

LONELINESS AND TOTALITARIANISM IN THE WALL

Political analysis of Roger Waters' The Wall

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Tämän tutkimuksen aineisto koostuu pääasiassa kahdesta elokuvasta: musikaali elokuva *Pink Floyd the Wall* (1982) ja konserttitalenne *Roger Waters' the Wall* (2014). Nämä kaksi elokuvaa ovat eri vuosikymmenenä totutettuja versioita samasta narratiivista. *The Wall* narratiivi on ajan kuluessa muuttunut yhä poliittisemmäksi sisällössään ja toteutuksessaan. Pinnallisin puolin se kertoo tarinan eristäytyneestä rock tähdestä, mutta abstraktilla tasolla se kuvaa modernia yksinäisyyttä ja totalitarismia. Tutkimukseni päämääränä on selvittää mikä on narratiivin välittämän totalitarismin kuvan poliittinen viesti.

Narratiivin totalitarismin teemaa olen lähestynyt Hannah Arendtin poliittisen teorian näkökulmasta. Hyödynnän erityisesti hänen teoksiaan *The Origins of Totalitarianism* ja *The Human Condition*. Itse narratiivin juonen ja symboliikan tulkintaan olen pääasiassa hyödyntänyt Northrop Fryen narratiivista teoriaa, jonka hän esittää teoksessa *Anatomy of Criticism*. Olen pyrkinyt yhdistämään nämä kaksi eri näkökulmaa (poliittinen ja narratiivinen) lähestymällä aineiston tulkintaa hermeneuttisesti. Hermeneutiikan edustajina olen hyödyntänyt pääasiassa Hans Georg Gadamerin teosta *Truth and Method*.

Olen jakanut analyysin kolmeen pääkappaleeseen. Ensimmäinen kappale *Bulding the Wall* käsittelee narratiivissa esiintyviä yksinäisyyden ja totalitarismin johtavia yhteiskunnallisia syitä. Toinen kappale *Behind the Wall* tulkitsee narratiivissa välitettyä yksinäisyyden ja totalitarismin kuvaa ja niiden välistä yhteyttä. Kolmannessa kappaleessa tulkitset millaisia ratkaisuja narratiivi esittää totalitarismin ja yksinäisyyden vastustamiseksi.

Tutkimukseni valossa narratiivissa kuvattu yksinäisyys ja totalitarismi näyttävät toistensa metaforana. Tutkimukseni osoittaa, että *The Wall* narratiivin viimeisin versio hyödyntää totalitarismin kuvastoa nykyisten hallintojen toimien kritisointiin. Narratiivin keskeisin viesti kehottaa ihmisiä tämänkaltaisten totalitarististen toimien tarkkailuun ja kollektiiviseen vastustamiseen.

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Introduction

What prepares men for totalitarian domination in the non-totalitarian world is the fact that loneliness, once a borderline experience usually suffered in certain marginal social conditions like old age, has become an everyday experience of the evergrowing masses of our century. (Arendt 1967, 478).

In 1979 English rock band Pink Floyd released their album *The Wall*, which can be considered one of the most unique interpretations of totalitarianism and modernity in the late 20th century popular culture. The album was also made into a musical film *Pink Floyd the Wall* directed by Alan Parker and released in 1982. *The Wall* show has also been performed live in course of several tours: the first by Pink Floyd in 1980–1981 and later twice by Roger Waters¹ first in 1990 when he performed *The Wall* show in Berlin only eight months after the fall of Berlin Wall. *The Wall Live* tour (2010–2013) was yet the most political expression of the original narrative, as Waters took *The Wall* show on the road making it the world's highest grossing tour for a solo musician. In this research, I have studied the motion picture *Pink Floyd the Wall* (1982) and the later live adaptation *The Wall Live* tour (2010–2013), which was filmed and released as a motion picture *Roger Waters' the Wall* (2014). In *The Wall Live* tour the narrative is presented in its most contemporary form relating to more recent events. However, for understanding the narrative as a whole *Pink Floyd the Wall* (1982) needs to be addressed as well. The imagery of the films and the accompanying music move from depicting personal isolation and loneliness to portraying a raging totalitarian movement, creating a perfect metaphor for political philosopher Hannah Arendt's conviction that mass experience of loneliness is strongly connected to totalitarianism.

The first time I saw the film *Pink Floyd the Wall* as a young man, I thought it was both evocative and ambiguous. I found the totalitarian symbolism and the grinding depiction of loneliness intriguing, but I really could not clearly make out how the two were connected. Coming across the writings of Arendt on totalitarianism later in my academic life I was reminded of the questions that the film had provoked in me and I felt like I might now have some answers.

¹ The founding member of the band and the writer of *The Wall* album and the screenplay of the film *Pink Floyd the Wall*

Conducting political research on this specific piece of popular culture is meaningful for two reasons. Firstly, it has especially political subject matter. Popular artists usually have some sort of political message as part of their work. However, it is debatable whether the message is there for the sake of art or the art is used as a vessel to transmit the message. It is probably safe to assume that the two exist in symbiosis with one another, and one can always be more highlighted compared to other depending on the intention of the artist or ultimately on the interpretation of the viewer. Secondly, *The Wall* has become extremely popular, which means it has been widely viewed and moreover it is still discussed and reinterpreted again and again. The band *Pink Floyd* involved in my research has sold more than 250 million albums worldwide, whereas Roger Waters' *The Wall Live* show was performed 219 times to over four million fans (Graff 2015). Artists, who have fame and artistic resources, can bring to light important political problems. Furthermore, they can make their own interpretation of the world be heard and accepted within their wide audience. Thus, they can be viewed as powerful influencers of public opinion, whose views are worthwhile to study. Thus, I believe it is important to research the political message behind *The Wall*. The research question of my study is what is the political meaning behind the depiction of totalitarianism in *The Wall* narrative? This involves two phases: first, I need to answer how totalitarianism is depicted in the narrative and second what is the political message of this depiction. For attaining this goal several different methodological elements need to be applied. In the next chapter I discuss my approach in more detail.

Approach and Previous Research

Totalitarianism has been my main focus in interpreting *The Wall* narrative. For gaining a viewpoint on the relevant political content I have leaned on the political thought of Hannah Arendt, and mostly on her interpretation of totalitarianism presented in the book *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. The book is divided into three parts. The first one discusses antisemitism, the second imperialism and the third totalitarianism. Antisemitism and imperialism are for Arendt the roots of totalitarianism. Arendt's main argument is that totalitarianism is novel form of government, which was brought on by development of colonial imperialism and antisemitism. The main difference to earlier forms of tyranny lies in the fact that instead of using terror on political adversaries, totalitarianism used terror to subjugate masses of people in the service of processes of nature or economics. Though the Nazi regime might have been the main inspiration for the book, Arendt decides to take into consideration the Soviet regime as well. Arendt looks at Nazism and Bolshevism as two example of the same phenomenon. (Arendt 1967.) Though *The Origins of Totalitarianism* is the main theoretical source for my interpretation, I have also viewed Arendt's other books such as *The Human Condition* and *Men in Dark Times* to understand how modernity is connected to totalitarianism in her thinking.

Totalitarianism in culture has been studied to some extent. Totalitarianism has been a very popular theme in western literature. The constructed meaning of totalitarianism in literature has attracted scholarly attention for example Abbot Gleason's (1984) "*Totalitarianism*" in 1984 and Mario Varricchio's (1999) *Power of Images/ Images of Power in Brave New World and Nineteen Eighty-Four*. What has been neglected is new ways of expressing narratives about totalitarianism, in film and music. Aldous Huxley's (1932) novel *Brave New World* and George Orwell's (1949) *Nineteen Eighty-Four* have clearly been inspiration to Waters. There are a few references to these novels, especially to latter in *The Wall* narrative. Therefore, these novels are of some interest to my study as well.

However, the theme of totalitarianism within *The Wall* hasn't gone completely unnoticed. Phillip Jenkins, a historian, has also had his emphasis on totalitarianism to some extent in his article *Bricks in the Wall: An interpretation of Pink Floyd's The Wall*. Jenkins interprets Roger Water's 1990 *The Wall* show in Berlin after the fall of the Berlin Wall and in such context avoiding perspective of totalitarianism is impossible. Jenkins (1996, 205) calls Pink Floyd's the Wall "a universal symbol of paranoia, of schizophrenia, and (externally) of totalitarianism". This supports my

assumption that totalitarianism is central theme for the narrative. Though Jenkins makes some convincing arguments, his mostly historical and psychological analysis isn't very in depth with the narrative, which is briefly interpreted in light of religious metaphors. However, I do join with his main argument that "it would be difficult to find a modern work which better epitomizes and celebrates the fall of totalitarian systems" (Jenkins 1996, 213).

Philip Rose has studied the concept albums made by Pink Floyd and Roger Waters. His study focuses mainly on the three albums that preceded *The Wall: The Dark Side of the Moon* (1973), *Wish You Were Here* (1975) and *The Animals* (1977). However, *The Wall* album is left mostly undiscussed by Rose, who seems to be able to get more than enough meaning out of the three albums. Some insights to the lyrics of *The Wall* album is offered by Bret Urick who is the writer and upholder of a website *Pink Floyd the Wall Complete Analysis*. Though Urick's website might not count as an academic source, it still is valid criticism. As an English major Urick has applied methods of literary criticism to the album. Though both of these sources are of great help, they have a different focus compared to my research, which differs in two ways. First of all, the material I study consists of video material, whereas Rose and Urick are mainly focused on audio and lyrics. This will add a more visual edge to my focus. Secondly, as I am making political research, my criticism is more politically directed. The closest to political interpretation of *The Wall* comes the study *Roger Waters Poetry of the Absent Father: British Identity in Pink Floyd's The Wall* by Jorge Sacido Romero and Luis Miguel Varela Cabo (2006). They have viewed Pink Floyd's *The Wall* together with Pink Floyd's following album *The Final Cut* (1983) as a reflection of British postwar identity. I have discussed their work in more detail in the analysis.

The previous studies described above have applied various approaches to the matter. The variety of methodologies probably has to do with the multimedia nature of the material. The methodology of this study consists of three different elements: (a) narrative theory, (b) political theory and (c) hermeneutics. As we are dealing with material, which can be considered as a piece of narrative art, much like opera or theatre, criticism is a natural academic way to approach the object. For understanding (a) the narrative element, I rely on literary criticist Northrop Frye's narrative theory. Especially his thought on symbols, presented in his famous *Anatomy of Criticism*, are extremely useful in interpreting the rich symbolism of *The Wall* narrative.

As this is political research, I need to have a deep understanding of the political themes involved in the narrative. The (b) political theory in this study consists mostly on Hannah Arendt's writing as she discusses the same themes (modernity, consumption, totalitarianism, loneliness etc.) as *The Wall* narrative involved in my study. According to Margaret Canovan, one of the contemporary

interpreters of Arendt's thought, Arendt's intention in telling the story of modernity was to reveal meaning. Many of Arendt's commentators have emphasized on her belief that we can grasp experience more adequately through stories than through the more conventional methods of social science. (Canovan 1995, 96.) Arendt's interest in aesthetics and insightful emphasis on the importance of telling stories make her a good theorist in other than just political aspects. Nevertheless, besides these themes there are no apparent connection between the narrative I am studying and the political theory of Hannah Arendt. Though Arendt did occasionally involve herself in commenting and interpreting many cultural objects such as paintings, novels and even films², she never heard the album nor saw the film *Pink Floyd the Wall*, as she died in 1975. Probably she would have not even been interested in them as in her essay *The Crisis in Culture* (1977) she was more interested in high culture than popular culture of her time. The other way around, it is hard to say whether Waters has read any books of Arendt and possibly become inspired by them.

Nevertheless, Waters and Arendt share the same century and similar concerns about it. By (3) hermeneutical approach I wish to make the narrative and the political theory discuss with each other. The most important theorists of hermeneutical view in 20th century would be Hans Georg Gadamer. In the introduction to his magnum opus *Truth and Method* Gadamer (2004, xx) states that the phenomenon of hermeneutics isn't a problem of method at all as it isn't concerned with a method of understanding by means of which texts are subjected to scientific investigation. According to Dieter Misgeld and Graeme Nicholson³ Gadamer understood *applicatio* in its ancient meaning: joining or attaching oneself to a thing. Only later did the concept get its connotation from the world of engineering and natural science, where a theory is used to reach a certain end. (Misgeld & Nicholson 1992, vii.) This view is also visible in Gadamer's view on the circle of understanding. He follows his teacher Martin Heidegger in stating that the circle of understanding "is neither subjective nor objective, but describes understanding as the interplay of the movement of tradition and the movement of the interpreter. The anticipation of meaning or what Gadamer calls foreconception of completeness, which guides the understanding of interpreter isn't subjective, "but proceeds from the commonality that binds us to the tradition." (Gadamer 2004, 293.)

In my study, I have also relied on Lawrence Kramer, who has written on musical hermeneutics, approach used by Rose in his study, and it should work more than well on the subject of this study as well. Musical hermeneutics might also come quite close to audiovisual hermeneutics.

²In the book *Doing Aesthetics with Arendt* Cecilia Sjöholm (2015) discusses most of Arendt's written pieces of criticism, and especially her comments on Chaplin's films

³ Dieter Misgeld and Graeme Nicholson are the editors of Gadamer's book *Hans-Georg Gadamer on Education, Poetry, and History: Applied Hermeneutics*

This is a term used by Kimi Kärki, who has studied The Wall tour (1980–1981) from the historical point of view. He focuses on how the development of audiovisual technology enabled Pink Floyd to express narratives in new ways. (Kärki 2004.) Audiovisual hermeneutics for Kärki (2004, 182) is a method to access rock performance as a cultural phenomenon using all the available sources to understand it. Like Kärki, I have used multiple sources in my interpretation of *The Wall* narrative: films, songs, recorded interviews, poems, written criticism, narrative theory etc.

I have primarily considered Kramer's book *Interpreting Music* as a guide of how to apply hermeneutics on musical element of my material. My aim is to understand the audio-visual material in a comprehensive manner, though moving pictures and words might at some points take a more dominant role. However, it is useful to keep in mind Kramer's notion that "words and images do not constitute musical meaning; they open toward it". Kramer points out that music isn't any different from novels, paintings or movies, which share the same kind of culturally mediated immediacy and which become meaningful only indirectly or by Kramer's words in means of detours, which sometime involve other symbolic media. (Kramer 2011, 15.) When it comes to *The Wall* and performance of Pink Floyd this is especially true:

"their performance is an excellent example of 'Gesamtkunstwerk', to use the composer Richard Wagner's term: a unified work of art, where music and visual presentation are fused to form as total an experience as possible." (Kärki 2001, 181).

Kramer (2011, 20) also stresses the importance of the whole experience by stating that "there are no musical works apart from the constantly changing frameworks in which we play and hear them." Nevertheless, Kramer is not ready to let music be demoted to the role of only supporting the meaning communicated more clearly by other medias. According to Kramer common objection to musical hermeneutics has been to deny the significant existence of communicative musical meaning, as what matters in music cannot often be paraphrased; it is somewhat ineffable (Kramer 2011, 13). To this Kramer answers:

Our emotional, sexual, and spiritual experiences, our encounters with memory and desire, our confrontations with history and mortality, all involve more than we can ever hope to represent or articulate fully, but for that very reason they invite us to do what we can. Why should music be any different? (Kramer 2011, 13–14.)

In my analysis I have communicated some of the musical elements of the film I find meaningful and relevant, but I have avoided getting too tied up with the technical terminology of musicology.

Kramer, is not only concerned with defending musical hermeneutics, but he also wants to take part in redefining hermeneutics altogether, as he claims that his “book about what hermeneutics can do for music is also about what music can do for hermeneutics, which needs some redoing.” (Kramer 2011, 1). Naturally, Kramer starts by discussing Gadamer. He is rather critical towards Gadamer’s clinging on tradition to the detriment of subjectivity:

Just beneath the surface, Gadamer is as suspicious of subjectivity as the partisans of objective science he constantly attacks. His depersonalized mode of interpretation overvalues authority, fetishizes tradition, and idealizes consensus while giving no place to dissent or divergence. His remarks on the subject sometimes sound like a wicked satire on the figure of the German Professor — except that he means them. The result is an unwitting parody of the famous hermeneutic circle. (Kramer 2011, 4.)

However, for Gadamer tradition isn’t a permanent precondition of understanding, but we rather “produce it ourselves inasmuch as we understand, participate in the evolution of tradition, and hence further determine it ourselves” (Gadamer 2004, 293). This line of thought allows Gadamer to claim that interpretation happens somewhere between or beyond subjective and objective. Thus, to some extent we are free to make, so to speak, our own fore-conception to the matter. According to Gadamer this fore-understanding is determined by specific content of the text. Gadamer puts this as follows:

Here again we see that understanding means, primarily, to understand the content of what is said, and only secondarily to isolate and understand another's meaning as such. Hence the most basic of all hermeneutic preconditions remains one's own fore-understanding, which comes from being concerned with the same subject. This is what determines what can be realized as unified meaning and thus determines how the foreconception of completeness is applied. (Gadamer 2004, 293–294).

