

BULLETIN α'

An array of heterogeneous notes that provide points of interaction with the project's concept.

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MICROFASCISMS

We would even say that fascism implies a molecular regime that is distinct both from molar segments and their centralization. Doubtless, fascism invented the concept of the totalitarian State, but there is no reason to define fascism by a concept of its own devising: there are totalitarian States, of the Stalinist or military dictatorship type, that are not fascist. The concept of the totalitarian State applies only at the macropolitical level, to a rigid segmentarity and a particular mode of totalization and centralization. But fascism is inseparable from a proliferation of molecular focuses in interaction, which skip from point to point, before beginning to resonate together in the National Socialist State. Rural fascism and city or neighborhood fascism, youth fascism and war veteran's fascism, fascism of the Left and fascism of the Right, fascism of the couple, family, school, and office: every fascism is defined by a micro-black hole that stands on its own and communicates with the others, before resonating in a great, generalized central black hole. There is fascism when a war machine is installed in each hole, in every niche. Even after the National Socialist State had been established, microfascisms persisted that gave it unequalled ability to act upon the "masses."

What makes fascism dangerous is its molecular or micropolitical power, for it is a mass movement: a cancerous body rather than a totalitarian organism. Only microfascism provides an answer to the global question: Why does desire desire its own repression, how can it desire its own repression? The masses certainly do not passively submit to power; nor do they "want" to be repressed, in a kind of masochistic hysteria; nor are they tricked by an ideological lure. Desire is never separable from complex assemblages that necessarily tie into molecular levels, from microformations already shaping postures, attitudes, perceptions, expectations, semiotic systems, etc. Desire is never an undifferentiated instinctual energy, but itself results from a highly developed, engineered setup rich in interactions: a whole supple segmentarity that processes molecular energies and potentially gives desire a fascist determination. Leftist organizations will not be the last to secrete microfascisms. It's too easy to be antifascist on the molar level, and not even see

the fascist inside you, the fascist you yourself sustain and nourish and cherish with molecules both personal and collective.

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 214-215, University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

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ON ELECTRA



Picture from the online "Gateway to Anafi Photo-Archive" by Margaret Kenna, University of Wales.

A way to set foot on its shore and to give rise to this apparition as a possible, temporary anchorage for my thoughts. As did the Argonauts, approaching the island [Anafi] like the ship *Argo* whose pieces were all gradually replaced but whose name remained unchanged. First, one has to choose a figurehead, which, like that of the *Argo* ship, is endowed with the faculty of speech and capable of prophesying, of indicating the pitfalls and dangers to avoid: Elektra Apostolou (1912-1944), a communist resistance fighter of the EAM (Εθνικό Απελευθερωτικό Μέτωπο) and artist, who was involved in the women's movement, later tortured and murdered by the Greek secret police collaborating with the German occupying forces. She was also deported to the island [Anafi] in 1939, with her daughter Agni, born just before her transfer, under the dictatorship of Metaxas. Her friend, the feminist writer Dido Sotiriou, dedicated a book to her in 1961, *Elektra*, which has not been translated to French. I cannot read it. I learn to visually recognise its transcript, Ηλέκτρα. [...]

In her text, "On Not Knowing Greek", published in 1925, Virginia Woolf evokes the impossibility, whatever our efforts, to understand Greek since "all those thousands of years ago, in their little islands, [they] know all that is to be known". She invokes another *Electra*, that of Sophocles, whose words could well be attached to our *Electra*: "But it is not so easy to decide what it is that gives these cries of *Electra* in her anguish their power to cut and wound and excite. It is partly that we know her, that we have picked up from little turns and twists of the dialogue hints of her character, of her appearance,

which, characteristically, she neglected; of something suffering in her, outraged and stimulated to its utmost stretch of capacity, yet, as she herself knows (“my behaviour is unseemly and becomes me ill”), blunted and debased by the horror of her position”. [...]



Interrogated in 1944 by her torturers, asking for her name, Elektra Apostolou would have answered: “Greek”, then to the question “Where are you sitting?”: “In Greece”. The first time as a tragedy, the second as a farce. An unaltered sense of belonging - Greece remains Greece, like Argo, despite the political changes of its time and the dark wave threatening to swallow it up entirely. A willingness to fight against dispossession aimed at disqualifying. Relocating a person through language. A Derridian ontologic which reads as follows: “by ontology we mean an axiomatic linking indissociably the ontological value of present-being (on) to its situation, to the stable and presentable determination of a locality, the topos of territory, native soil, city, body in general.”

Émilie Notéris, *Breaking into the Waves of Anafi*, 29-30, Catalogue Multitudinous Seas, 2018.

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#### A HORRIBLE ORIGINALITY

In fact, the picture of totalitarianism that she presents forms a stark contrast to the more familiar model. Metaphorically, one might say that if the dominant picture suggests the rigidity, uniformity, transparency, and immobility of a frozen lake, Arendt’s theory evokes a mountain torrent sweeping away everything in its path, or a hurricane leveling everything recognizably human. Instead of referring to a political system of a deliberately structured kind, “totalitarianism” in Arendt’s sense means a chaotic, nonutilitarian, manically dynamic movement of destruction that assails all the features of human nature and the human world that make politics possible. [...]

“Everything we know of totalitarianism demonstrates a horrible originality . . . its very actions constitute a break with all our traditions...”

In other words, totalitarianism illustrated the human capacity to begin, that power to think and to act in ways that are new, contingent, and unpredictable that looms so large in her mature political theory. But the paradox of totalitarian novelty was that it represented an assault on that very ability to act and think as a unique individual. Believing that “everything is possible” totalitarian movements demand unlimited power, but what this turns out to mean is not at all the building of utopia (which would itself set limits to power and possibility) but unparalleled destruction. [...]

The characteristics that make us more than members of an animal species – our unique individuality and our capacity for spontaneous thought and action – make us unpredictable and therefore get in the way of attempts to harness us for collective motion. “Total terror” as practiced in the camps is, Arendt claims, “the essence of totalitarian government.” It does not simply kill people but first eradicates their individuality and capacity for action. Any remnant of spontaneity would stand in the way of complete domination. “Total power can be achieved and safeguarded only in a world of conditioned reflexes, of marionettes without the slightest trace of spontaneity. Precisely because man’s resources are so great, he can be fully dominated only when he becomes a specimen of the animal-species man.” Unlike the violence and coercion used by ordinary tyrants it does not have a utilitarian purpose such as repressing opposition, and it reaches its climax only after genuine opposition has already been repressed; its only function is to further the project of total domination by crushing out all human individuality.

But in Arendt’s view the most dangerous opportunity they offer is their stress on logical consistency. Both leaders [Hitler and Stalin] prided themselves on the merciless reasoning with which they pursued the implications of race- or class-struggle to the murder of the last “objective enemy.” In their hands the ideologies were emptied of all content except for the automatic process of deduction that one group or another should die. Ideological logicity replaced free thought, inducing people to strip themselves of individuality until they were part of a single impersonal movement of total domination. For totalitarian ideologies do not support the status quo: they chart an endless struggle that is inexorable in its destructiveness.

Margaret Canovan, *Arendt’s theory of totalitarianism: a reassessment*, in *The Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt*, 25-43, Cambridge University Press, 2000.