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Raise Your Voice!?

German Artists' Protest Campaign #allesdichtmachen and the Question of Freedom of Expression During the Pandemic

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Abstract

Both the Covid-19 pandemic as well as the political and social discussions it forced upon liberal Western democracies on limitations of fundamental rights provide me with the framework for this paper's topic. I will address it through the question of how German artists – in this case mostly TV actors – with the social Media campaign *#allesdichtmachen* drew attention to their situation in times of widespread lockdown and contact restrictions in spring 2021. The question will be whether the constraints of free expression felt by these artists, or the public reactions to their voicing a sense of being unheard, can be captured by the vocabulary of censorship in the narrower or broader sense.

Keywords: Freedom of Expression; Pandemic Restrictions; Social Media; New Censorship Theory

In spring 2021, about one year into the Covid-19 pandemic, an unprecedented and concerted social media campaign – and especially its aftermath in press and TV – brought up a German discourse on freedom of

speech and art that surprisingly outpaced the up to then dominant rants of lateral thinkers and conspiracists who had themselves subscribed to deep state and repression theories, but did not (yet) have a broader impact on the mainstream pandemic discourse. To briefly summarise the situation in Germany before jumping into the matter: after a second major lockdown from October 2020 to February/March 2021 forced all schools, universities, museums, theatres, catering establishments and many other places and institutions of public life, culture and education into an indeterminate shutdown, critical voices repeatedly pointed out that this would have unforeseeable consequences for the individual and collective psychological constitution as well as for cultural and social diversity.[1] For an uncertain period of time the collective thinking spaces of a pluralistically designed society that still perceives itself as a *Kulturnation* were not available as they had been before, or were forced to retreat into other media and spheres of communication.

A final evaluation of this temporary self-seclusion of a late-modern society vis-à-vis its internal and externalised control mechanisms and discourse spaces – which art, theatre, museums and educational institutions after all represent – is still pending. Despite the public and governmental legitimation for securing health institutions and critical infrastructure, the closure of public educational and exchange spaces and social arenas of discourse – which, however, 'only' meant their closing as physical spaces, but not as practices or virtual forms of encounter – certainly represents a serious intervention. From the perspective of the topic of this publication, one should nevertheless hesitate to speak of a process of censorship or self-censorship.

Following the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, I would describe censorship as 'the

changing or the suppression or prohibition of speech or writing that is deemed subversive of the common good' (Anastaplo, 2022)– that is, an authoritative gesture and practice of suppressing oppositional, harmful, punishable or simply inconvenient thought, speech and publishing. When this is – like the liberal censorship theory would assume – *not* done by governmental or other authorised institutions, but if individuals or organised groups voluntarily or involuntarily restrict or classify their own discourse or the discourse of others by agreement or out of anticipatory obedience, we speak rather of self-censorship. Not yet included in this definition is what recent cultural and political studies call New Censorship Theory, which takes processes into account that are acted out by scattered or disseminated non-state actors and that by no means are to be conceived only as repressive and prohibitive, but on the contrary as a 'productive force that creates new forms of discourse, new forms of communication, and new genres of speech', (Bunn, 2015, pp. 25–44, cf p. 26) as Matthew Bunn summarises. Relying on the Marxist, Althusserian and Foucauldian conceptions of society, state and power relations, he asks for the terms and conditions of socially sanctioned communication in late-modern societies. With Bourdieu, the anticipation of such a system of sanctioned communication is the main trigger of structural censorship that brings actors/speakers to 'compromise the expressive extent of their message in accordance with the norms of the field in which they are communicating' (Bunn, 2015, p. 38). This anticipation though can be seen as part of the actual literary, artistic or communicative production – which means nothing less than that artists, authors and speakers cannot be perceived as if they existed in a social vacuum. They are always part of and social actors in a communicative system, often organised like any marketplace is: the artistic production has to be evaluated as a form of labour, as well as the work of their marketers, censors and

readers/consumers – and all of these positions are interchangeable in different situations. 'The true challenge of New Censorship Theory', Matthew Bunn thus concludes, 'is not in questioning the validity [or extending the coverage; MB] of our concept of censorship, but rather in *relativizing the meaning of censorship's opposite*, freedom of speech and of the press' (Bunn, 2015, p. 43; my highlighting). This relativizing means nothing else than the fundamental questioning of an ideal state of non-censorship that may actually never come into existence. The only way – at least in liberal democracies – would be to strive for the highest possible level of freedom of speech.

