

Armin Owzar

„Silence is golden“

Face-to-Face Communication in Urban Everyday Life, 1870-1914

At the end of the 19th century Germany was troubled by a huge number of social, political, religious and ethnic conflicts, which led to an extreme segmentation of the German society. There existed two milieus, a catholic and a socialist one, which had been formed in the 1870s, during the Kulturkampf and in consequence of the prosecution of the Social Democratic Party. These milieus were nearly completely isolated from other parts of the German society.¹ And even if their members were not as radical as many conservatives and liberals asserted, they were regarded as enemies of the Second Empire of 1871. Not only socialists and ultramontane catholics were discriminated as 'Reichsfeinde': the Guelphs in Hannover, the Alsatians and the Lorrainers, too, not to talk about the Danish minority in Schleswig-Holstein and the Poles in Posen, Silesia and the Ruhr district. In addition to these clashes between the majority and regional and ethnic minorities another open and serious conflict was provoked by raising antisemitism.² Last but not least there was a new kind of antifeminism corresponding to the growing emancipation of women at the turn of the century.³ All these conflicts had a national dimension because of the increasing significance of mass media. Even if a conflict only took place in one region, everybody could obtain information on it by the daily press.

How did the people deal with these conflicts in their everyday life? How did political processes determine their social behaviour? And did this behaviour have an influence on the political structures? Following Paul Watzlawick social action primarily consists of face-to-face communication.⁴ Therefore you can analyse human behaviour by studying not only the contents, but also the forms of interpersonal communication. So, describing the different sections of an urban society and their face-to-face communication in everyday life you can acquire knowledge how the members of the Wilhelmine society dealt with these omnipresent

¹ Cf. Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1866-1918*, Bd. 1: *Arbeitswelt und Bürgergeist*, München 1990, p. 428-468 and Gerhard A. Ritter/Klaus Tenfelde, *Arbeiter im Deutschen Kaiserreich 1871 bis 1914 (Geschichte der Arbeiter und der Arbeiterbewegung in Deutschland seit dem 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. by G. A. R., Bd. 5), Bonn 1992.

² Cf. Helmut Berding, *Moderner Antisemitismus in Deutschland* (NHB), Frankfurt am Main 1988, p. 86-164.

³ Cf. Ute Planert, *Antifeminismus im Kaiserreich. Diskurs, soziale Formation und politische Mentalität* (Kritische Studien zur Geschichtswissenschaft 124), Göttingen 1998.

⁴ Cf. Paul Watzlawick/Janet H. Beavin/Don D. Jackson, *Menschliche Kommunikation. Formen, Störungen,*

conflicts.⁵ Firstly we have to clarify the connections between the different sections, the different communities: Who talked to whom? Did members of the middle-class get into dialogue with the working-class? Did conservatives engage into conversation with liberals and socialists? What about Jews and Christians, Protestants and Catholics? What about women and men? And what about Germans and Polish immigrants? Secondly we have to describe, about what the members of different communities were talking, if they got into conversation. What were the topics of discussion? Were there arguments about politics or religion, science or sexuality? Did they talk about topics concerning subjects of conflict or touching their different identities? And, thirdly, we have to analyze, how face-to-face communication between the different sections took place if they got into a controversy, how they behaved themselves: How did they manage it? Did they succeed to enter into a dialogue with each other? Were there differences in the behaviour of proletarians and bourgeois, socialists and antisemites, Catholics and Protestants, women and men?

How can these relations of communication best be analyzed and evaluated? The realms of 'Commerzium', 'Commensalitas' und 'Connubium' (trade, social gatherings and marriage) are all appropriate realms to study face-to-face communication between people with opposing views and different social, ethnic, religious and sexual background.⁶ These realms only differ in regard to the persons' emotional involvement. In our context, the field of 'Commensalitas' is the most interesting one. The term refers to situations in which people socialize, e.g. gatherings that take place in 'Vereinen' - clubs - or in private. Analyzing the intensity of 'Commensalitas' between different sections of a society you can find out its degree of (des)integration.

I am interested in all places of 'Commensalitas', especially in pubs or in private companies at home. Because the choice is limited by our historical sources. The data about some places of communication, e.g. the shop, are so sparse that they cannot be considered a representative source, neither in regard to quantity nor quality. Also, some places of communication must be excluded, because they are not places of daily face-to-face communication. The aspect of frequency is very important, for behavioral patterns can only be established in places of everyday life, where people meet often and regularly, where they have an opportunity for conversation that goes beyond small talk and where they can speak

Paradoxien, Bern/Stuttgart/Wien⁸1990 [1969], p. 51.