From this perspective it becomes intelligible to apply Arendt’s ideas on *The Wall* narrative as they share a specific content. A great deal of my fore-understanding of the subject, *The Wall* narrative, is based on both the previous studies on the subject and the thinking of Hannah Arendt, which is justifiable by the specific content. I’d also like to highlight one aspect of hermeneutical thinking that is greatly important in my research. Kramer (2011, 30) claims that “interpretation does not invent the objects of its knowledge, but it does inform and modify them.” As the Wall narrative is the main object of my interpretation it becomes modified and informed, and more precisely it becomes informed by Arendt’s conception of totalitarianism. This is shown visually on *Figure 1* which portrays the overall view of my methodology.

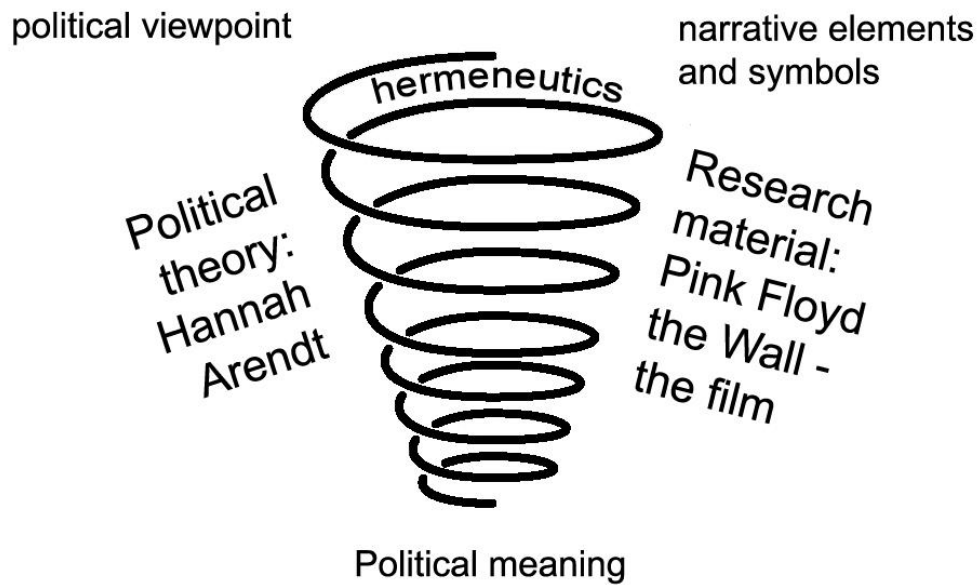


Figure 1. General view of my approach

In conclusion, my approach gathers under it the political element and narrative element, which are brought together by hermeneutical circle of understanding, in which the interpretation becomes leads towards the main goal: revealing political meaning from the material, to understand it in a political way. The relevance of such effort might be questioned by claiming it does not reveal anything from the real world. However, object of interpretation is not the world, at least not directly. Interpretation, according to Kramer (2011, 30), “addresses itself to process of symbolization and the artifacts they produce.” In this case the symbolization refers to the creative process of the artists, mainly Waters, and the artifact is the finished film or performance. This artifact, which is being interpreted, is in itself an interpretation, “a way of making sense of the world” (ibid.). My view is that both Arendt and Waters are trying to make sense of the world in much the same way, but just by different medias. My methodological view becomes quite well concluded in Kramer’s words “What interpretation seeks to know about the world is not how it is, but how it is recognized, experienced, represented, addressed, symbolized” (Kramer 2011, 29).

In my analysis, I have switched between the two adaptations of the narrative, the film (1982) and the tour (2010–2013), depending on which one expresses the narrative in more revelatory way for my study. My analysis has been divided into three chapters: *Building the Wall*, *Behind the Wall* and *Tearing Down the Wall*. Each chapter represents a different phase in the narrative where I can reflect it on different thoughts of Arendt. In the chapter *Building the Wall* my emphasis is on the elements and the process which enable totalitarianism. In the second chapter of analysis *Behind the Wall* I discuss the theme of loneliness and the theme of totalitarianism which are metaphorically

connected with one another. The last chapter of analysis discusses the conclusion of the narrative together with the views of what there is to do against totalitarianism provided by both Waters and Arendt.

Analysis: The Two Levels of the Narrative

It is true that storytelling reveals meaning without committing the error of defining it [. . .]
(Arendt 1995, 105)

I start my analysis with briefly describing my research material in relation to my theoretical approach. The first step would be to illustrate what sort of narrative *The Wall* is. Making use of Frye's distinction between mythos and ethos of the narrative is helpful. Essentially, mythos involves the plot of the narrative and usually it is the shaping principle in genres such as novels or plays. (Frye 1990, 51.) Kärki sums up the mythos of *The Wall* narrative quite well. According to him it consists of three plots, which are tied together:

First of all, *The Wall* was about Waters' childhood, disappointments in school, and his father's death in 1944 at Anzio beachhead during the Second World War. Secondly, it was the story of a rock star who slips into madness. In this plot it is easy to see the shadow of Syd Barret⁴. Thirdly, *The Wall* is a kind of a rock opera about fascism. (Kärki 2002, 191–192.)

This is rather short and accurate description of the plot. In its most superficial form *The Wall* is a story about an alienated and depressed rock star called Pink Floyd⁵ sitting in his hotel room. There he keeps retreating into his past and into his imagination. The past element is mostly focused into his childhood and how he managed to grow up in postwar England without his father who died in the Second World War. The imagination element consists mostly of animated scenes depicting the political state of the society he lives in. Toward the ending the protagonist also fantasizes about being the leader of a totalitarian movement. This can be mostly understood as a part of his imagination, but it becomes diffused with what might be believed to be his real experiences of performing in rock concerts. This is a short description of the mythos in the narrative.

⁴ Syd Barret was the artistic leader of the band in the 60s but he had to leave the band for mental and drug problems. When asked about whether the main character is Waters himself, Waters replies it is 75 percent him and maybe 15 percent Syd and the rest is "whoever throws TVs out hotel room windows (Williams 2011)

⁵ The protagonist's name has a connection to a song *Have a Cigar* from the album *Wish you were here*. The song is satire about music industry narrated from the point of view of record label manager, who complements the band saying: "the band is fantastic, that's really what I think", and then continues with insincere motivations and without understanding his mistake to asking: "By the way which one is Pink?" This again is related to a real similar experience of the band, where they were asked the same question in an industry related cocktail party.

Ethos on the other hand is concerned with dianoia, the idea, poetic thought or the theme present in the narrative. The question “What is the point of this story?” does not relate to the plot but to the theme or dianoia of the narrative. Frye stresses that both the fictional (mythos) and thematic (ethos) aspect are present in narratives, and deeming the one more important than the other is usually a question of emphasis in interpretation. Dianoia is usually the primary interest in essays and lyrics. (Frye 1990, 51 – 52.) As my goal is to reveal political meaning in the narrative, which is strongly based on lyrics, I am naturally more concerned with ethos of *The Wall* narrative. Of course, some elements of mythos (mostly plot) are also contemplated where they might offer some insight for my research.

As the theme of the narrative does not only manifest itself in the lyrics but in the sounds and images, a question of describing the imagery, which I see and hear in the material is raised. I have used the marks { } to indicate when I am audio-visually describing the material. Though I try to transcript what I see with some degree of neutrality, there is already a great deal of rendition involved in my presentation of the visual and audio content of the scene. This is because reading symbolism always calls for some sort of suggestive commenting. Frye also notices that when work of fiction is interpreted thematically they tend to be allegorical. Allegorical interpretation means attaching of ideas in to structure of poetic imagery (Frye 1990, 89.) Especially the animated scenes by an animator Gerald Scarfe⁶, are extremely allegorical. It’s hard to know for sure what Waters or Scarfe actually intended by their imagery. It is possible that they were unaware of some of the meanings that I have suggested are there. But I do believe it is not pointless trying to understand them anyway. Frye has put this quite tellingly:

A snowflake is probably quite unconscious of forming a crystal, but what it does may be worth study even if we are willing to leave its inner mental process alone (Frye 1990, 89).

The Wall has been an object of rich numerous allegorical interpretations. The most common one is put in words by Jenkins “Pink’s role is to be Britain in miniature (Jenkins 1997, 208). This statement is also the basis for Romero’s and Cabos (2006) study of *The Wall* as a reflection of British postwar identity. However, I think this statement is only half correct. The predicament of the protagonist does equal somewhat higher level political predicament, just not necessarily that of British nation, but rather the predicament of modern humanity. This is even more accurately true for the later adaptation of the narrative. Interestingly, this kind of interpretation has been given of

⁶ Gerald Scarfe is a political cartoonist, who created the animated scenes for *Pink Floyd the Wall*.

Arendt's work by Canovan, who claims that by her account on totalitarianism Arendt wasn't only trying to clarify what had already happened in Germany and Russia, but to issue a warning about the political predicament of modern humanity (Canovan 1995, 61). I believe that there is something similar cautionary universality in *The Wall* and that is one of the reasons why Arendt's thought seems to be so relevant in interpreting the message of the film. The scope of *The Wall* is much more universal than just the context of postwar British nation, and that is the reason it has been able to connect to people for over 35 years. Its rich symbolism has attracted more and more imaginative interpretations throughout the years. Of course, the events which took place within the author's own nation during the time might have been great inspiration for the narrative and its symbolism. Nonetheless, I think that some of the expressiveness of the narrative is lost when it is reduced to only one given historical context. This is how I understand the quote presented in the beginning of this chapter. *The Wall* reveals meaning without committing the error of defining it.

According to Frye (1990, 86) the process of translating into explicit what is implicit in the poem is typical for formal commentary. This suggests that in the narrative there is some kind of hidden meaning, which is then interpreted to make it visible. This is a somewhat simple definition of allegory. Good example of this might be George Orwell's (1945) novel *Animal farm*. The story of the farm animals is the visible element of the narrative and the hidden element is how the story reflects Russian revolution and its consequences. However, in *The Wall* neither level is exactly hidden. They are shown side by side occasionally merging with one another as if the weight was shifting between mythos and ethos. This makes it a bit difficult to categorize. I call these levels of *The Wall* narrative as individual level and political level. The latter doesn't refer only to national political level, but to a more global and even universal level. *The Wall* moves quite effortlessly from individual level to political level and back again. Where necessary I stress whether it is individual or political level where my interpretation might be taking place in.

According to Frye literature isn't simply commentary on life or reality. It exists in its own universe and contains life and reality in a system of verbal relationships. According to Frye similar universes exist for all the arts. Referring to Wittgenstein's picture theory Frye states that pictures are themselves facts and exist only in a pictorial universe. Frye calls the relationship between these units in literature universe as metaphor. Metaphor is a statement of identity of the "let X be Y". Metaphor isn't interested in the descriptive meaning, where "A is B" actually means that A and B are the same thing. In metaphor, the two things are identified with each other but also as themselves. (Frye 1990, 123.) In *The Wall* both levels are present and important for the narrative. They both enrich the meaning of the other without subjecting it to reflect only the content of the other.

I argue that though the mythos of *The Wall* narrative has remained quite stable the ethos has become wider in its scope through time. This becomes easier to understand if we consider the way the narrative of *The Wall* was born and how it has developed through time. In Rolling Stone interview Waters is asked the question of how has the meaning of the album changed since he wrote it. Waters replies:

At the start, it was much more a personal narrative about a man in his twenties who couldn't quite make sense of what was going on in his life and why he felt so isolated from other human beings and really unable to reach out. (Greene 2015.)

Waters continues his answer by telling he personally experienced being disconnected with his audience. He then came up with theatrical device of building a physical wall between himself and the audience in order to express his feeling of alienation. (ibid.) Then Waters goes on to describe what has changed since then:

My connection with my audience over the last few years traveling *The Wall* over the world has been very intimate and close and rewarding for me, so *The Wall* becomes more a communal examination of the political state that we live in. (ibid.)

So the narrative in the original album was a more personal contemplation of the author's feelings of alienation. Through time the political level has been added or deepened in the narrative. In the concert (2010–2013) adaptation the narrative has been refocused to some extent. In an interview, Waters comments the tour:

"I was absolutely determined to bring it up to date and to make it more obviously and overtly political and humane than it had been. To look for those things and to play down the story of the poor – you know – miserable millionaire" (HuffPost 2013).

Instead of the misery experienced by a rock star, the show according to Waters focuses on the fallen loved ones and more general political comments about how we are oppressed by malignant authority (ibid.) It seems that the plot has also been cut down in order to gain a more universal theme for the narrative. However, one thing that clearly has not changed is that the wall is depicted as a symbol for isolation and eventually the total experience of loneliness

1. Building the Wall

Hannah Arendt was convinced that the 20th century mass experience of loneliness was what made totalitarianism possible (Arendt 1967, 478). Thus, in her account on the origins of totalitarianism, she focuses in many cases to elements, which cause this mass loneliness. *The Wall* narrative reflects Arendt's conviction. *The Wall* tells a story of Pink, who builds his mental wall isolating himself from the rest of the society, and in his isolation he is transfigured into a fascist leader, though this presumable takes place in his mind.

The first chapter of my analysis discusses the elements leading to isolation and totalitarianism in *The Wall* narrative. These are reflected against Arendt's view of the elements leading to totalitarianism. In *The Wall* there are several factors contributing to this process. In interpreting these elements the individual and political level need to be taken into account. Some of these factors are primarily part of Pink's personal plot, whereas others are more explicitly political. On the individual level of the story the most fundamental ones are the death of Pink's father, his overprotective mother and oppressive school system. Nevertheless, these elements of the narrative have implicit political content as I come to argue. However, there are many songs in the narrative, which are primarily political. I start my analysis with one of them.

1.1. Empty Spaces: Expansion for Expansion's sake

In this chapter I discuss the song *Empty Spaces*. It is not chronologically the first song in the narrative, but it is positioned in the first half of the plot, where the character's mental wall is still under construction. I begin by introducing the scene in question and continue by discussing the central symbolism involved in it. After this I introduce ideas of Arendt relevant to the scene and continue examining it from a political perspective.

The grim animation accompanying *Empty Spaces* in the 1982 film is also projected on the wall in the 2010 – 2013 concert adaptation. The animated scenes are work of cartoonist Gerald Scarfe, who is titled as the director of animation in the ending credits of the film. Even though he has clearly used the songs and their lyrics as inspiration, the visual contents and expression of the

animations can in many points be credited to him. *Empty Spaces* is a great starting point for analysis as it displays the political state the protagonist is living in:

{Synthesizers play an ominous figure in low notes.
A lizard like creature flies over green and open fields which go on all the way to the horizon. At the same time a grey wall starts to appear dividing the fields. A closer look at the wall reveals that it resembles silhouette of a city, consisting of commercial buildings. The perspective gets even closer to the wall and it appears to be built of different kind of consumer goods such as cars, boats, radios and television sets. Then view is turned to a faceless crowd which has appeared on the field. The crowd consists of figures, who all have the same agonized expression on their face.}

What shall we use to fill the empty spaces

where waves of hunger roar?

Shall we set out across the sea of faces

In search of more and more applause?

(Pink Floyd The Wall 1982, [00:38:31 – 00:38:41].)

Before I can analyze the scene any further politically, the involved symbolism needs to be addressed more in detail. The wall expanding through the field is the most dominating symbol of the scene. At this point it is useful to introduce Frye's definition of symbol. Frye defines symbol as any unit of any literature structure which can be isolated for critical attention. This can be a word, a phrase or an image, which is used with a special reference. (Frye 1990, 71.) As we can see, Frye's definition is quite broad. To define symbolism in more detail Frye has divided it in different phases, the few most important ones I present here while reflecting their content on the symbol of the wall.

Important aspect to notice when discussing symbolism is that whenever we are reading something our focus is going to two different directions at the same time. At first according to Frye we tend to look at the centrifugal (or outward) meaning of the word. What is it the word relates to outside the text? This is the descriptive phase of symbolism. Symbol in this case is called a sign. (Frye 1990, 73.) As a descriptive sign the wall in the scene doesn't say much. It might remind the viewers of the word *wall* or of all the walls they have seen during their lives, such as the Great Wall of China.

What is more important is the literal meaning of the symbol. Frye uses the word *literal* in a way almost opposite to the everyday use of the word. It refers to the centripetal (inward) meaning the sign has within the text. (Frye 1990, 73–74.) Then the symbol should be understood as the part of

the surrounding textual context, which gives symbol its content. Frye refers to symbol in this phase as motif. The wall in the scene as motif draws its various literal meanings as a part of the surrounding narrative. The first time the viewer encounters it is in the opening scene of the film, where a hotel cleaner tries to enter the room the protagonist sits in a quite catatonic silence. Additionally, this is where Romero and Cabo (2006, 50) emphasize isolation depicted in the walls of the hotel room that protect Pink from the outside world. Here the motif is used the first time to symbolize the individual alienation from the world.