With these brief preliminaries in mind, I would like to discuss an artistically initiated, but above all politically perceived campaign by 53 German-speaking actors and directors, who on 23 April 2021 launched a series of videos on Youtube and on their own website, which immediately triggered a rarely seen wave of reaction in the media, in politics and the theatre and film scene. Under the hashtag *#allesdichtmachen* – 'closing down everything' – 52 pre-produced videos were distributed and discussed that satirically dealt with the political measures to mitigate the pandemic.[2] All videos, which were between 50 seconds and a maximum of 3 minutes long, begin in roughly the same way: a person in a portrait or semi-close-up shot introduces themself by name and occupation as an actor and then commented from a personal point of view on individual measures such as social distancing, school and theatre lockdowns, self-tests as well as the decisive orientation towards incidence and occupancy figures. In addition, the consequences of these measures such as psychological stress, anxiety, lack of contact, family violence, denunciation and general mistrust are described, whereby these are predominantly presented and consistently played out as positive factors. In their ironic-affirmative reports, the actors claim that the rather

defensively intentioned measures are quite excessive: that social isolation, the restrictions of public life, the challenges of home schooling and home office as well as the deepening division within society into privileged and socially detached strata have their causes and consequences not exclusively in the pandemic itself, but in the measures that are trying to meet it – or rather in their exaggeration. Some of the actors demand, for example, not to open the door to anybody – not even, or especially, to delivery workers – , to lock up one's children and to punish them severely, to test everybody, including unborn babies, twice a day, and to breathe only 'one's own' – and, if necessary, bought – clean air.[3] The level of fear and caution in the population as a whole must also be kept high for the measures to work, said Jan Josef Liefers, one of the heads of the campaign. As a most sarcastic highlight, the TV and movie star Ulrich Tukur demands, that not only theatres, museums and schools, but also grocery stores and supermarkets should be closed in order to obtain the goals of pandemic containment: 'As soon as we are starved in the body and not only in the soul and all dead as a doornail, we also deprive the virus […] of its basis of life. And thus, it returns at last what our planet urgently needs: peace and tranquility – and justice'.[4] Almost all of the videos conclude with the ironic phrase: 'Stay healthy and support the government's Covid policies'.

At first sight, we are dealing here with an artistic form of expressing an opinion that – in the best enlightenment sense – combines political and cultural education with the gesture of criticism and the constructive impulse of optimising the present towards a better future. The means of irony and satire, which admittedly cannot be immediately decoded as such in every single video, seem downright ideal for a thought-provoking impulse in challenging times. Also, the media production and presentation via digital platforms, which made it unnecessary for all participants as well as the

audience to meet directly in person, are appropriately meeting the situation.

However, the initiators obviously did not meet the *zeitgeist* or had miscalculated the effectiveness of such an exaggerating artistic appeal to quite moderate and reasonable political measures. Almost immediately after its publication, extremely critical portrayals of the video project emerged throughout public and private media: the actors were insulted as privileged and underemployed persons who underestimated the conditions in intensive care units and would ridicule or even disavow the many people suffering from Covid-19 and those who had died.[5] The action was described as misguided, inappropriate or even populist in its means and forms of presentation, and those involved were assigned to the milieu of Covid deniers, vaccination opponents, mavericks or right-wing conspiracy theorists. In addition to the demand for justifying statements by the artists involved, various contributions in social media channels, on public television and in private daily newspapers initiated a search for the initiators: the hidden sponsors and the suspected background of the project, steeped in conspiracy theories.[6] Initial reactions even went so far as to threaten those involved with an immediate ban from working in public television and public theatres (which was quickly withdrawn though; see e.g. Tunk; Wilms, 2021; Schwartz, 2021).

It can thus be stated that this project, while opposed to the censorship of public expression, was countered with the means of an – at least threatened – *post-censorship*: a classic 'shitstorm' in the social media, accompanied by private as well as public media commentaries that fundamentally questioned the sense and justification of this criticism of political measures. In response, about half of the participants (27 out of 53 people) withdrew their videos from the website and their names from the campaign within days or weeks

(although they can still be seen on Youtube in some compilations).[7] Public pressure and personal, verbal reactions through social media were followed by *self-censorship* in a second step – although it should be noted that no serious political intervention (in the sense of a state-authoritative censorship) took place at any point. On the contrary, many politicians at both federal and state level immediately stood up for the artists and defended their right to freedom of expression (see e.g. Beug, 2021; di Lorenzo; Parnack, 2021).