⁵ This paper bases on my dissertation submitted for the certificate of habilitation about *Kommunikation und Konflikt. Studien zum Sprechen und Schweigen in der wilhelminischen Großstadt unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Großraums Hamburg*, [typescript] Münster 2003.

⁶ Cf. Marion Frantzioch, *Die Vertriebenen. Hemmnisse, Antriebskräfte und Wege ihrer Integration in der*

their mind freely. In addition, this place of communication should have few or no barriers that hinder the access. Only few places fulfill all three criteria, but the most important one is certainly the pub. Firstly, because the pub provides a high degree of verbal communication. Secondly, because a pub is generally open to the public, regardless of the denomination, sex, social background, ethnic origin or political convictions of the visitors. As long as they are able to pay their bill, all guests meet as equals. This can also be said about the second place of communication that I have selected: the middle-class soiree that has replaced the salon by this time. The latter had developed two centuries ago as a meeting place for the sexes and for people from different social classes. Likewise, this holds true for the third place of communication I have selected: the working place. This is where the sexes, the right and left, catholics and protestants met. And it is definitely a place of everyday-life, where people met regularly up to six times a week, thereby having numerous occasions to communicate (on their way home, during break, sometimes during work). In addition to these places we have to analyze those situations in which people were socialized in their behaviour, e.g. at school or in local political assemblies.

My analysis covers the time span between 1870 and 1914. But the two decades round 1900 constitute the main topic of our studies. In the wake of the 'Reichsgründung' some political, cultural and social conflicts had reached its height bringing far-reaching consequences in its train. Because of the growing significance of mass media, changing the young nation into a community of communication, these conflicts started a chain reaction, quickening the process of social segregation, leading to the constitution of cultural and political milieus and promoting a fundamental politicization of everyday life at the turn of the century.⁷ Simultaneously the German society was also fragmented by changing from a land of emigration into a country of immigration - a change already on the way since the 1880s.⁸

These processes especially took place in bigger cities, in metropolis like Hamburg or Berlin. Nowhere else the tensions between the adherents of different political opinions were higher. There are several reasons why I chose the Hamburg area as the main focus for my studies. Not only did Hamburg have a multicultural society, but it also offers an excellent body of data about the time at issue: the so-called 'Vigilanzberichte', which consist of about 20.000 reports.⁹ Between 1892 and 1910, the Hamburg Police Department carried out a

Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Schriften zur Kulturosoziologie 9), West-Berlin 1987, p. 193-197 and 239f.

⁷ Cf. Hans-Peter Ullmann, *Politik im deutschen Kaiserreich 1871-1918* (EDG 52), München 1999, p. 25.

⁸ Cf. Klaus J. Bade, *Vom Auswanderungsland zum Einwanderungsland? Deutschland 1880-1980* (Beiträge zur Zeitgeschichte 12), West-Berlin 1983, p. 29-51.

⁹ Staatsarchiv Hamburg (StaatsA HH), Bestand 331-3, Politische Polizei, S 3930 (50 vol.). See also *Kneipenge-*

massive surveillance operation to get a picture of the general political mood. Every day, about four policemen dressed up as workers roamed the ferries and quays, the train stations and shops. The main focus of attention, however, were pubs, primarily those with working-class customers. Yet, pubs whose customers were mainly craftsmen or businessmen were also monitored. The most common *modus operandi* of the so-called 'Vigilanten' consisted in plain eavesdropping: they would try to get a table as close as possible to the people whose conversation they wanted to overhear. Their reports reflect everything one would expect to be talked about in a pub: work, family, housing, health and politics. Fortunately, many of these reports do not simply inform the reader about the point of view advocated by the people having the conversation, but also how the conversation developed and how the groups reacted towards each other.