However, the poet and the reader do not live in a vacuum. In mythical phase Frye describes symbol as archetype (Frye 1990, 95). In their archetypal form symbols become units of communication, which have conventionalized meanings within literature (Frye 1990, 95–104). The argument Frye is forming here, one might describe as intertextuality connecting different literal works. From this view the wall as symbol of alienation is not that original. In fact, as an archetype it is quite popular and it has even been used in Pink Floyd's own literature genre, which in this case would be British progressive rock lyrics. In the song *House with no door* (1970) performed by British progressive rock band *Van Der Graaf Generator* symbol of walls of house is used as a metaphor to describe somewhat same kind of existential loneliness which results from isolation as seen in *The Wall* narrative. It seems that the ambience of the 1970s produced similar symbolism in songs. This meaning of personal isolation becomes better manifested in the original 1979 album version:

What shall we use/ To fill the empty spaces/ Where we used to talk?/ How shall I fill/
The final places?/ How should I complete the wall? (The wall 1979)

When Waters asks: "How should I complete the Wall?" he is referring to his personal wall and sense of alienation. However, as I have described the narrative has become more political in its content, hence the meaning of isolation has given away in the 1982 film version. The symbolism in the dynamic scene seems to be more concerned with depicting ideas and events instead of inner state of the protagonist, though the animated scene would suggest that these events and ideas have been filtered through his interpretation and consciousness. When symbols become involved in imitating ideas or events, Frye chooses to call them images. Calling symbol an image doesn't mean that poems would necessarily mirror nature but rather that they cause nature to be reflected in their form. (Frye 1990, 84.) There is a crucial difference, as Frye (1990, 86) stresses that poet's intention is always centripetally directed. This is contemplated mostly against the idea that discursive writing which, unlike poems, tends to be more centrifugal or descriptive in its meaning.

When we look the wall in the scene as an image imitating an event or an idea, we start to look the scene as an allegory; concept touched upon in the previous chapter. According to Frye there is a great deal of ambiguity involved in using this concept, because it is very loosely used to describe many different phenomena (Frye 1990, 90). For the purpose of this study we have to be contented with defining it as narrative reflecting an event or idea through use of symbolism. My interpretation is that the song *Empty Spaces* and accompanying animation display violently expansive consumerist society. The primary idea imitated in the scene is capitalistic expansion, which is most clearly suggested in the image of the expanding wall consisting of commercial buildings and consumer goods.

At this point I introduce more political perspective to the matter. The second part of Arendt's book *Origins of Totalitarianism* describing imperialism becomes important. As one of my question is how the narrative of *The Wall* has depicted totalitarianism, it is useful to first understand its origins. It is no coincidence that only less than a third of Arendt's book on totalitarianism is dedicated to discussing totalitarianism. One of Arendt's most brilliant insight is the importance of imperialism and its development that eventually provided all the elements for totalitarian movements. Canovan has recognized five elements that compound totalitarianism in Arendt's thinking. These elements had developed before totalitarian regimes, but were crystallized after the First World War. These are antisemitism, decay of the national state, racism, expansion for expansion's sake, alliance between capital and mob. According to Canovan expansion is the most fundamental of these elements. (Canovan 1995, 29.)

According to Arendt (1967, 125) expansion as a supreme aim of politics is the central political idea of imperialism. Though the origins of the word imperialism are in word *empire*, Arendt draws some distance between the two. According to Arendt (1967, 130 - 131) imperialism isn't empire building and expansion isn't conquest. One of the main difference between imperialism and empire building is that national institutions are not imposed on the colonized nations in imperialism.

Ari-Elmeri Hyvönen has captioned this idea of expansion without an end quite well observing the concept of process in Arendt's thinking. The concept of process is something that according to Arendt is very distinctive to modern age (Hyvönen 2016, 1). The process thinking had its beginning in the initiation of modernity, capitalism and modern natural and historic sciences (Hyvönen 2016, 3). In Arendt's thinking the first time the idea of process can be encountered is when she is discussing imperialism. Arendt describes how imperialism was touched off by an emergence of too much capital, which couldn't be invested within national borders. This led to export of money and later the power of nation state followed. (Arendt 1967, 135.) Imperialism was born when the

capitalistic ruling class met the national limitations to its economic growth (Arendt 1967, 125). With capitalistic ruling class Arendt (1967, 124) refers to bourgeoisie who were forced by the new situation to get into politics, but who had only been half successful harnessing the national state and its instruments of violence for their own purposes. This purpose was to secure their capitalistic endeavors outside national borders. To sum up Arendt's argument Hyvönen states that this resulted in a supposedly permanent process, which had no end or aim but itself. Consequently, the imperial agents started to consider themselves as the mere functions of this process. This process thinking then lent itself to totalitarian movements which envisioned themselves as the executors and accelerators of the processes of history or nature. (Hyvönen 2016, 3–4.)

Similar idea of expansion as the ultimate goal is visible in the lyrics, where narrator asks: "What shall we use to fill the empty spaces?" He doesn't bother to ask: "why should we fill the empty spaces?" as someone more idealistic might have done, but instead he has cynically embraced the principle of expansion and jumped from the question "why" to "how". This is done to underline the already existing principle of expansion, which has become so obvious that people only seem to notice its presence, when it is put in a form of a provocative poetic statement.

According to Frye the tonality of the narrative becomes formed by repeated imagery (Frye 1990, 85). So the used imagery isn't only caused by the theme of the narrative or the ideas it represents. It also determines in which light the idea or event is depicted. In the film, symbol of the wall together with other dark symbols become central repeated imagery. The low synthesizer figure enhances the darkness of the symbol. Rose points out that Pink Floyd has used synthesizers, characterized by mechanical timbre, in several songs to portray unauthenticity or obtrusiveness, which becomes in many cases connected with mechanized and technological world (Rose 1995, 77, 97). If similar interpretation is applied in this case, there is something deceitful in the process the scene is describing.

The central image of the expanding wall consisting of consumer goods draws a connection between capitalism and expansion. Capitalism is not only indicated by the images of consumer goods, but by author's previous work. According to Frye predilections of the author have a notable effect on chosen imagery (Frye 1990, 85). Criticizing capitalism has been a distinctive trait of Pink Floyd's lyrics in the earlier albums of the band and it seems to continue here as well. The most famous example might be the song *Money*, which was released on the band's album *The Dark Side of the Moon*. The song can be seen as satire of the pressure of earning. Another song with similar theme is *Have a Cigar* from the following album, which parodies music industry. Ultimately the most comprehensive criticism of capitalism made by the band is the album *Animals*, which is based on

George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. However, instead of allegorizing Russian Revolution, Roger Waters used its central imagery to criticize the capitalistic system instead.

According to Canovan linking capitalism and its principles with expansion has been a popular claim among Marxist theorists⁷. Nonetheless, Canovan tries to put distance between Arendt and these Marxist theorists. She states that though Arendt understood that expansion had its origins in capitalistic principles, it developed into a political principle in its own right during imperialistic era. (Canovan 1995, 30.) Thus, Waters and Arendt have different perspectives to the matter. Waters' account in *Empty Spaces* might be understood as continuum for his previous capitalism criticism whereas Arendt's account is more devoted to history.

Though expansion as an idea is quite clearly communicated in *Empty Spaces*, looking the scene more as a depiction of event is also an option. The images are quite unstable. It seems that the constantly developing imagery points to a process, which has led to contemporary situation. Thus, it is possible to view the scene as a possible allegory for imperialism. However, Frye advises to be careful in interpreting something as allegory. He states that we can only speak of an actual allegory when the writer explicitly indicates that by his imagery he also means that. If this is done continuously, according to Frye we can say what writer is writing is an allegory. (Frye 1990, 90.) In this case we have at least an implication of *Empty Spaces* being an allegory of imperialism. Waters is asked in the Rolling Stone interview, how he thinks *The Wall* has managed to connect with so many people over 35 years. In his reply Waters mentions imperialism:

[. . .] but I think people are just beginning, as they sleepwalk their way through imperial capitalism, to realize the law is being eroded and the military are taking over commerce and the corporations are taking over government and that we the people no longer have a voice. (Greene 2015)

Besides linking imperialism with modern capitalism, we also notice that Waters is talking about contemporary economic conditions, when he mentions imperial capitalism. When Arendt (1967) discusses imperialism and expansion, she places her focus in the 19th century development. There seems to be some sort of historical element present in Arendt's writing. The same historical element is not that obvious in *Empty Spaces* and the accompanying scene which depicts expansion. The scene clearly strives to grasp the development which has led to the contemporary situation; the same development which Arendt has described in her account of imperialism. The scene works as a part of

⁷ For an example *Die Akkumulation des Kapitals* by Rosa Luxemburg, who nevertheless had a great impact on Arendt's thought (Canovan 1995, 22, 30).

the narrative, the purpose of which is to shed some light on the origins of the contemporary world, which the protagonist of the narrative inhabits. However, this is done without being too precise. It is useful to remind ourselves of the quote from Arendt presented at the beginning of this chapter. In this case, story tries to reveal meaning of expansion, without committing the error of defining it too precisely. According to Frye (1990, 102) the modern writers in western literature try to keep their symbols as versatile as possible. I suspect that this is what is going on in *Empty Spaces*.

Perhaps the best way to understand the imperialist element in *The Wall* narrative is to look at it much the same way as Hobbes⁸ looked at the state of nature and the way out of it, the social contract. It is not actual historical event, but a philosophical tool to understanding the existing social order. In the narrative imperialism is presented as a source of the present predicament, but artistic principles resist any attempt at describing this too historically. As a result, this source can be only accessed by a hypothetical image constructed in our imagination, much the same way Hobbes did with his account on the state of nature.

Though I have just claimed that the portrayal of imperialism in *The Wall* narrative is not necessarily historical in its nature, there is research suggesting otherwise. In their research, Romero and Cabo have viewed Pink Floyd's *The Wall* as a reflection of British postwar period and British identity of being a former imperial power. Romero and Cabo view the album as a reflection of postwar disappointment to societal problems and loss of imperial stature experienced by the British people. (Romero & Cabo 2006, 45–47). They argue that *The Wall* and the following album *The Final Cut* released in 1983 are interconnected works (2006, 48). I do agree with this to some extent. In *The Final Cut* Roger Waters criticizes the neoliberal and imperial politics of the Margaret Thatcher led government. However, it seems that Romero and Cabo have taken the theme from *The Final Cut* and tried to fit it as the allegorical meaning of *The Wall*. My claim gets some support from the fact that almost all the precise references to postwar politics of Thatcher's government Romero and Cabo have picked up, are from *The Final Cut* album. The connections that Romero and Cabo have made in *The Wall* narrative are bit sketchier. For example the line of "Daddy's flown across the ocean" presented in the song *Another Brick in the Wall part I* is interpreted to mean not only the death of protagonist's father but also the British nation (embodied in the idea of father), which has now flown across the ocean (across the Atlantic) into the lap of the new superpower USA (Romero & Cabo 2006, 51).

⁸ According to Arendt (1993, 76) this distinguishing trait of getting rid of the past in Hobbes' philosophy was typical to political philosophy in modern age.

The study of Romero and Cabo rests on assumption they have made on the role of protagonist in *The Wall* narrative. That is the assumption the predicament of the protagonist equals the nation's predicament (Romero & Cabo 2006, 49). This is where I disagree with them. The predicament of the protagonist Pink shouldn't be looked only as symbol of the predicament of British nation. Ultimately Romero and Cabo's study contemplates on the new identity of British nation as an old imperial power, which now had to learn to live with capitalist society, it had given birth to but did not poses power over anymore. All in all, their interpretation relates more coherently to *The Final Cut*, which is overtly historical album. Nonetheless their perspective seems too specific for *The Wall*, which has a more universal theme.

This universality of the narrative is evident in the beginning of *Empty Spaces*. When I introduced the song I intentionally left out the description of the beginning of the scene. The beginning isn't irrelevant for my interpretation, but in order to discuss its meaning I had to establish political perspective of expansion and imperialism relevant for my interpretation. The symbolism involved is very strong and versatile right from the beginning:

{A very minimalist and dark song *Empty Spaces* starts to slowly fade in. Against a black background there are two animated flowers, which circle each other in a very lively manner. One of the flowers seems to be male and the other female. The flowers start caressing each other and they start to resemble human beings in middle of sexual acts.}

(Pink Floyd The Wall 1982, [00:36:36 – 00:37:39].)

What is important in symbolical terms is the black background. As archetype it refers to emptiness in the beginning and to birth of the world. Conveyed In biblical terms, when God created the earth there was nothing. It means that the scene takes the viewer to the philosophical state of nature, the starting point of society. This meaning is still enforced by the imagery of sex. There are two flowers: one male and one female. This is a common universal archetype and in western literature its main reference point is the creation myth of Adam and Eve. The scene continues:

{The intensity of music grows stronger. The flowers start to resemble two dogs who are aggressively fighting and biting each other. After this they turn back into flowers. In the end the male flower is turned into a shape resembling penis and female flower turns into a form resembling vagina. All of a sudden one of the flowers eats the other one and turns into some kind of flying beast. The lizard type creature then flies away against the backdrop of dark skies and open fields which go on all the way to the horizon.}

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [00:37:39 – 00:38:00].)

This is where, on the open fields, the scene described earlier picks up and more capitalistic imagery starts to appear. Looking at this part of the scene we can see that the sexual symbolism is presented again. This followed with the sudden death of the male flower brings to mind somewhat popular example of female dominance encountered in nature; that is, breeding habits of some species of spider, which end in the male spider getting eaten by the female. This is very strong symbolism and it might be interpreted as very sexist in some contexts. When considered in relation to creation myth of Adam and Eve, viewer might be reminded, it was Eve⁹, who picked the fruit from the forbidden tree and offered it to Adam. The ending of that narrative was rather unfortunate for the first couple. All the sexual references are quite clearly connected to the previous scene, which I have not described. In the scene Pink calls her estranged wife and finds out she is having an affair with other man. Therefore, the flowers might be symbolizing marriage turned bad after a passionate start.

It is useful to notice what Fry says about literature. In literature the descriptive-principle gives way to pleasure-principle (Frye 1990, 75). What he means by this is that in art, what entertains, is far more important aim for the writer than, what describes reality. Frye (1990, 86) claims how it would be absurd to ask Shakespeare (if it were possible) what he meant by such and such passage, because the answer would probably always be the same: "I meant it to form part of the play." From this perspective the motive of the author in presenting the flowers in the beginning of the scene might have been purely narrative. For example it can work as an element of bonding two different scenes with different themes together. On an individual level the flowers portray Pink feeling betrayed by his wife. However, in the context of the following scene, one cannot help thinking that the scene is describing something more general about society.

The scene in question shows a stable state, which gives birth to the dynamic expansive process depicted later in the scene. In this context Arendt's account on early stages of imperialism become relevant. The decisive factor lies in the relationship between nation-state and bourgeoisie. According to Canovan nation-state is sharply contrasted with imperialism in Arendt's thought. The nation-state presented for Arendt civilized institution, which held in check the bourgeois whose passion for expansion would eventually undermine civilization. The imperialism is a matter of letting loose uncontrollable forces of expansion to which human beings sacrificed themselves and others. (Canovan, 1995, 31.) In Germany the bourgeoisie had staked its hopes on Hitler and tried to rule with

⁹ For some reason it seems to be almost universal archetype, that it is always the woman in the narrative, who by their anarchic action ruin the harmony and order in the world of man. (Myth of Adam and Eve, the Greek myth of Pandora and her box or more modern example such as *Madame Bovary* by Gustave Flaubert)

the help of a mob. This time bourgeoisie was successful in abolishing the nation-state. Arendt describes this as a pyrrhic victory, because the mob turned out to be able to rule without bourgeoisie, which got liquidated with all the other classes and institutions. (Arendt 1967, 124.)

I would not claim that the two flowers in the beginning symbolize the bourgeoisie and nation-state in a battle, which eventually let loose the uncontrollable process of expansion. I wouldn't presume that the author, in this case Waters or Scarfe, meant the symbolism to be that precise. But what is quite clear in the scene, is the sense of something seemingly friendly and innocent has turned into something dangerous. This sense of danger is most clearly embodied in the flying creature. The song involves a message that something, which has previously been kept in check, has now gotten out of hand. And for the narrative it is enough to move on to depicting expansive capitalism. The narrative has moved on from a marital separation to a whole other level describing expansive capitalism. The former serves level serves the mythos and the latter serves the ethos of the narrative. This is a good example of how the narrative moves from individual level to political level.