Before evaluating these reactions, it is necessary to look at the videos again on a second, substantive level. Here, too, questions of censorship and self-censorship were addressed – and these might have contributed to the unexpected harshness of the reaction. In some of the videos – and most clearly in the case of the most prominent artists involved, who were also identified as initiators or early supporters of the project – there are accusations of a one-sided coverage of the pandemic and, at least in hints, even of a state control of the journalistic media. Accordingly, it is also claimed that a narrative of the inevitability of the political measures to combat the pandemic prevails in the media reports, which does not take note of dissenting opinions or scientific findings, or even deliberately and actively suppresses them – in other words, the project itself thus brought up an implicit accusation of censorship.

Especially in the videos of the very prominent TV actors Jan Josef Liefers, Wotan Wilke Möhring or Nadja Uhl, there is clear evidence of an underlying narrative of enforced submission and obedience to what is necessary, just as there is an impression of strong police enforcement of measures even against reasonable objections. Liefers begins his piece by thanking all the media who ‘tirelessly, responsibly and with a clear stance ensure that the

alarm stays exactly where it belongs: at the very, very top'. He continues,

> Lately, however, I have the feeling that some newspapers are beginning to reactivate old notions of critical journalism that were thought to have been overcome. That's something we have to fight back against. We must not allow that to happen. We should just agree with everything and do what we are told. Only in this way will we get through the pandemic well.[8]

Interestingly enough, in the case of such actors in particular, who grew up in the GDR, such as Liefers and Uhl, but also Jörg Bundschuh, Thorsten Merten and Martin Brambach – some of whom were actively involved in the peaceful revolution of 1989/90 – a narrative appears of authoritative statehood and controlled propaganda against which it became necessary to actively rebel (or in the ironic reversal in the videos: to consent to without objection). Uhl expresses in her piece the joy to have learned to be silent again in the pandemic and that the truth is allowed to be simple again – which she illustrates with reference to the fairy tale *The Emperor's New Clothes* (*Des Kaisers neue Kleider*), shortened by the ending in which a child points out that he is naked. When no one says anything anymore – according to her subtext – everyone will be happy and satisfied. Thorsten Merten demands in his video large apartments and villas for everyone, so that all can keep enough distance from each other. And Nina Gummich states,

> Having your own opinion is indeed blatantly lacking in solidarity at the moment, leads to more and more infected people and unsettles not only myself, but also my entire environment. And that certainly shouldn't be the case. It's best for all of us if we simply echo

> whatever the Federal Government assigns us to do. Because that's the only way we'll be able to feel a sense of solidarity and security in the community again. And it's better for our careers, too. […] No opinion is the best opinion.[9]

Martin Brambach confesses that he 'started pointing fingers at other people in solidarity over the past year'. He feels most comfortable with clear rules about which he can also lecture others in order to teach them the errors of their ways.

These judgmental denunciations and the invocation of clearly distinguishable binaries such as truth and lie, 'those' up there and 'us' down here, the compulsion to agree or the duty of self-criticism are, in my opinion, not coincidentally reminiscent of George Orwell's novel *1984*.[10] The paradigm of Orwellian 'thought-crime' underlying many of the videos even seems to me to be constitutive of the project's agenda: 'Don't get caught up by the Big Brothers of the present' the actors seem to be murmuring behind their actual text. 'Start thinking for yourself and making your own decisions'. As a further highlight in this direction, Wotan Wilke Möhring postulates in his video that 'negative is positive' and that we accordingly just see everything wrong: 'If negative [as a test result, MB] is positive, then we are not doing badly at all, but well. Then the measures are not wrong, but right. And then I'm not inside at all, but outside. So, stay positive'.[11]

However, this subversive self-stylisation as lone fighters against a police state, this auto-positioning as the only ones who are perceiving things right in a fundamentally wrong system and who are seeing through them was not only radically inappropriate to the situation in Germany in 2021 – because the undoubtedly existing restrictions on fundamental rights are in no way

comparable to politically authoritarian regimes like the GDR or the Soviet Union. Rather, this self-victimising narrative, oblivious to history, is also one that has since long been propagated by right-wing populist parties and conspiracy-believing movements around the globe: that there is only one centrally controlled media mainstream where dissenting opinions are suppressed, which is why an underground rebellion of political and media activism (up to and including terrorism) seems unavoidable.[12] Last but not least, such self-stylisation of privileged artists in an affluent industrial state flies in the face of the actual limitations of independent reporting in politically much less liberal systems of the present.