One must of course bear in mind, that these reports concentrate on the working and the middle classes. To analyze the communication of the bourgeoisie we have to use additional classes of sources. The first one consists of texts that are autobiographical in nature, e.g. memoirs, which very often report on the contents and forms of face-to-face communication in urban everyday life. The second class of sources are texts establishing social norms, primarily the so-called 'Benimmbücher', which addressed to upstarters and parvenus who stood in great need of sociocultural orientation. Sometimes these books on etiquette even have a protosociological character describing the differences between reality and norm.¹⁰

I. Who talked to whom?

Who talked to whom? Respectively: Who did not talk to whom? Silence may be as expressive as words if it is used intentionally as an alternative to verbal or nonverbal communication. 'There is no way of not communicating', Paul Watzlawick said.¹¹ This axiom of face-to-face communication can also be applied to the level of communication between groups. Accordingly, groups communicate even if they refuse to begin a dialogue. This is how they signal each other their unwillingness to communicate and to deal with differences that could be overcome. This variety of face-to-face communication, which I call preventive

sprache im Kaiserreich. Die Stimmungsberichte der Hamburger Politischen Polizei 1892-1914, ed. by Richard J. Evans, Reinbek 1989 and „*Ich erlauschte folgendes Gespräch:...*“. *Mit Polizeispitzeln durch Eimsbütteler Kneipen der Jahrhundertwende*, ed. by Galerie Morgenland, Hamburg [1995].

¹⁰ Cf. Ulrike Döcker, *Die Ordnung der bürgerlichen Welt. Verhaltensideale und soziale Praktiken im 19. Jahrhundert* (Historische Studien 13), Frankfurt am Main/New York 1994.

silence, requires a place that theoretically enables the two groups to observe and contact each other.

In the German metropolis many places fulfilled more or less all the requirements for face-to-face communication. But you have to consider, that the communicants had different positions in the urban topography, primarily depending on their budget of free time and their living conditions. These factors also depended on the social and ethnic backgrounds, but even on the political convictions and the religious beliefs. Members of the lower classes working in the dock area had less leisure time at their disposal than a teacher or a person carrying on a business in the district of Rotherbaum.¹² There were significant differences in the social, the religious and the ethnic composition of the different quarters. Regardless of these differences you can see that nearly all of Hamburg's quarters had a heterogenous social structure,¹³ especially Eimsbüttel, St. Pauli or Eppendorf, where protestants, jews and catholics, antisemits, liberals and social democrats, Poles and Germans often lived door next door.

Nevertheless, and this is my first thesis, people from different sections of German society, e.g. working- and middle-class citizens, the right and the left, jews and christians rarely talked to each other. Analyzing their leisure time we can diagnose a very high degree of segregation, not only in organizations, but also in pubs and evening parties, in coffee shops and during breaks from work. All these places were exclusively visited by members of specific classes and milieus. However, there were still some places where people with opposing political opinions, from all social classes, of different denominations and diverse ethnic origins sometimes met.

II. What did they talk about?

What did they talk about? Did they talk about everything even controversial issues? Or were there taboos, concerning special topics. My second thesis is that everyday communication between people from different sections was generally marked by a negligence of controversial issues. Reading contemporary books on etiquette and essays dealing with the theory of conversation you get the impression that face-to-face communication was standardized to a large extent. There were numerous practical guides, most of them having gone through

¹¹ Watzlawick u.a., p. 53.

¹² Cf. Wolfgang Nahrstedt, *Die Entstehung der Freizeit. Dargestellt am Beispiel Hamburgs. Ein Beitrag zur Strukturgeschichte und zur strukturgeschichtlichen Grundlegung der Freizeitpädagogik*, Göttingen 1970.

¹³ Cf. Clemens Wischermann, *Wohnen in Hamburg vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg* (Studien zur Geschichte des Alltags), Münster 1983.

several editions, that contained regulations for each kind of everyday situation. The most important regulation concerning the choice of contents was: Never talk about politics, never talk about religion, if you stay with someone who might have another opinion than you. This regulation was valid, too, for all subjects of conversation revolving around sciences and sexuality, especially if the interlocutors belonged to different sexes. In a word: all subjects concerning matters for dispute were forbidden as tricky topics of conversation.

But did the people really follow these regulations? Sometimes real life does not conform to the standard. On the contrary: the books of etiquette often testify to the fact that bans were not accepted. The more urgent the warnings, the more probable that they were not heard. But this is not the case with the regulation concerning the topics of conversation. because nearly the whole range of articles dealing with the choose of topics devote to the warnings not more than one sentence. Evidently, it was regarded as a matter of course not to talk about politics or religion. Everybody knew about it, especially those people whose only aim was to get ahead, to make a success. Reading the autobiographies of people belonging to the upper and the middle-classes you get the impression that even inside the family the tricky topics of conversation had been banned. But what about people belonging to the working class? Finally, they did not have these intentions of rising to high honours. And in fact, they did not risk their career. However, nearly all adherents of the social democrats were frightened of being denounced to the police. As long as they knew their interlocutors, they talked about everything. There was no matter of politics they did not discuss about. But as soon as a stranger entered the pub and took place at a neighbouring table, the communicants terminated their conversation, changed the topics or even left the pub.