1.2. Superfluity of Masses

Up till now, I have discussed the process of expansion depicted in the scene. However, the human figures involved in the scene have been left unexamined. During the *Empty Spaces* a large mass of people appears on the field right after the emergence of the wall. All the human figures share similar face, which resembles distantly the figure in *The Scream*, the famous painting by Edvard Munch. If considered as an archetype, *The Scream* has been described as a universal symbol of existential anxiety and it has been frequently referred to in popular culture. From this view, it can be seen as supporting imagery to motif of the wall understood as symbol of individual alienation. But presented together with the symbol of expanding wall, which symbolized the aimless process of expansion, there is somewhat more collective idea present. My interpretation is that the human figures stand for modern masses. I reflect this element of the scene against Arendt's thinking on modern masses.

Masses are strongly related to totalitarianism in Arendt's thinking, as Arendt argues that totalitarian movements are based on organizing the masses (Arendt 1967, 308). According to Arendt (1967, 318) the totalitarian movements depend less on the structurelessness of mass society than on

the specific condition of an atomized and individualized mass. The reasons for the existence of these kinds of masses in the first place, especially in case of Nazism and Bolshevism, were the breakdown of class system in Europe and the overall absence of any stratification in rural population of Russia. In Arendt's view there is a difference between the masses and the classes. The classes consist of individuals, who are driven by self-interest and who have shared opinions about handling of the public affairs. (Arendt 1967, 312 – 313.) Against these features members of masses become defined by Arendt as isolated and lacking any common interest (Canovan 1995, 53).

The Wall doesn't depict any historical breakdown of class system. Nonetheless the faceless masses are a reoccurring motif in the narrative. How are these masses connected to the theme of expansion in *Empty Spaces*? They appear concurrently with the expanding wall. At this point it is useful to stay with Arendt's thought on imperialism and expansion. Hyvönen further analyses the consequences of imperial expansion in Arendt's thinking. In Arendt's view it was the aimless process of expansion and economic growth, which led to the need of regulating and normalizing behavioral patterns of the population. The aim of this was to ensure the undisturbed process of expansion. Statistical uniformity became the guiding ideal of this process. (Hyvönen 2016, 6.) If we turn our attention to the narrative at hand, we notice that in *Empty spaces* the visual image of masses combined with variety of consumer goods serves to depict a normalized consumer, whose movements are controlled by the expanding wall, which is essentially identified as symbolic structure of economic growth. This movement of these masses becomes well manifested in metaphors such as “*sea of faces*” and “*waves of hunger*”. They are both metaphors, which identify people with water, the movements of which are at the mercy of processes of nature or in some cases attempted to be controlled by people, but with poor results.

There is also another meaning attached to the metaphors. Sea and waves point to superfluity. Especially stating that there is a sea of something indicates that there is more than exceedingly enough. This sense of superfluity becomes more clearly communicated in the following song *What Shall We Do Now*. However, it turned out to be too long for the album, which is why only the intro named as *Empty Spaces* was used in the 1979 album. However, *What Shall We Do Now* later found its place in the film adaptation. The scene continues without any break from *Empty Spaces* to *What Shall We Do Now*. The song introduces a new menacing electric guitar riff, but keeps with the same theme of capitalism in the lyrics and imagery. This scene is very fast paced and goes through a variety of imagery in a short amount of time, so it is useful to divide it into few sequences, which become easier to comment separately. The scene picks up where the large mass of faces is shown outspread on the fields:

{The wall which was built of colorful consumer goods has now turned into a grey brick wall, which becomes constructed around the masses. The wall is shown expanding further in random places. In a close up of the wall a face rises from its surface and screams. The expanding wall moves by a flower in the ground, which is turned into a barbed wire by this process. After this the wall expands and passes two people. One of them is a baby playing in the ground with a rattle and the other is a dark-skinned man sitting on the ground. As the wall passes them the baby goes through a metamorphosis, where he is turned into some sort of lizard looking creature which is then again turned into man wearing a paramilitary uniform. At the same time the rattle in his hand is turned into a baton, which he uses to strike the homeless man sitting beside him. }

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [00:38:41 – 00:38:54].)

The expanding wall has been established as the symbol of aimless process of expansion and economic growth. Now this same wall imprisons the masses within itself. They have become trapped within the process of economic growth, which is driven by consumption. The face rising from the wall catches this feeling of anxiety and worthlessness felt by the masses, which was brought upon it by the imprisoning view of process thinking. Superfluity is an important concept for Arendt in explaining totalitarianism. Her ideas on superfluous masses seem relevant in interpreting this specific scene. According to Canovan (1995, 61) Arendt speaks of mass experience of “superfluity on an overcrowded earth” which can be seen foreshadowed in the thought of imperial agents, who thought they were mere servants of natural process of expansion. A similar experience of superfluity is communicated in the existential anxiety expressed on the face the masses share. This face becomes a symbol for masses and it is displayed repeatedly throughout the film in various different scenes.

This symbol is used in especially clever way in the live adaptation (2010–2013) where the audience becomes part of the show. When the band starts to play the song *Empty Spaces* almost all the members of the audience put on masks, which have the identical face of mass man on them. They become, of course quite ironically, the living symbol for the sea of faces. Alun Munslow has written on new radical and nontraditional ways of expressing historical narrative. According to Munslow it is in the expression (the concrete form) of the narrative, where the meaningful dimensions of presenting history lies. He sees that in performances it can be useful for the audience to become part of the process in order to better grasp the reality it is trying to describe. (Munslow 2007, 65, 105–109.) By taking part in the play in role of the masses, audience can better grasp the reality the show is transmitting.

In a symbolic level, what becomes important are the two examples of metamorphosis presented in the scene. These come to represent the effect of change that this process has on the human

life. The first symbolic metamorphosis where a flower is turned into a barbed wire reminds of the scene with the flowers earlier on. It presents a same kind of development where something seemingly innocent is turned into something ugly and dangerous. Barbed wire as a symbol has association to restriction of movements of masses. Furthermore, archetypal connotation to concentration camps isn't too farfetched idea either. If looked from the perspective of Arendt's thinking it was the concentration camps, where the sense of worthlessness of human life was best institutionalized in (Canovan 1995, 61).

The other metamorphosis takes place when a newborn is turned into paramilitary trooper. The middle phase of this process, where the baby for a while resembles a lizard, is connected to the sense of danger, which earlier became embodied in the flying lizard. It follows the familiar pattern where something innocent becomes transformed into something dangerous. The paramilitary uniform is a reference to later depiction of totalitarianism in the narrative. In the context of this scene the act of striking the homeless person indicates that the capitalistic competitive society turns everyone into either executors or victims of its expansive process. In his statement, where Waters mentions imperial capitalism, he also mentions that military is taking over commerce (Greene 2015). The scene in question might also refer to this development. Particularly, when the wall, responsible for turning the baby into a trooper, is considered through imperial allegory. At this point it is helpful to view Arendt's account on imperialism. When the bourgeoisie had finally won the opposition presented by the old national institutions, the state's instruments of violence (the police and army) were separated from other national institutions and promoted as national representatives in weak countries (Arendt 1967, 136). Their primary goal was of course to secure the economic interests of corporations. What Waters might be implying in *The Wall* narrative is that these national instruments of violence are an essential part of contemporary imperial capitalism. The scene serves to highlight the violently oppressive side of this expansive process.

The conclusion of this chapter is that in both Arendt's and Waters' accounts superfluity or sense of worthlessness is connected to an expansive economic process. Arendt's perspective is more historically focused to 19th century imperialism and its ideology, whereas Waters is more involved in criticizing contemporary capitalism or what he calls imperial capitalism.

1.3. Shall We Work Straight Through the Night: Work and Labor

As the lyrics start in *What Shall We Do Now* the song begins to describe the expansive process from the view of work and modern consumerism. To better understand this theme, we should turn our focus to Arendt's *The Human Condition*. This particular book is in no way irrelevant when it comes to understanding the guiding theme of my research: totalitarianism. According to Canovan (1995, 99) *The human condition* should be understood as continuum of Arendt's thought set off by her encounter with totalitarianism. In 1950s Arendt originally intended to write about totalitarian elements in Marxism, but became entangled with the Marx's concept of work (Canovan 1995, 100–101). This contemplation led to her rethinking of political theory in *The Human Condition*, where her conception of work constitutes the basis of her theory. Waters is concerned with work as well in his lyrics:

{The view is switched to a cathedral on a hill. Then the wall is shown expanding towards it. The wall goes through the cathedral. The cathedral is crushed and the loose bricks pile up into a form of temple. The temple becomes ornamented by neon lights of different color and there is a resemblance to an outlook of a casino in Las Vegas. The temple keeps producing bricks, whose contours are red neon light. The bricks fill the whole screen.}

Shall we buy a new guitar/

Shall we drive a more powerful car/

Shall we work straight through the night/

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [00:38:54 – 00:39:13].)

The previous sequence might be interpreted as transition phase driven by the new political idea of unlimited expansion. The destroying of the cathedral symbolizes the finalization of this transition. As an archetype cathedral is not so much a symbol of religious¹⁰ faith as of values and tradition. In this context, Arendt's concern for the loss of tradition during imperial era becomes relevant. Arendt was convinced that totalitarianism wouldn't have been possible if traditional religion had been in place. In this sense the 20th century loss of tradition had been a disaster in Arendt's thought. (Canovan 1995, 69.) In the narrative at hand the reconstruction of the cathedral in form of casino kind of temple also indicates loss of traditional values, which have become replaces by more

¹⁰ Roger Waters is not religious, but Gerald Scarfe might be, which might explain the rather religious symbolism.

consumerist values. The following situation might be called as the predicament of modern humanity in its most contemporary form: What to do when there are no other values except unlimited expansion guiding us? The name of the song “*What Shall We Do Now*” is somewhat revealing if it is considered with the starting line of the previous song empty spaces: “What shall we use to fill the empty spaces?” The name seems to suggest that the empty spaces have been filled. Now we, as the singer addresses, are left with nothing to do.

Viewing Arendt’s classification of human activities might be informative to the interpretation of the scene. For Arendt there are three fundamental human activities, which she has gathered under the term *vita activa* (Arendt 1958, 7). These are labor, work and action. Labor is concerned only with the necessities of life and it is this necessity, which man has in common with all the other animals (Arendt 1958, 85). Thus, it could be said that labor is the least human activity. Arendt refers to people restricted by the necessity of labor as *animal laborans* (Arendt 1958). For the purpose of analyzing this scene, the distinction Arendt makes between labor and work is especially important. If labor is concerned with immediate needs of human life, work is concerned with more durable results. Work produces the durable unnatural world that people live in. The objects work produces are used but not consumed as products of labor are. Though single things do disappear from the use in the end the human produced world as such has no end. (Arendt 1958, 136–138). The condition of work is worldliness. (Arendt 1958, 7.) Human whose aim is to work and produce durable results Arendt (1958) refers by the term *homo faber*.

Labor and work are important concepts in understanding Arendt’s critique of consumerism. Arendt states that it is often said that we live in a consumers’ society. However, according to Arendt it would be more accurate to talk about society of laborers instead of consumers’ society, as labor and consumption are just the two different levels of the same process. (Arendt 1958, 126.) It is typical for labor that it leaves nothing behind and that the result of its effort become almost as quickly consumed as the effort is spent (Arendt 1958, 87). Arendt refers to this as life process or metabolism between man and nature (Arendt 1958, 126 - 127). Labor and consumption are implicitly connected in Waters’ lyrics as well. The narrator asks whether we should buy new things, such as guitar and car, or whether we should just work straight through the night. These questions are presented in a form of a list where work and consumption do not appear to be separated or put at odds with each other. Consequently, the kind of work lyrics are referring to might come closer to Arendt’s concept of labor. The scene continues with the same themes:

{The expanding wall is displayed again followed by a view of person with a similar face as the masses depicted earlier. His head becomes tilted back and his jaw opened wide. His face seems very tensed and white rot or mold like white substance starts to appear on his face. This sets in motion a process of metamorphosis where the face is turned into series of objects such as: a naked female body, melting ice cream, firing submachine gun, syringe, bass guitar and a luxury car. }

Shall we get into fights/ Leave the lights on/
drop bombs/ Do tours of the east/
Contract diseases/ Bury bones/
break up homes/ Send flowers by phone/
Take to drink/ Go to shrinks/
Give up meat/ Rarely sleep/
Keep people as pets/ Train dogs/
Race rats/ Fill the Attic with cash/

(Pink Floyd The Wall 1982, [00:39:13 – 00:39:39].)

The rhythm of vocals is very hectic and the lines are very short forming a list of suggestions for things to do. The purposelessness of modern humanity becomes mirrored in the randomness of this list. The list is a desperate answer to the question: What shall we do now? However, the lyrics indicate that we are left mostly with endless options to consume. In *The Human Condition* Arendt has assessed the conditions, which make limitless consumption possible. According to Arendt in socialized humankind all the stable property has been turned into money. This leads to a situation where accumulation of wealth can be limitless and it is more superfluously available for spending and consumption. (Arendt 1958, 124.) Hyvönen points out how this line of thought is connected to Arendt's account on imperialism. It was the pursuit of endless growth, which demanded all the stable property to be turned into social wealth (Hyvönen 2016, 5). If we examine the scene from this perspective there is an apparent hint of criticism for limitless accumulation of wealth in the line of the lyrics: "Fill the attics with cash". Attic is commonly known as a place where excessive number of things become stored for the unlikely event that they might be needed again.

In Arendt's view on consumerism, limitless accumulation of wealth is only half of the truth. The main problem in making expansively limitless consumption possible is posed by individual's limitations to consumption. Though the wealth can be limitlessly accumulated, people are still limited on how much they can consume. According to Arendt the solution to this contradiction is simple enough in consumer's society. It is that all the objects of use (fruits of work) become objects of consumption. (Arendt 1958, 124.) According to Arendt our economy has become a waste economy where things must be as quickly devoured and discarded as they have appeared in the world. Arendt warns of a society, which has become dazzled by the abundance of growing fertility to produce objects of consumption. (Arendt 1958, 134–135.) Arendt argues that we feel constant need to replace

worldly objects, such as houses or cars, around us as if they should be part of the natural metabolism between man and nature (Arendt 1958, 126). By worldly objects Arendt refers to results of work, which should be understood as part of durable world. By metabolism between man and nature Arendt refers to labor where all the results are consumed almost immediately. In Arendt's view the error committed by consumers' society is to place these worldly objects where they don't belong, which is the life process.

Comparing Arendt's view with the hectic images displayed in the scene at hand exposes a similar line of thought present in the narrative. The scene displays a process where different objects become molded from one object to another in matter of seconds. This process of transmutations begins from the confused mass man. If this is taken into account, the transforming objects become a metaphor for the growing hunger of an individual to consume more and more items. It is noteworthy that some of these items, such as cars and guitars, are things that in Arendt's thinking are considered as part of durable world. The displayed female body, another component of wide sexual imagery applied in the narrative, might also be indicating that people have become consumable objects as well. This interpretation is enforced by the line "keep people as pets". The images also become connotated to exploiting sexuality in marketing, which has become increasingly common practice throughout the 20th century. Furthermore, the hyper-sexualized female body also symbolizes the power of obtrusiveness that modern consumerist way has on people.

The dazing effect that consuming has on people causes them to overlook the violent elements of the system. The lines "drop bombs" "tours of the east" and image of submachine gun becomes linked with images of consumption. This serves to suggest that there is a connection between war and consumerist way of life. The message is quite idealistic: even though our western consumerist way of life might appear as harmless enough, the flipside is that we still need to wage war around the world. The antiwar theme is quite relevant for the narrative, as Waters himself had lost his father in the war. The Cold War period and Vietnam War are especially important context for understanding this particular message. The most military operations of the United States and its allies during the Cold War were justified by defending democracy, which implicitly meant defending western free market system against communism. The recently ended Vietnam War (1975) and its wide coverage in papers and television have probably inspired the images of war in this particular scene. The scene continues:

{The car drives away and a fist appears forming out of the ground. The fist is then turned into a hammer, which appears to be striking at the direction of the viewer.}

Bury treasure/ Store up leisure/
But never relax at all/
with our backs to the wall/

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [00:39:39 – 00:39:49].)

What needs to be kept in mind is that the song is constantly answering to the question: “what shall we do now?” As we can see most of the lyrical and visual imagery refers to consumption as a way of filling this void. The lyrics then make a surprising contradiction between leisure and relaxing: we can store up leisure, but we cannot relax. This contradiction might be better understood if we reflect it on Arendt’s understanding of spare time in society of laborers. Arendt criticizes Marx for holding utopian beliefs that the increasing free time would eventually free man from the necessity brought by labor. As Arendt points out the spare time of the *animal laborans* is never spent on anything but consumption. The more time is left to him, the greedier he gets. The character of this process does not change even when the appetite of *animal laborans* becomes directed towards not only the necessities of life. This involves a danger that eventually no object of the world is safe from annihilation through consumption. (Arendt 1958, 133.) The resulting situation is according to Arendt euphemistically called mass culture. The characteristic never relaxing process of mass culture, seems to have one universal aim, which is the happiness of *animal laborans*. This can only be achieved “where the life processes of exhaustion and regeneration, of pain and release from pain, strike a perfect balance.” (Arendt 1958, 134.)