So, what the project fundamentally lacks is any empathy towards those actually affected by the pandemic – not only in Germany – , people who should not be portrayed as mindless victims of political and medical decisions over their heads. Moreover, it lacks empathy for the supposedly detached 'political class', which has to make its decisions under maximum pressure from all directions and in an ongoing process. This, of course, does not exempt them from criticism, and any form of public discourse on the Covid measures is as welcome as it is necessary. However, the generally praiseworthy concern behind *#allesdichtmachen* – to make heard different positions on the pandemic situation and the measures that respond to it – had been disavowed from the outset by the simultaneous assertion of a media master narrative and a fundamentally manipulative or politically tampered mainstream position. The confrontational positioning vis-à-vis an Orwellian authoritarian system that uses 'thought-police' and 'new-speak' to suppress minority opinions has – it needs to be noted – not been helpful to the cause of a pluralistic discussion of pandemic containment measures, especially with regard to the cultural sector (see e.g. 'Kulturverbände zu #allesdichtmachen-Videos: Sie machen uns das Leben sehr, sehr schwer',

Der Spiegel, 2021; Sternberg, 2021).

In the end, the actors themselves have not taken the self-assertive position of the child from the fairy tale, who acknowledges the emperor's nakedness from the midst of society and thus dissolves it into community-building laughter. Rather, from the outset they have already anticipated Winston Smith's radically hostile position in Orwell's *1984* and are now denouncing the imminent re-education to 'double-think' and 'new-speak'. In doing so, however, they artificially limit themselves to extremes: either fundamental opposition, or the complete abandonment of all resistance.[13] In this respect, the harsh reactions to the video campaign were hardly surprising in my opinion: the attacked media defended themselves against the absurd accusation of a centralised control of opinion, those affected by the health crisis and their doctors scandalised the unsympathetic tenor of the campaign, and those artists who were actually affected by income losses and who, unlike the TV actors, had no way of earning a living during the lockdown, pointed to the project's lack of solidarity with other professional groups. On the other side, the right-wing party AfD and various lateral thinking initiatives immediately applauded the action, as it corresponded to their self-perception as political underdogs and those 'who see the big picture'.[14] Also, as the organisers pointed out in further interviews and statements, a lot of personal messages and comments on the action (especially directly below the Youtube videos) supported them and thanked them for speaking their mind.[15]

So, to conclude – was there any censorship at work at all? Can, with the New Censorship Theory, any part of the process be described as censorship – especially in the productive sense that Matthew Bunn argued for? I'd say yes, and no, at the same time. Probably, it depends on the actor's

perspective: Who is looking at which part of the discussion with which interest? The initiators had the intention to address the measures of pandemic containment as too one-sided and excessive. They did this by using public media as well as privatised societal discourse and addressing an economy of attention – but at the same time using accusations of 'You can't speak your mind properly in this society'. Actually, none of the videos was censored by anybody (also not by Youtube, as had been the case in other situations[16]) other than by those contributors who withdrew their contributions after the first public reactions. This can of course be seen as self-censorship in the sense of Bourdieu as to 'compromise the expressive extent of their message in accordance with the norms of the field in which they are communicating' (Bunn, 2015, p. 38). Nonetheless, they were not hindered or in any way compromised by others in their freedom of expression – as far as this term and concept can reach in an interdependent economy of attention.

On the side of public reactions to the project, there have indeed been calls for censorship or other, effective sanctions for the artists – from requests for dismissal from public television to actual murder threats.[17] This is in no way acceptable in a liberal democracy and rightly punished as defamation or threats to commit a crime. Nevertheless, the very public discussion of such reactions – and their overwhelming rejection – demonstrated the lively and unmoderated discourse that took place even under the constrained conditions of the pandemic. In this context, the most euphemistic application of an accusation of censorship came from those groups that actually hoped to benefit from it: right-wing activists, lateral thinkers and other outliers who used the opportunity to discredit not only state measures but also the so-called 'mainstream media', the medical system and other public institutions and to warn of a 'return to the GDR 2.0'.[18] Their demand for unrestricted

freedom of expression usually goes along the lines of ‘One may well still say that’, insinuating that actual freedom of speech does not (no longer or not yet) exist and that there should be no consequences and responsibility for expressing one’s mind. One of the early comments from Marina Weisband, a digital activist, publicist and politician of Jewish-Ukrainian origin, addresses this directly in her reaction to the actors’ videos:

> You have chosen to express your criticism in a way that anti-Semites like Attila Hildmann celebrate and share. The fact that people are now giving you a hard time for this does not mean that freedom of speech in Germany is dying. What you get is not censorship, what you get is not a mob, what you get *is* freedom of expression.[19]

Freedom of expression in all its imperfections, one might add – not as an unquestionable concept and idealised principle, but as a critical instrument of error and correction, of public discourse and dispute, as an unlimited resource of wisdom and stupidity, of satire and seriousness, and of a personal as well as societal questioning of the given.

