus, Name, Gestalt*, 123.
- ¹⁰⁸ Freud, 'Medusa's Head,' in *Writings on Art and Literature*. trans. James Strachey (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 264–265, 265.
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