If we apply Arendt’s view to the apparent contradiction between leisure and relaxing mentioned in the lyrics, it becomes obvious what Waters is trying to say. The unrelenting stream of possibilities for consumption, not only diverts our attention, but enslaves us. This is also indicated in the last line of the lyrics: “with our backs to the wall”. As an idiom: have one’s back to the wall, means being in a difficult situation with no way out. The sign of wall absorbs new literal meanings, when it is used in this particular idiom. Understood in this context the meaning easily turns to necessity; having no other option. Arendt’s concept of society’s life process becomes applicable at this point of the narrative. Hyvönen (2016, 6) encapsulates Arendt’s view of modern government, which has been conceived as the protector not so much of freedom as of the life process, which follows its inherent necessities. Up to this point in the narrative the symbol of wall has been depicted as something that can freely expand throughout the world; a symbol for unlimited process. However now it becomes a symbol for imprisonment. The wall imprisons people to serve the process of endless labor and consumption, making freedom or relaxing impossible.

The oppressiveness of capitalistic system is one of the central themes of the narrative. This is a theme, which has been with Waters throughout most of his work. Peter Wicke explains in his book *Rock Music: Culture, Aesthetics and Sociology* how alienation and frustration under capitalistic system became expressed in rock music. According to Wicke this critique became clearly expressed by Roger Waters, whose statement he cites:

‘Many people are robbed of their whole lives because they are trapped in the system. They are used to produce Volkswagens. People are paid for their work, buy televisions and fridges and believe that this compensates for the fact that they spend their whole lives putting cars together. And they live in this rut for 48 weeks out of every 52’ (Wicke 1990, 108).

This statement is enlightening to understanding the imagery of *The Wall*. Though Waters’ comment might offer quite limited view of the life of a worker in German automobile plant and furthermore appear quite ironical coming from a rock star millionaire, it still shows Waters’ attitude towards labor. It wouldn’t be accurate to say that Waters despises earning a living, but instead his contempt is pointed more to a system, which deceives people to exchange majority of their time for a few home appliances. The statement is quite overdrawn, but it catches the essence of Waters critique. Furthermore, this statement is quite analogous to Arendt’s assessment of spare time the society of laborers. Though Arendt and Waters are both commenting the same phenomenon on the same century, the consumerism in 50s would probably pale in comparison to the consumerism in 70s and 80s. Nevertheless, their interpretations of the fundamental nature of consuming and labor are still quite similar.

The visual images of the scene further develop the message. The luxury car drives away and leaves the viewer with a fist, which turns into a hammer. In a BBC interview Waters says that in *The Wall* he has used hammer as a symbol for forces of oppression (Vance 1979). Thus, the ending of the scene implies that there is an oppressive element present within consumerist system. However, this oppression becomes visible only after the hectic obtrusiveness caused by consumable items has faded away. This disillusionment becomes portrayed in the car driving away from the picture, leaving the confused viewers with an image of hammer striking towards them. The hammer in this case symbolizes the oppressive force keeping capitalist system moving. In Arendt’s interpretation of consumerism there is also somewhat oppressive element present. Arendt (1958, 135) claims the easier the life becomes in the society of laborers, the more increasingly difficult it becomes to remain aware of the urges of necessity, which drives that society. In *The Wall* narrative the hammer displayed in the scene becomes visible manifestation of the oppressive forces of capitalistic society. If we use

Arendt's terms to interpret the symbol of the wall, it symbolizes the way the society of laborers forces its members into serving the endless cycle of life process as laborers and consumers.

Hammer as symbol of oppression, becomes increasingly important element in depicting totalitarianism later in the narrative. The hammer displayed in this scene already ties the theme of capitalism with totalitarianism. Waters is not at all shy in drawing connections between capitalism and totalitarianism in *The Wall*. However, we should be more careful with likening these two in Arendt's thinking, even if there are some clear similarities. Hyvönen raises a concern that Arendt's distinction between liberalism and totalitarianism shouldn't become too blurred. Though the administration of life processes in liberal societies of mass consumerism and totalitarianism are driven by the same process thinking, it doesn't mean that Arendt thought that they were analogous or that the former would necessarily lead to the latter. (Hyvönen 2016, 4.) Canovan seems to have a similar opinion. According to her Arendt didn't think that any of the elements, which went into making of totalitarianism, were themselves totalitarian. Nevertheless, for Arendt these elements seemed to represent a long-term danger. Though their synthesis (Nazism and Stalinism) was defeated, these elements are unlikely to disappear, because they correspond to genuine modern problems. (Canovan 1995, 42.) It is mainly the modern problems that the narrative of *The Wall* best relates to in its effort to describe the predicament of modern humanity.

1.4. We Don't Need No Thought Control: Action and Authority

The first half of the narrative tells a story of Pink building a mental wall around himself. The skeleton for this part of the plot is formed by a song *Another Brick in the Wall*. The song is divided in three parts, which have been scattered on the first half of the narrative. The second part of the song *Another Brick in the Wall – Part II* is most recognizable with its catchy chorus line: "We don't need no education". The line is commonly misunderstood as antieducational statement. However, Rose argues that in the context of the whole narrative the song is not simply repeating a catchy phrase but making a significant statement of school system (Rose 1995, 11). I agree with Rose. However, Rose doesn't develop his argument further than citing the lyrics of the song. In this chapter I attempt to argue what that significant message might have been. I believe that Waters is criticizing the normalizing effect that school system has on children. This theme is slightly connected to the

ideal of statistical uniformity discussed earlier. To gain better political perspective on this matter I first need to define Arendt's third human activity.

Up until now I have mainly focused on the two first human activities in Arendt's thought: labor and work. However, the highest one for Arendt is action. Action for Arendt is a very collective effort. It is not possible in isolation. The distinction Arendt makes to other human activities is that action is never forced upon people by necessity, like in labor, or for the sake of utility, as with work. For Arendt, to act means beginning, initiating new processes (Arendt 1958, 177.) But it is in the nature of this process that once started one can never predict its outcome. Action relies on plurality, which for Arendt means that people are always unique, distinct, different from one another. It is this plurality, which causes the outcome of action to be unpredictable. (Arendt 1958, 178–184.)

At this point it is useful to look at the concepts defining space in Arendt's thinking. The two main concepts of her theory are private and public realm. Arendt draws her examples from antiquity, which creates a unique point of view when reflected on modernity. In antiquity labor was something that was mostly performed in the private realm of household. According to Arendt (1958, 37) mastering the necessities of life was the prerequisite to being allowed to the public realm, which was in turn the space for politics and action. Ancient Greek polis serves as a metaphor for public realm. Only in a public realm could man be fully human. If in private realm priority of people was life, in public realm they had to be ready to even disregard their lives. Courage became the true virtue of public life. (Arendt 1958, 36.) If labor belonged more or less to the private realm and action only to public realm, the role of working *homo faber* was to be the intermediary between the two realms. *Homo faber's* work produces the common world and the public spaces where men can act together (Arendt 1958, 173).

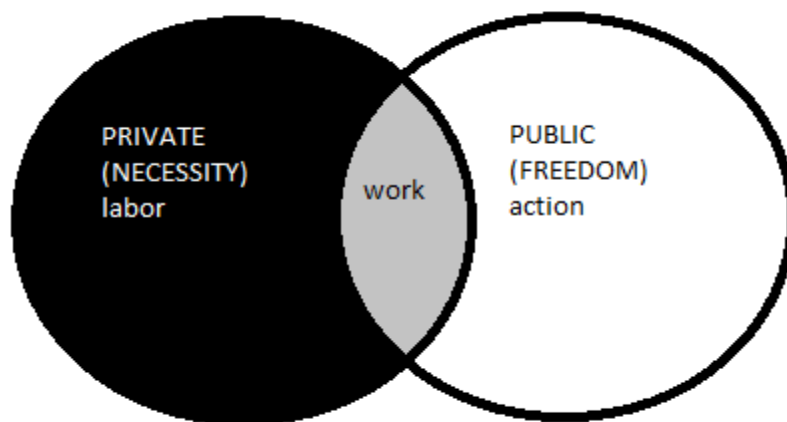


Figure 2. The division of private and public realms in antiquity

The society of laborers discussed in the previous chapter, however, involves a new social realm. In Arendt's terminology social incorporates an idea of handling the life process of the members of the society as if all the members were part of one great family (Arendt 1958, 39). The social realm had its origins in the necessity thinking of private realm, which eventually took over the public realm. From Arendt's point of view, the ancient division of priority where the "household life exists only for the good life in the polis" was now turned upside down in the form of the statement: the public realm exist only for the service of life process. The public realm is yet to be totally disappear from the world for Arendt, but it is according to Arendt it is becoming an experience only for privileged few (1958, 324). However, the role of public was not the only space diminished by society. According to Arendt (1958, 257) the rise of society brought about the decline of the public as well as private realm. The private realm, as opposed to the public realm, was now replaced by intimacy, which received it's meaning as opposed to the social realm (Arendt 1958, 38). This intimacy becomes important theoretical concept in interpreting the theme of loneliness later on in the narrative.



Figure 3. The realms of modernity in the society of laborers

Under these new realms the roles of both work and action diminish. In the society of laborers all the human activities become reduced under the common denominator of securing the necessities and providing their abundance (Arendt 1958, 126). Action is not possible in the necessity of the private realm, and as the social realm is only unnaturally extended private realm, spontaneous action becomes excluded from the whole society. Action becomes replaced by behavior in a society which imposes various rules in order to normalize its members. (Arendt 1958, 40.)

Arendt's assessment on the diminished role of action becomes important perspective in interpreting the song *Another Brick in the Wall – Part II*. The song comes after the song *The Happiest*

Days of our Lives, where Waters has a go at some of his childhood grammar school teachers. Though the song is not that political, there is a scene in the film adaptation, which quite clearly depicts the normalizing effect schools can have on children. This scene involves one of the very few pieces of dialogue in the film; or in this case monologue of the school teacher. After noticing young Pink scribbling poems, the teacher mockingly reads it out to the whole class. After this he comments on it stating: “absolute rubbish, Laddie! Get on with your work!” (Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [00:23:33 – 00:24:05].) To enhance the message in behaviorist manner the comment is accompanied by a firm strike on Pink’s fingers delivered with a wooden pointer. Pink’s artistic thrives are suppressed already in the school, which strives towards normalizing its students and removing any shreds of spontaneity of action. This kind of theme becomes depicted on a more abstract level in the following song *Another Brick in the Wall – Part II*. The lyrics are rather simple, but the political theme is enhanced by strong visual symbolism:

{The drums and bass produce a funk beat, which is very simplistic. The music has very little variation save for occasional funk guitar. School children wearing varying school uniforms are marching in line on a conveyer belt. On the other side of the wall they come out sitting on school desks as the belt moves forward. Now they are wearing unified pink skin toned masks, which have small holes for eyes and the mouth. The children are marching in lines around the maze like school hallways, while the teacher yells: “Wrong do it again!”.

We don't need no education.

We don't need no thought control.

No dark sarcasm in the classroom.

Teacher leave them kids alone.

Hey! Teacher! Leave them kids alone!

All in all it's just another brick in the wall.

All in all you're just another brick in the wall.

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982 [00:24:44 – 00:25:49])

According to Waters the teacher in the song is putting the children down and never encouraging them to do things; crushing them into a right shape (Vance 1979). To do things, especially by one’s own initiative, spontaneously relates to Arendt’s concept of action. The teacher in the scene becomes a symbol for the malignant authority, which according to Waters is one of the themes in the narrative. Arendt has discussed authority in her essay *What is Authority?* Arendt’s assessment on the connection between authority and education, becomes relevant at this point. In Arendt’s view authority in prepolitical areas such as child-rearing and education is naturally justified by the task of continuing civilization; connecting children into the pre-established common world (Arendt 1977, 92). From the perspective of narrative theory incorporating effect of education becomes important. Frye makes a distinction between two modes of fiction: tragic and comic. According to

Frye they do not simply refer to forms of drama, as might be suspected, but to the aspects of plot. In tragic fiction the hero becomes isolated from his society and in comic fiction hero is incorporated into it. (Frye 1990, 34.) If indeed we would view education from Arendt's aspect as incorporating children into common world, we would have a comic fiction of authority. However, the education system the narrative is describing isolating children.

The masks have already been established as a symbol for masses. Consequently, the masked school children are shown to be molded into obedient masses. The small eyeholes in the masks the children are wearing only allow them to see very limited view of the world, whereas the small mouth hole, doesn't allow them to speak properly. The children are not only isolated from the world but from one another as well. According to Arendt the common world comes to existence by being heard and seen by others (Arendt 1958, 58). If the narrative was reflected against this idea of Arendt, it would suggest that Waters has chosen a more tragic approach towards authority.

Frye also classifies fictions into low and high mimetic modes in terms of hero's power of action. If the hero's power is not superior in any way, in relation to other people or the environment, we are dealing with low mimetic mode in which we respond to a sense of hero's common humanity. (Frye 1990, 32.) In the song the hero of the story is young Pink and all the school children seen in the scene, if considered more broadly. Their power to act has been strongly restricted, thus it relates to low mimetic mode. This mode is generally present everywhere in the narrative, from depiction of imperialism to loneliness and totalitarianism. Instead of encouraging children to spontaneity the education system, whose oppressive authority is embodied in the teacher, tries to smother their individuality. In Arendt's terms individuality is connected to plurality in a sense that all the people are different and look the world from a unique perspective. The unvarying drum beat and more liberated bright funk guitar symbolize the contradiction between uniformity and individuality. The scene continues with darker imagery:

{A choir of school children is singing the lyrics of the song. At the end of the conveyor belt the masked children are falling down into a giant meat grinder one after another. On the wall there are shadows of striking hammers attached to moving cogwheels. Minced meat comes out on the other end of the meat grinder.}

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [00:25:49 – 00:26:43].)

The perspective is switched to the actual narrators and heroes of the song: school children. Minced meat, a completely homogenized meat product, which comes out of the grinder with the exact same texture, no matter what goes in from the other side, works as a perfect symbol for normalized masses,

who have been stripped of their individuality. Jenkins makes a similar notion as according to him the schools in *The Wall* narrative are depicted as factories where the individuality is destroyed and children are "squeezed into homogeneous packages" (Jenkins 1996, 206). The factory imagery has been used earlier in the genre of cinema to portray the pressuring effect that industrialized efficiency has on people. The most famous example of this is Chaplin's *Modern Times* (1936). When this imagery is applied to setting of schools, it speaks a whole new language. The school works as factory producing uniform pulp to feed the increasingly expanding system. People are taught to think and behave the same way. The line "we don't need no thought control" refers to this aspect of society normalizing the thinking of its members.

The hammers appearing as shadows on the wall are linking the message above, not only the education system, but to the surrounding oppressive society that the schools serves. The more recent adaptation of the narrative raises the theme of the song to more political level. There are propaganda posters projected on the wall saying: "TRUST US!" In this case "US" refers to any oppressive. In the show around fifteen school children appear on the stage clapping their hands, dancing and lip-syncing along with the song. They are wearing shirts, which say: "FEAR BUILDS WALLS". (Roger Waters the Wall 2014, [00:20:11 – 00:22:30].) This statement enlarges the concept of education to concern any form of violence or coercion by the state, and to condemn the use of fear as a tool for education. At this point it is useful to notice Arendt's remark that authority often becomes mixed by people with power or violence, but according to her where force or coercion is used authority has failed (Arendt 1977, 92–93). Waters quite freely draws symbolic connection between authority in school and state violence. In the show this violent form of authority becomes manifested in a six-meter-high hammer shaped puppet of the teacher. Frye notices that fear is exploited in low mimetic plot, usually in a terrible and ruthless figure "strongly contrasted with some kind of delicate virtue, generally a helpless victim in his power" (Frye 1990, 38). The schoolchildren represent this helpless victim and the teacher embodies the ruthless figure. Mixing the teacher with the symbol of hammer indicates that he is an oppressive part of the society.