Ultimately, the project’s clear reference to censorship was perhaps a useful and necessary way to show how decentralised opinion-forming processes work in a digital environment and in the free media of a liberal Western society: not in the form of a direct utterance followed by its suppression or banning, but as a multitude of statements, comments, rebuttals, and parodies, as well as expressions of approval, support, and affirmation, to no identifiable end. But to answer the question that gave my contribution its title: Should artists raise their voice at all? Absolutely! After all, that is

precisely one self-assigned and quite important task of art, throughout history and also and especially in times of crisis: to question what seems to be the norm and, without fear of censorship and scissors in one's own mind, to rethink life, together, as a community.

And if – to get back to the bedtime story of *The Emperor's New Clothes* – the emperor turns out to be naked in the process, we should all laugh and lend him a coat – because we made him emperor in the first place and, in any case, we don't wear much more than he does.

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Footnotes

1. See for example the regular statements of the Deutscher Kulturrat for estimations of the consequences of cultural lockdowns at their webpage: https://www.kulturrat.de/thema/corona-vs-kultur/lageeinschaetzung-kultur/ as well as the thematic issues of their magazine *Politik & Kultur*, issues 4/20, 7-8/20 and 3/21, available at https://www.kulturrat.de/publikationen/zeitung-politik-kultur/ [accessed: 25.11.2022].
2. See the project's website, as of 04/22/2021 (via Wayback Machine): https://web.archive.org/web/20210422162656/https://allesdichtmachen.de/ [accessed: 25.11.2022]. As of November 2022, the domain allesdichtmachen.de is used by another group of people that wants to document and discuss consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic on German and global economy. While this may be seen as an indirect result of the *#allesdichtmachen* campaign, there is no obvious link to the original organisers.
3. As in this order in the videos by/with e.g. Heike Makatsch (door answering), Felix Klare or Cem Ali Gültekin (children's punishment), Miriam Stein (tests), and Christine Sommer & Martin Brambach (air).
4. My translation of: 'Sind wir erst am Leibe und nicht nur an der Seele verhungert und allesamt mausetot, entziehen wir auch dem Virus […] die Lebensgrundlage. Und so kehrt endlich zurück, was unser Planet dringend benötigt: Ruhe und Frieden – und Gerechtigkeit'. Cited after https: https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=KQX79GqSAME [accessed: 25.11.2022].
5. As an English report on the topic see e.g.: Grenier, 2021. Further, as some examples for balancing assessments, not only from German media, all of 23.04.2021: Scharfenberg; 'Schauspieler protestieren mit #AllesDichtmachen gegen Lockdown'; 'Schauspieler sorgen mit der Aktion "Alles dicht machen" für Aufsehen'; Brodkorb.
6. Most prominently by the journalists Moritz Dickentmann (2021) and Hannes Soltau, Andreas Busche & Julius Geiler (2021). The latter apologised later for their quick and careless accusations, although still insisting on the suspected connections of the project network to lateral thinkers and right-wing activists. See 'In eigener Sache: Unsere Berichterstattung zu #allesdichtmachen', 2021.
7. Officially, there are still 27 videos online, compiled in this YouTube Playlist: https://www.YouTube.com/playlist?list=PLJZme9ZBIhG9gOB4uLw5vO2v5SSxF71iw [accessed: 25.11.2022].
8. My translation of: 'Danke an alle Medien unseres Landes, die seit über einem Jahr unermüdlich, verantwortungsvoll und mit klarer Haltung dafür sorgen, dass der Alarm genau da bleibt, wo er hingehört: nämlich ganz, ganz oben. […] In letzter Zeit habe ich aber