III. How did they talk with each other?

Fortunately some of them acted carelessly, so that the so-called 'Vigilanten' could listen secretly to their conversations. Sometimes they even witnessed a situation in which adherents of different parties provoked a clash of opinions. What patterns did these discussions follow and under what circumstances did they take place? How did the citizens of the Kaiserreich deal with conflicts? My third claim is that if a controversial question became a topic of discussion at all, the conversation tended to escalate or to be ended. In order to analyze and evaluate the historical data and sources systematically, I will distinguish four types of debates. The first one is the *dialogue*, which is marked by a verbal exchange of the opposing views and opinions. The opponents end the discussion by mutual consent without having

necessarily reached an agreement. The second type of controversy is a debate that is basically a *monologue*: one side promotes its point of view whereas the other signals by nonverbal signs or silence that they want a change of topic. Thirdly, I will discern the *interrupted debate*: the differences between both sides generate a controversy which gets out of control so that the debate is interrupted. Normally it is one of the opponents who interrupts the debate by leaving the place of communication. Fourthly, the *debate that escalates* and is continued by means of force or physical violence. This would be the case if one challenges the other to fight, threatens to beat him up or ultimately uses physical violence or one of the opponents reports the other to the police respectively to another authority that has the means and power to mediate between the two groups is called for and intervenes,

I would now like to present some of the results of my research, which are best exemplified by the pub. Whether it is national or international politics or social topics - it is hard to think of something that was not talked about in a pub. However, the majority of the reports reflect conversations that took place between individuals having the same political beliefs. It is only in 5.4 % of the discussions written down in the reports I have analyzed that a debate between people with an opposing political background is recorded. Also, politics was not the main topic of conversation when people got together in a pub. In 67.2 % of the reports, the policemen noted that the conversation 'did not turn to any topics of interest'. Very often, people did not have a conversation but just played cards or read a newspaper at hand. Nevertheless, the percentage of reports that recorded a political discussion is high enough to draw some general conclusions.

Let me first turn to that kind of debate that involves a dialogue. This type of verbal conflict – to be found in 68 % of all the discussions, but only in 30 % of the discussions between people of different convictions – can be subdivided into two categories. The first is a debate during which the opponents exchange their ideas but do not reach an agreement. In this case, the reports clearly show that this kind of conclusion was more easily accepted if the people involved in the debate belonged to the same political section. That is why this type of debate is mainly represented by a conversation between people that share the same political beliefs. Consequentially, they talk about political strategies and tactics but do not disagree about axioms of their convictions. Rarely does a discussion end with an agreement. If people do consent at all, it is even rarer that this happens as a result of persuasion. There is no report in which one side is persuaded by the arguments of the other side to discard his own political opinions and consequentially adopts those of the other. On the contrary, if a conflict is about to get out of control, it is overcome by turning to a topic that they agree on. In most cases,

this involves the discussion of a third person or group who has a point of view entirely different from their own and is usually not present during the debate. Both sides therefore form an in-group by means of exclusion.

The debate as monologue (8 % respectively 20 %), which is the second type of political dispute I have discerned, took almost exclusively place among middle-class citizens. As a rule, workers did not deploy this communicative strategy, which is used when one side advocates his position whereas the other side signals by silence or by nonverbal signs that a change of topic is desired.

If working-class citizens did not succeed in accepting an opposing political view, the conflict normally tended to escalate: the debate transformed into a conflict and was interrupted. The way the recorded disputes escalated depended primarily on the social and denominational background of the persons involved. These were mainly disputes between social democrats and anti-semites. If the conflict escalated, it followed a certain pattern. In the first stage, several groups or members of these groups met and recognized each other as political opponents. In a second step, one side challenges the opponent(s) with a provocative utterance or an insult that triggers a comparable reaction. This was followed by more verbal attacks or aggressive nonverbal signs, e.g. beating the fist on the table. However, in the majority of cases the dispute was restricted to a singular provocation and its response. It was rarely continued with more provocative speeches or even arguments. On the contrary, at least one of the sides soon signaled a lack of interest to continue the debate by walking away. This was sometimes accompanied by shouting or utterances of protest, sometimes by threats of violence. 24 % respectively 50 % of all disputes recorded in the reports follow this pattern. If one narrows down the focus to those disputes between persons with opposing political beliefs, it becomes strikingly apparent that this mode of political debate was the most common one. 93 % of all debates between social democrats and their opponents escalated. Contact, provocation and response took place within a time span of no more than 5 minutes.