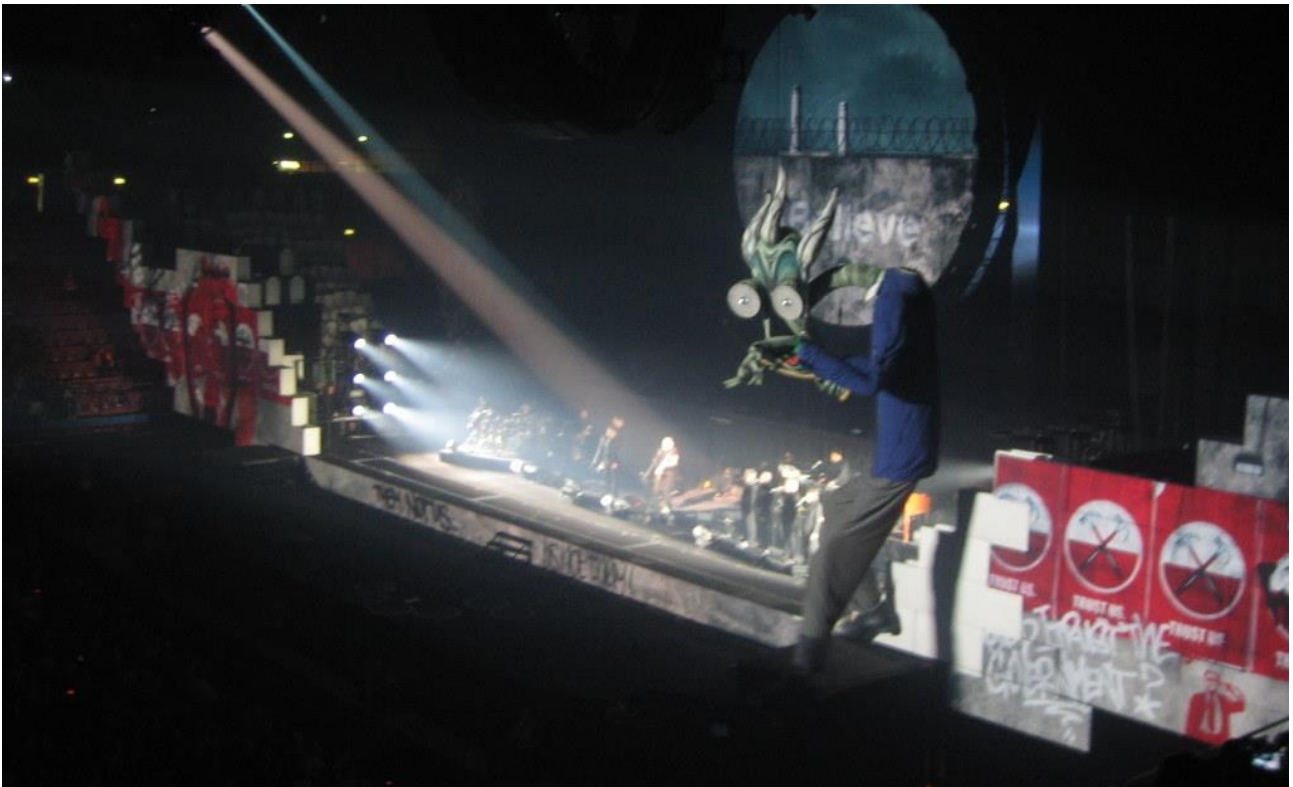


Figure 4: The teacher puppet appearing on stage during *Another Brick in the Wall – Part II*

In the show version of the song *Another Brick in the Wall – Part II* a recent tragic event is added to the plot:

{As the song concludes a passing subway train is projected on the wall. When the train stops flashing lights and sound effects indicate that eight gunshots are fired in one of the cars. After this a memorial text appears on the round screen above the stage: “Jean Charles de Menezes/ Civilian/ Born 1978/ Brazil/ Died 2005/ Stockwell Road/ Tube Station/ London, England”}

(Roger Waters’ *the Wall* 2014, [00:22:34 – 00:22:57].)

Several similar memorial text appear on the screen throughout the show. The visual elements projected on the wall are an enactment of de Menezes’ death. A Civilian, Jean Charles de Menezes, was shot to death by a police officer in the Stockwell Road tube station on 22 July 2005. Officers were hunting terrorists who had tried to bomb London the previous day and they mistakenly took de Menezes as a suspect. The officer shot him point-blank seven times to head and once to shoulder. (Siddique 2016.) *Another Brick in the Wall – Part II* is followed by a new musical section, which does not appear in the earlier adaptations. The song continues with same theme, but the expression is lighter:

and apologies ring hollow/ From the guilty in Whitehall
and there's no him of sorrow/ In the whitewash on their walls
and nothing is gained/ And Jean Charles de Menezes remains
just another brick in the wall

(Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [00:22:55 – 00:24:54].)

After the song Waters states: “I would like to dedicate this concert to him and all the other victims of state terror everywhere, all over the world” (ibid.) In the new extended part Menezes becomes mentioned by name. “Whitehall” refers to the street in London, which is identified as the center of governmental power in the United Kingdom. In the lyrics Waters is not so much accusing the police officer, who had shot an innocent man quite excessively eight times, but instead Waters is pointing toward the British government. The rules of engagement introduced by Metropolitan Police Service stated that suspected suicide bombers are to be shot before they have chance to detonate explosives (Siddique 2016). From this point of view the officer had just followed orders, only with terrible consequences. The whole point of adding de Menezes extension to the end of the song is to show what kind of consequences fear and normalizing process might have: absence of action and responsibility. The theme of the song is clearly raised to a larger political level. This is indicated by Waters' dedication of the concert to victims of state terror. This kind of organized responsibility, which led to death of de Menezes is strongly connected to later depiction of totalitarian irresponsibility in the narrative. This is also indicated by the fact that the song is performed before the song *Mother*, which depicts almost dystopian surveillance state.

If Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* provides a general perspective to totalitarian movements and regimes, her more notorious book *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* offers an insight to a mind and conditions of a single member of totalitarian movement. Tuija Parvikko has studied Arendt's argumentation in *Eichmann in Jerusalem* as well as the debate that followed after its publication. According to Parvikko (2008, 212) Arendt considered Eichmann as a prime example of new evil, which became manifested in the Third Reich. For Arendt Eichmann was in no way exceptional among Nazi officials, but rather a typical example of organized irresponsibility (Parvikko 2008, 18). This view, enabled Arendt to explore on Eichmann the idea of radical evil she and her husband had been considering years before the trial. This idea, which did not yet utilize the idea of banality of evil, was connected to the system where all people had become equally superfluous (Parvikko 2008, 111).

In the following debate Arendt was continually attacked for calling Eichmann normal. However, according to Parvikko (2008, 158) Arendt's motive in calling Eichmann normal, had not been defending him but instead reflecting on what kind of a criminal was in question here. What most of the critics failed to see was Arendt's warning that this new kind of evil might be far more dangerous and difficult to identify than the classic radical evil (Parvikko 2008, 153). The description of Eichmann's normalcy might be confusing. Generally, normal is a positive or a rather neutral concept. However, for Arendt it seems to be rather a negative concept, if it is considered against her thinking in *The Human condition*, where behavior becomes likened with normalcy. Normalized behavior becomes valuated against action, which for Arendt represents something great and exceptional.

If we look the event depicted in the scene from this perspective, we notice that the conduct of officer had been to obey the rules of normalized society. The evil of his action had been more based on irresponsibility than any evil motive. According to Arendt it was Eichmann's thoughtlessness, which enabled him to become one of the greatest criminals of the period. By banality of evil Arendt mostly refers to not thinking for oneself. (Arendt 2006, 287 – 288.). In *The Wall* narrative there is a similar element of criticizing collective thoughtlessness, which becomes best manifested in the line: "we don't need no thought control!"

Such an idea of normalizing society, where no one needs to think for themselves becomes depicted in the following song *Mother*. Originally the song mother depicted an overprotective mother:

[Roger Waters]

Mother, do you think they'll drop the bomb?

Mother, do you think they'll like this song?

Mother, do you think they'll try to break my balls?

Mother, should I build the wall?

Mother, should I run for president?

Mother, should I trust the government?

Mother, will they put me in the firing line?

Is it just a waste of time?

[Robbie Wyckoff]

Hush now, baby. Baby, don't you cry.

Mamma's gonna make all your nightmares come true.

Mamma's gonna put all of her fears into you.

Mamma's gonna keep you right here under her wing.

She won't let you fly, but she might let you sing.

Mama's gonna keep baby cozy and warm.

Ooooh babe. Ooooh babe. Ooooooh babe,

Of course mama's gonna help build a wall.

(Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [00:25:48 – 00:29:24].)

In the lyrics young Pink is dealing with fears aroused by the recent violent history. World War II, which claimed the life of Pink's father probably echoes in the young boy's fear of being put in the firing line. The more existential fear of "the bomb" reflects the ambience of the Cold War. Starting the lyrics with such a horrific concern for mass destruction of humankind and continuing with more trivial fears, such as worrying whether people like his song, reflects the confusion of a child trying to make sense of the frightening world around him. The nuclear weapons are a defining trait of 20th century. Arendt was also worried by nuclear weapons in her account on modernity. The power human race has to wipe out itself along with the all other life on earth has shattered the very purposefulness of human life (Arendt 1958, 149–150).

Mother is a good example of how the meaning of the narrative has broadened from the individual level to a more political level. In the concert adaptation (2010–2013) the beginning of the first verse is still quite involved in the individual view point, but the first hints of larger perspective appear when Waters sings "should I trust the government". A graffiti like text appears on the wall stating "no fucking way". The first verse is performed singer song-writer style, with Waters singing and playing the acoustic guitar. (Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [00:25:48 – 00:29:24].) According to Rose in many Pink Floyd songs this sort of expression is associated with confessional intimacy and honesty (Rose 1990, 95). After the narrator is switched to a calming mother (the role sang by Robbie Wyckoff¹¹), new elements are introduced to the mix: drums, second guitar and bass. This would suggest that the viewpoint is switched from pure and sincere to something else.

This message is clarified by new visual elements, which appear on the wall. Above the stage a large surveillance camera is watching over the audience. At the same time text stating: "DON'T WORRY EVERYTHING WILL BE ALRIGHT, TRUST ME" is sliding across the wall repeatedly. During the guitar solo new pieces of texts appear on the wall: "MOTHER KNOWS BEST". (Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [00:25:48 – 00:29:24].) The proverb suggests that children are irresponsible and unable to know what they need. These ironic clichés describing mothers watching over their children, become rather disturbing when they become connected with an image of surveillance camera. Governments are being criticized for provoking fear within people by the

¹¹ Robbie Wyckoff is the second lead singer in the stage band of Roger Waters. Wyckoff sings the parts, which were sang by David Gilmour in original album.

lines: “Mamma's gonna make all your nightmares come true” and “Mamma's gonna put all of her fears into you”. In the second verse narrated by the mother this allegory is made clearer:

On the background of the stage there is a large doll depicting the mother. The crossed arms of the mother look like brick wall¹². At the same time as the doll moves its eyes the camera moves at the same direction. A text saying “BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU” is shown on the wall, but the letters “BR” in the word brother have been marked over and on top of them is written “M”, which makes the sentence say “BIG MOTHER IS WATCHING YOU”.

Hush now, baby, Baby, don't you cry.

Mama's gonna check out all your girlfriends for you.

Mama won't let anyone dirty get through.

Mama's gonna wait up until you get in.

Mama will always find out where you've been.

Mama's gonna keep baby healthy and clean.

Ooooh babe, Ooooh babe, Ooooh babe.

You'll always be baby to me.

(Roger Waters’ the Wall 2014, [00:30:49 – 00:32:22].)

The synchronized movement of the mother and the surveillance camera serve to further explicit the allegory that the caring mother in the song is representing the surveillance-state controlling and watching over its subjects. The Big Mother is also one of the many references to Orwell’s (1949) book *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which depicts a totalitarian dystopian society where the state organization called Big Brother watches over all the citizens.



Figure 5. Mother watching over the audience

¹² In the song *The Trial* the mother is depicted as cartoon character who encloses Pink within his arms at the same time creating a wall around him.

The surveillance symbolism together with allegorical mother also ridicules the obsession of contemporary societies with state security. This same obsession led to the death of de Menezes. The NSA Prism surveillance program has made tension between security and privacy one of the most disputed political questions of present day. However, the Prism surveillance program was not publicly known until 2013, when the information was leaked by Snowden. Thus the imagery presented in the show (2010–2013) is unlikely to be imitating that occasion. Waters has lived in the United States since the beginning of 21st century. The song is probably most closely connected to the USA PATRIOT Act, signed by president Bush at the beginning of century after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The act granted law enforcement unprecedentedly wide warranty for surveillance.

The form of authority in prepolitical areas of education and child-rearing, which rules the relationships between adults and children, teachers and pupils, has according to Arendt (1977, 92) served as a model for great variety of authoritarian forms of government. Similar analogy is noticed by Waters as well who criticizes government by depicting it in the role of teacher and in the role of mother. Over-protective behavior of mother reaches satirical levels when it is applied to behavior of state. The problem Waters is pointing out is that citizens are treated as children, who are unable to make their own mind and who are unable to know what is best for them.

At this point I'd like to present one more archetypal meaning attached to the symbol of wall. Though this meaning is never directly established, as is the case with most archetypes¹³, it seems to be constantly present. When person thinks of a wall together with totalitarianism, the first thing that usually comes to mind is the Berlin Wall. According to Jenkins the original album has drawn on German experience and the symbol of wall has been influenced by the reality in Berlin; the Berlin Wall had become a metaphor for divisions and psychoses of other nations (Jenkins 1997, 210). The familiarity of the general audience with the Berlin Wall might be the very thing that enables Waters to bring together so much of his symbolism with totalitarianism. The Berlin Wall has a quite well established status as the symbol of introversion of the Soviet system. German Democratic Republic and its secret police Stasi are especially notorious for the mass surveillance of East-German people.

¹³ The communicative strength of archetypal symbols rests on the almost universally conventionalized meanings attached to them, so there is no need to open their content.

1.5. Bricks in the Wall

This is the concluding subchapter of the chapter *Building the Wall*, where I have looked at the elements in the narrative which went into the building of the wall, the symbol of isolation and totalitarianism. This process of building the wall is best put in words in the name of the song *Another brick in the wall*, where every oppressive element in Pink's personal life and in the surrounding society adds another brick to individual as well as to political isolation. Bricks are the symbolic elements creating isolation. These elements have up to this point involved expansive capitalism in *Empty Spaces*, inescapable and obtrusive consumerism in *What Shall We Do Now*, oppressively normalizing society in *Another Brick in the Wall – Part II* and overprotective state in *Mother*. However, the narrative's central theme of war and its casualties has for the most part been left undiscussed. This theme is involved in the first part of *Another Brick in the Wall*, where the symbol of brick first appears:

Daddy, what else did you leave behind for me?

All in all it was just a brick in the wall.

All in all it was all just bricks in the wall.

(Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [00:14:31 – 00:15:08].)

On the individual level the brick refer to Pink's loss of father. However, on the political level the bricks refer to all the victims of wars. De Menezes was portrayed as just another brick in the wall after the part two of the song. During the song *Thin Ice* which is performed quite early in the narrative, several victims of different wars and terrorist attacks are portrayed on the screen with similar memorial texts as with de Menezes. One after another their pictures light up as single bricks on the wall until the whole wall is full of their pictures. The deceased in these pictures represent a variety of people: a young Iraqi boy, an US marine, an Iranian activist etc. (Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [00:10:48 – 00:13:34].) Waters does not seem to differentiate between military and civilian casualties, nor between victims of radical and state terrorism. There seems to be something else connecting these victims.