das Gefühl, dass einige Zeitungen damit beginnen, alte, überwunden geglaubte Vorstellungen von kritischem Journalismus wieder aufleben zu lassen. Dagegen müssen wir uns wehren. Das dürfen wir nicht zulassen. Wir sollten einfach nur allem zustimmen und tun, was man uns sagt. Nur so kommen wir gut durch die Pandemie'. Cited after https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=Ux_j8ALQiQY [accessed: 25.11.2022].
9. My translation of: 'Eine eigene Meinung zu haben ist momentan tatsächlich krass unsolidarisch, führt zu immer mehr Infizierten und verunsichert nicht nur mich selbst, sondern auch mein gesamtes Umfeld. Und das muss ja nicht sein. Es ist für uns alle am besten, wenn wir einfach das wiedergeben, was uns von der Bundesregierung aufgetragen wird. Denn nur so können wir uns in der Gemeinschaft wieder solidarisch und aufgehoben fühlen. Und für die Karriere ist es auch besser. […] Keine Meinung ist die beste Meinung'. Cited after: https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=0WHnxeS3Fi0 [accessed: 25.11.2022].
10. Not by coincidence, I guess, the novel was a bestseller during the pandemic, with new editions, two new translations into German in 2021, and countless re-uploads of Anderson's and Rutherford's 1956 and 1984 movies on YouTube, which were deleted again for copyright reasons.
11. My translation of: 'Wenn negativ [als ein Testergebnis, MB] positiv ist, dann geht's uns gar nicht schlecht, sondern gut. Dann sind die Maßnahmen nicht falsch, sondern richtig. Und dann bin ich gar nicht drinnen, sondern draußen. Also, bleiben Sie positiv'. Cited after: https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=j4LOGhk5o_I [accessed: 25.11.2022].
12. Interestingly, there are also media and communication scholars who propagate this opinion in recent publications – one of them directly takes the *#allesdichtmachen* campaign into focus. See Meyen, 2021, pp. 99–115; Meyen, 2021A; Meyen, Gansel, Gordeeva, 2022.
13. On a side note, some initiators have since cultivated an oppositional, or rather maverick political gestus and have started a new video series under the title *#allesaufdentisch* – by which, however, they have completely left the realm of art and artistic freedom. See e.g. 'Neue umstrittene Videoaktion zur Corona-Pandemie mit Volker Bruch', 2021; Wohlrath, 2021.
14. See a collection of reactions, tweets and other social media comments in Hanselle, 2021; 'Die Twitterreaktionen auf #allesdichtmachen', 2021.
15. See e.g. the interview with Jan Josef Liefers in the Radio Bremen talk-show '3nach9', 24.09.2021, https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=GYVY_C1jMP8 or the text by one of the initiators, the director D. Brüggemann (2021).
16. See e.g. '#allesaufdentisch": YouTube sperrt erneut ein Video – und den ganzen Kanal', *RND*, 12.01.2022, https://www.rnd.de/politik/youtube-allesaufdentisch-kanal-gesperrt-NSJUXCTWRN3MRHDMKGP7IK7TPE.html [accessed: 25.11.2022].
17. In the case of Meret Becker, who was one of the first to distance herself from the project as a reaction to the social media storm, which followed its launch during the night of 22.04.2021.
18. See e.g. an interview of the weekly paper of the German New Right *Junge Freiheit* with the former civil rights activist in the GDR, Vera Lengsfeld, who not only defends the action but also compares recent Germany with the GDR regime – a common topos across the heterogeneous strains of lateral movements who oppose the Covid mitigation strategies. See: Schwarz, 2021). Interestingly, the *#allesdichtmachen* action made it also into the ‚timeline of relevant events' (Zeitstrahl relevanter Ereignisse) of the 'Special Report on Conspiracy Myths and "Corona Deniers"' ('Sonderbericht zu Verschwörungsmythen und

“Corona-Leugnern”’) of the Ministry of the Interior of North Rhine-Westfalia, May 2021, https://www.im.nrw/system/files/media/document/file/Sonderbericht_2021_Verschwoerungsmythen_und_Corona-Leugner.pdf, p. 178 [accessed: 25.11.2022].
19. My translation of: ‘Ihr habt euch entschieden, eure Kritik auf eine Weise zu äußern, die Antisemiten wie Attila Hildmann abfeiern und teilen. Dass Leute euch dafür jetzt Gegenwind geben, bedeutet nicht, dass die Meinungsfreiheit in Deutschland stirbt. Was ihr abbekommt, ist keine Zensur, was ihr abbekommt, ist kein Mob, was ihr abbekommt *ist* Meinungsfreiheit’. My highlighting. Cited after https://twitter.com/Afelia/status/1385558177715048457 [accessed: 25.11.2022].

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