The fourth category of a political debate - the dispute that is terminated by the intervention of the police or denunciation, is not exemplified by one of the reports! It is important to realize, though, that what holds true for the working-class is not representative of the middle-class. On the contrary, middle-class conservatives and nationalists were more inclined to call the police when a political debate in a pub escalated. Yet, neither middle- nor working-class citizens resorted to direct physical violence in a political debate, even if they met. Not a single dispute recorded in the Hamburg reports is concluded by a fight, the use of knives or even a shooting. Also, none of the autobiographical sources I studied mentions

physical assaults in the context of political disputes.¹⁴ However, physical violence was always an issue during these political disputes. It was quite common to threaten the political opponent with violence and with elimination, even in the literal sense of the word. These radical statements were sometimes uttered by social democrats, sometimes by conservatives or nationalists who disliked verbal debates and favored the elimination of the enemy. Although the only situation in which these radical speeches were voiced by middle-class citizens was usually when they were among themselves during their 'Stammtisch' meeting. But the social democrats knew about these fantasies of elimination, and their press helped to make it public. This should mark a crucial point in the further development of political communication in Germany. The social democrats in particular often justified their unwillingness to begin a dialogue with their political opponents by saying that the latter were too eager to use physical violence.

Causes and Consequences

Mutatis mutandis these results can be transferred to other places of daily interpersonal communication. Preventive silence, tabuization of tricky topics, and the trend to avoid conflicts: these were the central strategies of everyday life communication, not only in the working classes, but also in the middle and the upper classes. Most of the people had already internalized these strategies at school, in the army or at home. It would be an error to interpret these patterns of behaviour as a result of 'Politikferne' or even 'Untertanengeist' as you can read in many researches on the political culture of Germany. On the contrary: at the turn of the 19th century the majority of the German people was politicized: men of all classes went to the elections, read political newspapers, and took part in political discussions. However only when there were exclusively people of the same convictions. The majority of German people thought politically, but did not act politically.

There are different causes of this behaviour. Firstly anthropological causes like fear of isolation. Several sociopsychological studies have shown that the fear of being isolated induces a majority of people to share an opinion even if they are not convinced of it. In consequence of this most of the people tend towards silence if they are in the minority. One must of course bear in mind that this behaviour is changeable depending on the society the

¹⁴ For the use of violence in non-political conflicts see Thomas Lindenberger, *Straßenpolitik. Zur Sozialgeschichte der öffentlichen Ordnung in Berlin 1900 bis 1914*, Bonn 1995.

communicants belong to.¹⁵ So there must be other causes.

One of them is of political nature. In the Wilhelmine ‚Obrigkeitsstaat‘ many people were frightened of being spied on and denounced. This is why the adherents of the social democrats normally did not talk about politics in pubs when there were strangers in the room. The negligence of talking about politics from a socialist point of view could cost a worker his job. The fear of being dismissed by an authoritarian employer or the fear to risk one's career in the administration led many people to keep quiet and to conceal their opinion. But there is still another reason for this behaviour. Keeping quiet was the first thing a new member of a party or a ‚Verein‘ had to learn and to accept. Everybody who wanted to say something had to subject himself to specific regulations. Those party members who offended against these rules were immediately disciplined.¹⁶ You can hardly underestimate the influence of these intraparty rules. They did not only help to internalize a new kind of discipline inside the party, they also helped to ban the use of violence against people of other convictions and other beliefs.

Another cause for the specific patterns of face-to-face communication is the variety and the intensity of conflicts in Wilhelmine Germany. The social, the religious, the political and the ethnic problems were increasing alarmingly, so that silence seemed to be the most appropriate and reasonable strategy of managing conflicts. It would be anachronistic to postulate a behaviour following the rules of a discourse theory as it has been formulated by Jürgen Habermas.¹⁷ On the contrary: in a fragmented society, troubled by a huge number of social, political, religious and ethnic conflicts, it can be senseful to avoid everything that might provoke a conflict with serious consequences or even devastating effects for the living together of the different sections. In a situation as unstable as the Wilhelmine society it fulfilled a rational function to maintain one's silence.