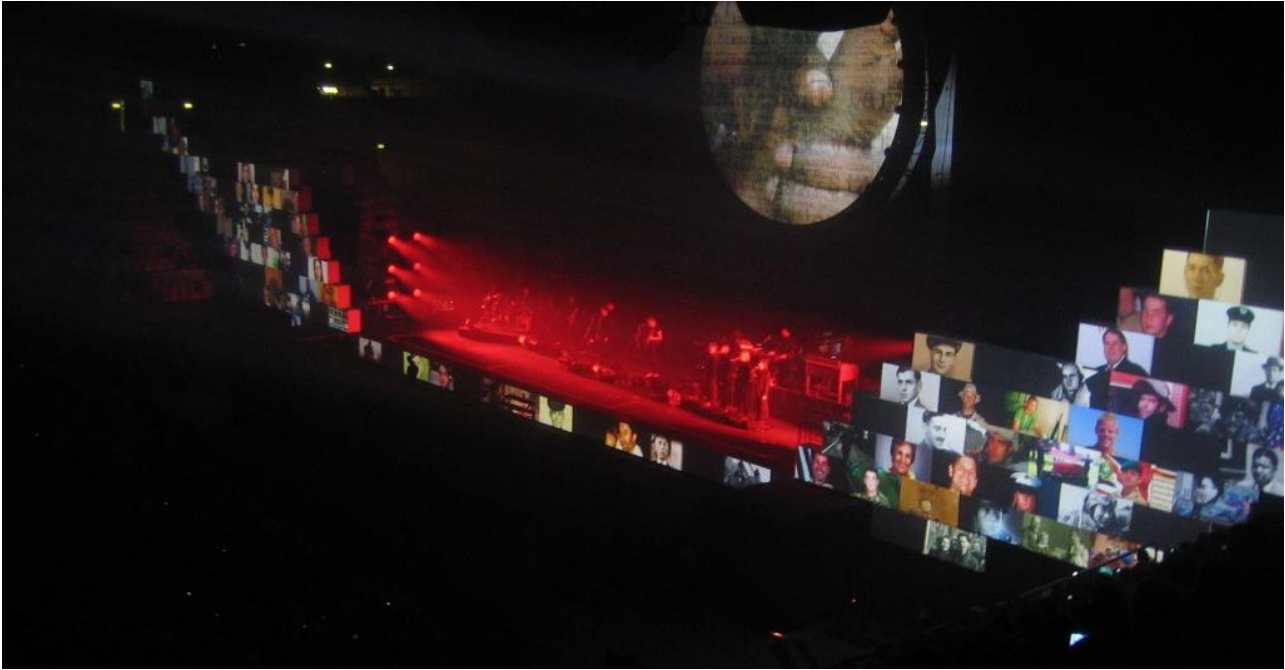


Figure 6. Pictures of victims projected on the wall

In a quite recent interview Waters comments the anti-War theme of the Wall: “it is fundamental to all of our experiences that we’re sick of our men and women being slaughtered on the altar of avarice and commerce” (Locker 2017). *The Wall* seems to connect war strongly with serving capitalistic process of expansion and profit. Calling these people as bricks in the wall is closely connected with the sense of superfluosness felt by the modern masses. The point is not to make these victims seem unimportant, but to suggest that this is how they are seen by governments, which allow people to be sent to their deaths. The statement of Waters suggests that this is done mainly for commercial motives. The argument implicit in depicting people as bricks, is that they are denied their agency. They become the faceless executors and victims of the war. When commenting war Arendt also observes a lack of agency. Arendt argues that the monument “Unknown Soldier” erected after the First World War embodied the frustration “to the brutal fact that the agent of the war was actually nobody” who “the war had failed to make known and had robbed thereby, not of their achievement, but of their human dignity” (Arendt 1958, 181).

There is yet another more symbolic reason for the narrative to depict victims of war as bricks in the wall. The frustration and anger of the people, who have lost family and friends in war, serves in turn to build their walls of isolation as well; on individual as well as on political level. People become increasingly suspicious of people from other cultures, when they are perceived as the enemy responsible for killing our loved ones. Waters comments the message of the narrative in another interview:

It's about our children and about each other and about how we so desperately need to transcend national boundaries in order to cooperate with one another rather than sitting entrenched on our side of a boundary or wall and lobbing bombs at each other over the top of it (Lang 2014).

The narrative, however, doesn't reach such a happy ending of harmony, or at least not quite as soon. Instead it depicts, what happens if we are unable to transcend these boundaries dividing us from one another. Pink's frustration finally erupts in the third and last part of the song *Another Brick in the Wall*:

{Multiple televised speeches of world leaders are projected on the wall, for an example Barack Obama speaking of "a civilian national security force". Pink screams and accompanied by a sound of smash of glass some fractures appear on the wall, which is imitating a television screen. It is smashed until the screen breaks into small shards. Musical theme is the same as in all the earlier parts of the song, but the expression is more aggressive, dominated by long distorted guitar chords and a steady bass drum beat. Names of commercial brands flash on the broken screen }

I don't need no arms around me.

And I don't need no drugs to calm me.

I have seen the writing on the wall.

Don't think I need anything at all.

No! Don't think I'll need anything at all.

All in all it was all just bricks in the wall.

All in all you were all just bricks in the wall.

(Roger Waters' the Wall, [01:02:33 – 01:03:48].)



Picture 7. The wall as a broken screen

In the scene Pink is indifferent even aggressive to other people and to any collective effort. Pink's condition is quite analogous with how Arendt describes the indifference of the masses, which eventually became marooned by totalitarian movements. According to Arendt (1967, 313) the competitive bourgeois society had produced apathy and hostility toward public life, especially among those who had been excluded from it. From this perspective Pink's act of violently destroying the television screen displaying political leaders, indicates his hostility towards politics. This hostility reflects the frustration of all the people, who in modern world have been excluded from politics. Furthermore, the names of commercial brands are displayed on the same screen as the political leaders. This might indicate two different things. First it might suggest that Pink is hostile not only to politics but to the capitalistic system in general. Second it could point to commercialization of politics; in other words the social realm is devouring the space of public realm, if Arendt's terms are applied.

At this point it is helpful to have a closer look at Arendt's concept of power and the way it is connected to her line of thought about the diminished role of the public realm. According to Arendt people depend on one another, as the strength of one person is limited (Arendt 1958, 234). For Arendt power comes always from men acting together, but if the space between men, the public realm, is destroyed, they are left in isolation they become impotent against the terror of totalitarianism. (Arendt 1967, 474 – 479.)

The symbol of the wall is enlarged yet with another common idiom. "Writing on the wall" means that there are clear signs that something will fail. In this sense the wall becomes a harbinger of bad news; a vessel of suspicion and prophecies of doom. Pink might be suspicious that any collective effort could ever change the corrupted political system following its own commercial values. He thus capsulizes the general "what does my action count" kind of attitude, which quite often becomes expressed in low voting rates in western democracies.

Besides the obvious connotation to overmedicalization of western societies, the line "I don't need now drugs to calm me" might refer to not wanting to fall back into the obtrusive circle of consumption and labor, portrayed in the song *What Shall We Do Now*, where a drug syringe was also displayed. The insurmountable feeling of powerlessness is causing Pink, the manifestation of masses, to turn away from other people stating: "I don't need no arms around me". If we interpret the scene using Arendt's terms, Pink has become suspicious of power, which depends on plurality, and instead he is striving towards a sense of self-sufficiency, which becomes indicated in the line: "don't think I need anything at all".

Arendt's assessment of the contradiction between freedom and sovereignty is insightful for the interpretation of the scene. This specific line of thought of Arendt is not only relevant as philosophical speculation, but it becomes important in understanding her account on totalitarianism. The mistake, which has been traditional in Western thought, according to Arendt is to identify freedom with sovereignty; to be suspicious of action, spontaneous beginning of something new, the results of which can never be predicted as they fall into interconnected net of plural human relationships. The ideal of uncompromising self-sufficiency and mastery, typical for sovereignty, is contradictory to the very condition of plurality. (Arendt 1958, 234.) Canovan (1995, 27) sums up Arendt's arguments quite well by stating that aspiration to omnipotence destroys plurality and spontaneity; the human nature itself: "if man is to be omnipotent, human beings as individuals have to disappear". However, the price to pay for the illusion of sovereignty according to Arendt is high:

Yet, if these recommendations were followed and this attempt to overcome the consensus of plurality were successful, the result would be not so much sovereign domination of one's self as arbitrary domination of all others, or, as in Stoicism, the exchange of the real world for an imaginary one where these others would simply not exist (Arendt 1958, 234).

Another Brick in the Wall – Part III is the last song where Pink's wall is still under construction. This is the tragic peak of the plot, where Pink decides to finish his wall and isolate himself. Arendt's evaluation of the attempt to overcome plurality provides an informative perspective to *The Wall* narrative. On the more individual level of the narrative Pink's yearning for sovereignty leads him to exchange the real world for an imaginary one, where other people do not exist. On a more political level this imaginary world involves an attempt of domination of all others depicted in the plot about totalitarianism. These two levels, which will be discussed in the following chapter are highly metaphorical.

2. Behind the Wall

In the previous chapter I have discussed how the wall is built in the narrative and what elements provided the bricks for the character's wall. In the live tour (2010–2013), this progression of the mental wall is symbolized by construction of an actual wall on the stage dividing the performers and the audience. A wall as high as 8 to 10 meters is constructed on each end of the stage stretching out tens of meters to the sides, but leaving the centre of the stage open. As the narrative advances in the concert, new bricks become placed in the wall. The bricks are light material white plates attached to a metal frame. Each brick is around 1,5 meters wide and a meter high. Throughout the show, the roadies attach these brick elements to the wall leading to eventually closing up the whole centre of the stage and isolating the performers from the audience.

In this chapter *Behind the Wall* I discuss two interconnected themes involved in the narrative. These themes are loneliness and totalitarianism.

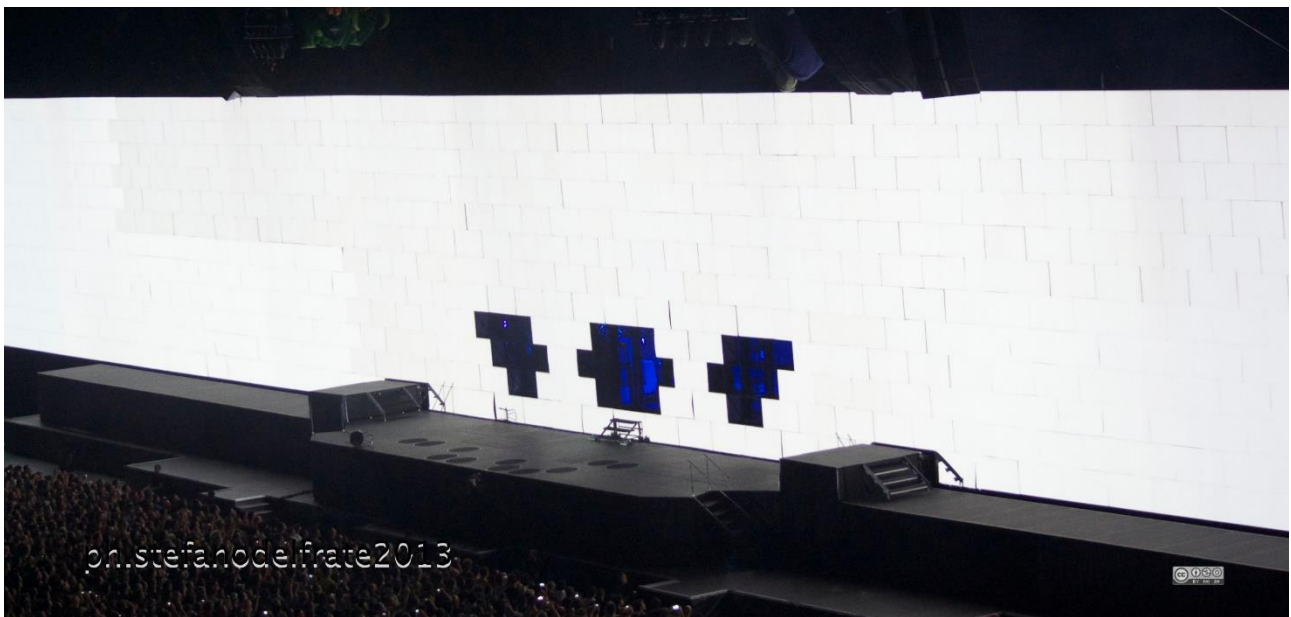


Figure 8. The wall on stage is almost complete

2.1. Modern Loneliness

I start with the theme of loneliness in *The Wall* narrative. This loneliness is depicted from Pink's perspective. Thus, the individual level is more dominating in my interpretation. Nonetheless, loneliness isn't irrelevant from political perspective. In *The Origins of Totalitarianism* the theme of loneliness comprises a large part in Arendt's interpretation of totalitarianism. Arendt has also discussed political meaning of isolation and loneliness in *The Human Condition* and *Men in Dark Times*. I mostly make use of Arendt's thinking presented in these three books to better understand the political aspects in Waters' depiction of loneliness.

2.1.1. Withdrawal from the world

As this chapter is devoted to discussing being behind the wall, I start my analysis from the song *Goodbye Cruel World* where the wall becomes completed:

{The wall is almost complete. Only a single brick remains to be put on the wall. There is a shimmer of light shining through the hole where the last brick would go. Waters appears and starts to sing to the audience through the hole in the wall. At the same time as Waters sings the last line the lights go out behind the wall and the shimmer of light disappears. Right after that the final brick is placed on the wall blocking the final crack.}

*Goodbye cruel world,
I am leaving you today,
goodbye, goodbye, goodbye,
and goodbye all you people,
there is nothing you can say
to make me change my mind,
goodbye*

(Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [01:07:11 – 01:08:22])

This is the moment in the narrative where the wall becomes complete. This is not a song with suicidal message, as the title might be generally understood in the context of popular culture. Instead the character announces that he is withdrawing from the world and its cruelty. This is also approach taken by Jenkins (1996, 209): "As all external hopes failed, the individual could only resort to retreating within a private world within the mind: 'Goodbye Cruel World'". By linking the world with people inhabiting it Waters uses the concept in quite similar way as Arendt. To Arendt the world

stands for all the human made things, which together create a common place for action and politics (Arendt 1958, 7–9). It is the interspace connecting people. As such it is strongly connected to concept of plurality discussed earlier.

Pink's desire to leave the world can be interpreted by Arendt's thinking in *Men in Dark Times*. According to Sjöholm in Arendt's *Men in Dark Times* "the state of inner exile becomes intertwined with outer flight, which is not voluntary escape but a necessary flight (Sjöholm 2015, 26–27). This withdrawal from the world is described by Arendt when she discusses pariahs of the world. For the pariahs of the world this withdrawal might not be a choice "when the times become so extremely dark for certain group of people that it is no longer up to them, their insight or choice, to withdraw from the world" (Arendt 1967, 13). Arendt speaks mainly of persecuted and enslaved groups of people; the injured and insulted, such as the Jews, who have no other choice but to withdraw from the world. On the individual level narrative describes a single character, an artist who feels repressed by personal trouble as well as the malignant authority of mass society.

According to Arendt artist, as *homo faber*, needs to be isolated and concealed from the public, in order for him to be able to produce new things to add to the world (Arendt 1977, 217). However, this isolation of workmanship altogether was abolished in the society of laborers by the introduction of division of labor, where the production was atomized to smallest possible tasks and divided between unskilled labor force (Arendt 1958, 161–163). Sjöholm articulates that in Arendt's view the suppression of public space, which in modernity is accomplished either through commercialism or oppression, produces a situation where loneliness replaces the isolation necessary for production of art. Modernity thus leads to an escape from the public realm into the intimate reclusive spot of self-indulgence. (Sjöholm 2015, 24.) This relates to the intimacy¹⁴, which has according to Arendt replaced the private realm. This relationship to oneself becomes visible in the way Arendt describes modern enchantment with small things; being happy within the space of four walls, "between chest and bed, table and chair, dog and cat and flower pot, extending to these things a care and tenderness which, in a world where the rapid industrialization constantly kills off the things of yesterday to produce today's objects, may even appear to be the world's last, purely humane corner" (Arendt 1958, 52). In *The Wall* narrative there is an attempt to describe same kind of modern intimacy which follows after the withdrawal from the world. This is most clearly articulated in the song *Nobody Home*:

¹⁴ The realms in the society of laborers are depicted in *Figure 3*.

I've got a little black book with my poems in / Got a bag with a toothbrush and a comb in.

When I'm a good dog they sometimes throw me a bone in.

I got elastic bands keeping my shoes on/ Got those swollen hand blues.

I've got thirteen channels of shit on the T.V. to choose from.

I've got electric light. /And I've got second sight.

(Roger Waters' *the Wall* 2014, [01:20:58 – 01:21:40].)

Pink is withdrawing from the world he sees as cruel to the safety of tangible humane things within the space of four walls. Whether this is done in the role of a persecuted and insulted artist or a member of modern oppressed masses might be debated. If considered in the context of the (2010–2013) adaptation latter might be more accurate. Pink as a character embodies many different aspects of modern human life. Nevertheless, it is the same phenomenon the narrative and Arendt are trying to reach: the misery of the world forcing people to turn their backs on it. However, according to Arendt this withdrawing from the world has severe consequences, which are most elaborately described in *The Human Condition*:

To live entirely private life means above all to be deprived of things essential to a truly human life: to be deprived of the reality that comes from being seen and heard by others, to be deprived of an “objective” relationship with them that comes from being related to and separated from them through the intermediary of a common world of things (Arendt 1958, 58).

In this sentence, Arendt describes the political relevance of plurality; other people are the only guarantors of reality. For Arendt, plurality is closely connected to the concept of world. In the song *Goodbye Cruel World* the character has not only become totally isolated from the world but also, totally unreachable by other people, as he states “there is nothing you can say to make me change my mind”. The world and people become connected in the lyrics as the protagonist realizes he’s not only leaving the world, but all the people that inhabit it: the protagonist says goodbye to the world and people separately. Consequently, Pink’s access to reality becomes disturbed. This theme becomes increasingly important as the plot of Pink’s isolation advances.

2.1.2. Hey You: Irrelevant compassion and absence of action

This message relating to being out of reach by other people is conveyed in the following song *Hey You*. It was cut out from the 1982 film version, but it is an important part of the narrative as a whole. In the BBC interview, Waters describes the position of the protagonist in the song: “He is behind the wall (a) symbolically and (b) he’s locked in a hotel room with a broken window that looks out on a freeway” (Vance 1979). These are the two levels the narrative moves on, at least on the film and album versions. For my study, the symbolic level is more important, and it seems to be the case for the later adaptation as the role of millionaire rock star was played down considerably.