For the development of the Weimar society the results turn out ambivalently. On the one hand this strategy of managing conflicts helped to stabilize the different ‚Milieus‘ and, as

¹⁵ Cf. Solomon E. Asch, Effects of Group Pressure upon the Modification and Distortion of Judgments, *Groups, Leadership and Men. Research in Human Relations*, Reports on Research Sponsored by the Human Relations and Morale Branch of the Office of Naval Research 1945-1950, ed. by Harold Guetzkow, New York 1963 [1951], p. 177-190, Stanley Milgram, Nationality and Conformity, *Scientific American* 205 (decembre 1961), p. 45-51 and Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, *Die Schweigespirale. Öffentliche Meinung – unsere soziale Haut*, München 2001.

¹⁶ Cf. Thomas Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit. Die deutsche Sozialdemokratie vom Vormärz bis zum Sozialistengesetz* (Historisches Forschungszentrum der FES, Reihe Politik- und Gesellschaftsgeschichte 54), Bonn 2000.

¹⁷ Cf. Jürgen Habermas, Wahrheitstheorien [1972], J. H., *Vorstudien und Ergänzungen zur Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, Frankfurt am Main 1984, p. 127-183 and Jürgen Habermas, Was heißt Universalpragmatik? [1976], J. H., *Vorstudien und Ergänzungen zur Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, Frankfurt am

a result, the republic of Weimar.¹⁸ On the other hand this behaviour had serious consequences for the desintegration of the German society. It is certainly an illusion to find always a solution to conflicts in individualized, socially stratified and both culturally and ethnically diverse societies. Yet, the attempt to do so is very relevant for the feeling of unity within a society, even if the conflict does not cease to exist. Communication that does exclusively take place within a group of people sharing the same beliefs only confirms the views represented by this group. On the other hand, if two groups with opposing beliefs begin to communicate, this interaction can have an integrative effect even if these two groups do not reach an agreement. This is primarily due to the fact that this kind of communication makes each group familiar with the formerly unknown beliefs, attitudes and way of life of the political opponent. In addition, it offers the opportunity to practice dealing with conflicts without resorting to the means of violence. Those who have reason to believe that their arguments are strong enough to bring about a change are less likely to use repression in order to reach their aims.

Modern society offers different means of communication for this strategy of integration. There is mass media communication, which enables a broad public to participate in sociopolitical discussions. Moreover, face-to-face communication plays an essential role on the way towards social integration. In general, it has to be assumed that social attitudes like tolerance and empathy are not solely created by the mass media but are generated by everyday experience. Generally speaking, only those people who have found friends and acquaintances in different sections of society discontinue forming prejudiced and over-general judgements. Instead, they begin to develop an understanding for the situation of these people and thus learn to respect them as human beings.¹⁹ Also, it is very probable that only those who have learned to listen to an opposing point of view, to cope with it or to work out compromises, acquire a communicative competence that is sufficient to make them disapprove of violence as an acceptable solution to an existing conflict. Therefore, I do consider everyday communication between individuals from different social, political or religious sections, their capability for dialogue, a crucial prerequisite on the way towards a fully integrated society. This face-to-face communication becomes even more significant in a

Main 1984, p. 353-440.

¹⁸ Cf. Franz Walter/Helge Matthiesen, Milieus in der modernen deutschen Gesellschaftsgeschichte. Ergebnisse und Perspektiven der Forschung, *Anpassung, Verweigerung, Widerstand. Soziale Milieus, Politische Kultur und der Widerstand gegen den Nationalsozialismus in Deutschland im regionalen Vergleich*, ed. by Detlef Schmichen-Ackermann, Berlin 1997, p. 46-75, here p. 55.

¹⁹ Cf. Else Bohnsack, *Flüchtlinge und Einheimische in Schleswig-Holstein. Ergebnisse einer Stichprobenerhebung 1953* (Kieler Studien 38), Kiel 1956, p. 53.

society whose members lack a common bond in form of a shared ideology, an institution or an individual. In other words: the importance of face-to-face communication between people with different backgrounds or convictions is best revealed in a time when ideologies are shattered in the wake of traumatic events, e.g. a lost war or an economic crisis.