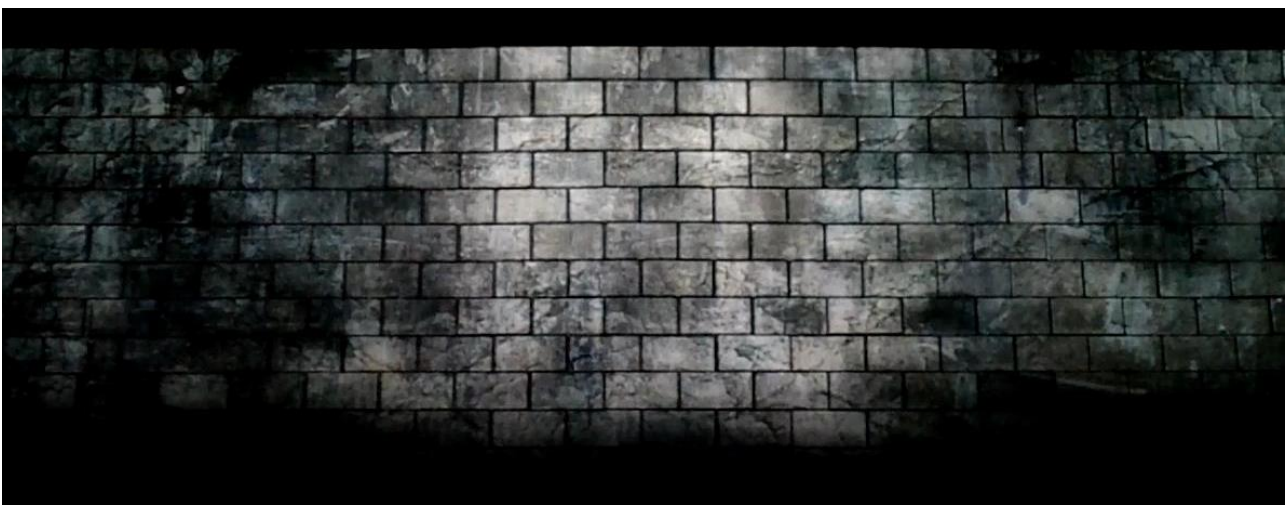


Figure 9. The completed wall during *Hey You*

Protagonist’s symbolic position behind the wall is amplified by the fact that the band performs completely behind the wall. The only thing seen by the audience is a grey brick wall:

Hey you, Out there in the cold

Getting lonely, getting old

Can you feel me?

Hey you, Standing in the aisles

With itchy feet and fading smiles

Can you feel me?

Hey you, Don't help them to bury the light

Don't give in without a fight

Hey you, Out there on your own

Sitting naked by the phone

Would you touch me?

Hey you, With your ear against the wall

Waiting for someone to call out

Would you touch me?

Hey you, Would you help me to carry the stone?

Open your heart, I'm coming home

(Roger Waters’ the Wall 2014, [01:13:03 – 01:15:55].)

As the visual elements are minimal during the song, a great body of central symbolism is presented as semiotic signs: words. According to Kramer “signs assume their semiotic status only once an interpretation is already in progress. Meaning in such cases precedes and energizes its signification” (Kramer 2011, 21–22). What he means by this is that signs have to be interpreted as part of the whole understanding process, not just named as individual signs before the interpretation takes place. Throughout my analysis I take short detours to ponder the meaning of the presented symbols and their relation to the wholeness of the narrative.

Urick notices that Pink is asking help from “lonely” people whose world is paralleling his own, which is visible in the lines “sitting naked by the phone” and “with your ear against the wall” (Urick 2010). Phone stands as a modern symbol of trying to connect with other person, but from the comfort of privacy, which is also highlighted by the absence of clothes in the metaphor. Thus, it is not a genuine attempt to connect with the world, as is not pressing one’s ear against the wall, for if one wanted to truly hear what was going on outside, one would go outside. The wall is presented as manifestation of things that prevent people from hearing and seeing each other.

Waters describes *Hey You* as Pink’s attempt to re-establish connection with the outside world (Vance 1979). The lyrics involve a great deal of humanism, which is surprising after the themes of the previous songs. The lines vary from asking for help and encouraging others “not to give in without a fight”. Presumably this refers to standing against the oppressive forces of modern society. According to Urick the protagonist, in his ironical and egoist attempt to reach out, projects himself on the world around him. In Urick’s interpretation the irony lies in the fact that Pink is asking other people to do unto him what he himself refused from the others¹⁵. (Urick 2010.) However, in my view the protagonist is not simply projecting himself on the world around him, but making a plea for the other pariahs and the atomized masses, who share his pain and can understand his agony. Arendt’s idea of humanity among pariahs might be informative for the interpretation of the lyrics. In her essay *Thoughts about Lessing* Arendt compares this humanity to Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s view of philanthropic feelings: ‘Brotherly attachment to other human beings which springs from hatred of the world in which men are treated ‘inhumanly.’” It is the kind of humanity that Arendt calls the great privilege of pariah peoples. This compassion among the injured and insulted is due to the privilege of “being unburdened by care for the world¹⁶”. (Arendt 1968, 12–14.)

¹⁵ The protagonist has drifted apart from his wife

¹⁶ For Arendt politics wasn’t about taking care of people but taking care of the world. Withdrawal from the world means to stop caring about what goes on in it.

In the narrative Pink has become similarly unburdened by the world, which is quite explicitly articulated in the songs *Another Brick in the Wall – Part III* and *Goodbye Cruel World* discussed earlier. Furthermore, there seems to be a persecuted and injured group that the protagonist sees himself in: “the Bleeding Hearts and Artists”. This group isn’t mentioned until the last two songs *The Trial* and *Outside the Wall*. In *The Trial* the school teacher, presented in form of hammer the symbol for forces of oppression¹⁷, is blaming this group for protecting Pink against proper education:

{The fat wife of the teacher is holding strings of his hammer shaped marionette husband while caning him. The teacher then in turn is holding Pink, portrayed as a ragdoll, in a noose while beating him.}

*If they'd let me have my way
I could have flayed him into shape
but my hands were tied
The bleeding hearts and artists,
let him get away with murder*

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [01:25:19 – 01:25:34].)

Much of the experience of isolation in *The Wall* narrative is described from the viewpoint of isolated artist, Pink. Arendt’s assessment on the role of artist in modern societies might offer some insight to the agony of “the bleeding hearts and artists” involved in the narrative. According to Arendt the work of artist in a society of laborers is seen outside serious labour and is dissolved into play, which leads to art losing its worldly meaning (Arendt 1958, 127 – 128). “The bleeding hearts and artists” are forced to exile from the common world by the consumerist “hard values” of modern society. The bleeding hearts and artists are presented as counterforce for the forces of oppression; the suffering sentimental people sticking together against the harsh world. Though this group does not become mentioned by name in *Hey You*, it is implicit that Pink is referring his plea to them.

Though the plot portraying isolation of the hero is quite tragic, amidst all the depiction of misery, there is a slight undertone of irony involved. This irony is especially visible in the scene from *The Trial* where Pink is portrayed as a helpless ragdoll, the lowest part in the hierarchy of oppression. According to Frye if we see the hero as inferior in power to ourselves “so that we have the sense of looking down on a scene of bondage, frustration, or absurdity, the hero belongs to the ironic mode.” Though the viewers might relate to the situation, the irony is present as they judge the situation by “the norms of a greater freedom.” (Frye 1990, 33.) Similar ironical powerlessness of the hero becomes a prevailing tendency throughout the narrative. Thus, in terms of plot we can speak of

¹⁷ This is also established in the previous chapter. In a interview Roger Waters mentions: “We’ve used the hammer as a symbol of forces of oppression” (Vance 1979).

tragic irony as the hero is also isolated from the society. This irony allows the viewer to identify with the hero. Despite the narrative at this point describes a single character, on a political level he becomes identified with all the modern masses and with the viewers who feel they might be in a similar situation.

Urick (2010) notices that the sign of “light” occurring in the phrase “don’t help them to bury the light” commonly acts as a metaphor for truth in western literature and even “takes on Christ-like significance when read in conjunction with certain New Testament passages either comparing Jesus to the light of the world (John 8:12) or teaching followers not to hide one’s light under a bushel (Matthew 5:14-15).” Light might be one of the most versatile archetypes in Western literature. Light is also a frequently used metaphor in the earlier lyrics of Waters. According to Rose the album *The Dark Side of the Moon* is based on the tension between the light and dark, the sun and the moon. The light of the sun stands for aspiring for beauty and truth in life whereas darkness of the moon represents the misleading anti-life pressures taking place in modern alienating capitalist society. (Rose 1995, 21–22). In *The Wall* a lot of effort is put on criticizing the normalizing tendency of the modern society. This perhaps becomes most clearly articulated in the school teacher presented in form of a hammer, saying: “I could have flayed him into shape”.

In Arendt’s *Men in Dark Times* light stands for the common world, whereas darkness becomes a symbol for hiding from the world into the intimacy of isolation (Arendt 1968). This is the whole essence of the light metaphor in Arendt’s (1995) book *Men in Dark Times*, which might be called a collection of essays about extraordinary people who were able to keep the light alive during oppressive times. The meaning of light as beauty is also present in Arendt’s thinking. According to Arendt works of art are made for the sole purpose of appearing, and appearance is judged by criterion of beauty (Arendt 1977, 210). Sjöholm argues that plurality to Arendt is heterogeneous and differentiated, as it doesn’t come from equal voices, but it can come from people, novels, films or visual works presenting themselves through appearance (Sjöholm 2015, 54). Interpreted from this perspective the supposed meaning of the light; truth and beauty can only be experienced in the plurality of the common world. As the protagonist has retreated from the visible world into the darkness of isolation, the light stands for the last shreds of the common world, where truth and beauty could be experienced.

Urick (2010) attempts to define what light might mean within the narrative and is eventually only able to speculate that it might refer to individuality or to the light of human connectedness. However, from the viewpoint of Arendt’s conception of the world these two meanings become one. Individuality is only possible in a world where people are connected, as according to

Arendt (1958, 179) people reveal their personal identities, which are to themselves invisible, in speaking and acting in the common world. Thus, our individual identities can only become ensured to us through other people. It seems that light as an archetype embodies a variety of more or less shared meanings. The fact that Waters has used such versatile symbol means that he probably wanted to arouse many connotations, some of which I have just described.

However, light is only one of the signs introduced in the lyrics. Some of the signs are connected to bodily sensations: “out there in the cold” and “touch me”. It is typical for low mimetic tragedies that feelings of pity and fear become communicated as sensations. According to Frye this becomes best characterized as pathos, which has a close relation to the sensational reflex of tears (Frye 1990, 37). This is where the lyrics of the song exceed: in describing misery and agony of isolation. Pink’s desire to connect with the other pariahs is typical for pathos:

The root idea of pathos is the exclusion of an individual on our own level from a social group to which he is trying to belong. Hence the central tradition of sophisticated pathos is the study of the isolated mind, the story of how someone recognizably like ourselves is broken by a conflict between the inner and outer world, between imaginative reality and the sort of reality which is established by a social consensus. (Frye 1990, 38.)

It is on this pathetic level that the narrative moves on during the song *Hey You*, where Pink is in vain trying to ask for help of other pariahs.

If we continue on the path of sensational metaphors, we notice that they play a part in Arendt’s thinking as well. Arendt argues that in the darkness of the worldlessness, light becomes replaced by warmth; “pariahs substitute for light” (Arendt 1968, 16). It is of importance to notice that warmth can never substitute light as politically visible space, but it seems like the only way to defend oneself from the irreality brought on by the absence of common world:

And in invisibility, in that obscurity in which a man who is himself hidden need no longer see the visible world either, only the warmth and fraternity of closely packed human beings can compensate for the weird irreality that human relationships assume wherever they develop in absolute worldlessness, unrelated to a world common to all people (Arendt 1968, 16.)

If we reflect this metaphor against *The Wall* narrative we notice that Pink is longing for warmth, as he states “hey you, out there in the cold”. This interpretation is accurate if we assume that he is calling out to people, who share his condition. In that case Pink is describing himself as much as the person

he is calling out to. However, Pink has become completely isolated and he doesn't have access to what Arendt describes "warmth and fraternity of closely packed people". Pink's plea is left on merely a symbolic level taking place in his mind as he is alone in his hotel room. Nevertheless, the plea for help and human connection is quite explicit in the song, especially in the line "would you help me to carry the stone". Urick remarks that "carrying a stone" is a popular symbol of overwhelming burdens since the ancient Greek myth of Sisyphus (Urick 2010). In this context, the stone easily becomes a symbol of unbearable isolation.

To better understand the symbolism applied here I embark on a detour of exploring Waters' use of symbols in his earlier work. Waters has used the metaphor of stone in the previous album *Animals*, which as mentioned is based on George Orwell's novel *Animal Farm*. Waters uses the animal characters to criticise capitalistic economic system. The sheep symbolize the lowest class, which is unable to question the oppressive conditions they live in. The dogs are the competitive bourgeoisie, the class protecting the pigs and striving towards becoming as successful as them. Pigs are the ruling class "which owns the means of economic production". (Rose 1995, 93 – 94.) The topic of this discussion, the stone, becomes mentioned in the lyrics of the song *Dogs*: "so you have good drown, as you go down, alone, dragged down by the stone". According to Rose (1995, 101–102) the narrator is a dog, who is refusing to help another isolated dog, who has finally reached the highest status of an pig; the symbol of greed and disillusionment of success. In *The Wall* Pink is in a similar ailment as this dog, asking for help to carry the stone. Pink also refers to himself as a dog in the song *Nobody Home*: "*When I'm a good dog they sometimes throw me a bone in*". By "They" he presumably refers to the ruling class, pigs. Rose argues that in the narrative of *Animals*, as in Orwell's *Animal Farm*, the dogs have been trained by the pigs to protect their interests. Additionally it is in their interest that the dogs are isolated from one another; they are in an unrelenting competition with one another (Rose 1995, 103–104.)

In *Animals* the theme of unrelenting competition is highly contrasted with reciprocal compassion. This compassion is explicit in the song *Pigs on the Wing – Part I*, where the narrator is according to Rose (1995, 96) a dog who begins to question the rules of his society:

*If you didn't care what happened to me,
And I didn't care for you,
We would zig zag our way through the boredom and pain,
Occasionally glancing up through the rain,*

Wondering which of the buggers to blame

And watching for pigs on the wing.

(Pink Floyd Animals 1977)

According to Rose's interpretation the narrator is suggesting that the only way of "escaping what he sees as the directionless or meaningless modern condition", the boredom and pain, is through human affection (Rose 1995, 96). The lyrics of *Pigs on the Wing* and *Hey You* both seem to mirror something very similar as Arendt's view of the compassion among pariahs; the warmth and fraternity among the pariahs helping each other "to carry the stone".

In *Hey You* Pink's plea for help is followed by the exhortation: "open your heart I'm coming home". Home is used in a similar sense by Waters in all of his lyrics. An example of this can be found in the album *The Dark Side of the Moon*, especially in the song *Breathe*, where the character finds the time to relax by the fire in his home. Rose interprets home as a symbol for relief and comfort against the pressures of modern capitalist society (Rose 1995, 32–33). Home in the song *Hey You* stands for the human affection, which is the only thing offering warmth in the conditions of isolation. Similar meaning becomes also manifested in the second part of the song *Pigs on the Wing*, which concludes the album *Animals*:

You know that I care what happens to you.

And I know that you care for me too,

So I don't feel alone,

Or the weight of the stone,

Now that I've found somewhere safe

To bury my bone.

And any fool knows a dog needs a home

A shelter from pigs on the wing.

(Pink Floyd Animals 1977)

In the lyrics home becomes referred to as shelter. This is very similar to the way Arendt stresses having a sheltered place in the world in *The Human Condition*. This is connected mainly to Arendt's idea of private realm, which consists of sheltered life of household. Arendt suggests that in antiquity "without owning a house a man could not participate in the affairs of the world because he had no

location in it, which was properly his own” (Arendt 1958, 30). Somewhat similar statement is made in the lyrics: “any fool knows a dog needs a home”. Though the dog is unable to change the oppressive world and he has withdrawn from it, he has not lost his spirits as he has a safe place where he is able to give and receive compassion. Once again the “weight of the stone” becomes mentioned, but this time right after the phrase “so I don’t feel alone”. Though the dog has become alienated from the society, he is not completely alone and thus he has been able to preserve some capacity for compassion. In *Men in Dark times* Arendt describes the humanity of pariahs as “some minimum of humanity in a world that has grown inhuman” (Arendt 1968, 17). In Arendt’s view a flight from the world to the concealment of private life during the times of impotence and darkness is justifiable as long as the reality is not ignored (Arendt 1968, 22). However, according to Arendt there is always a temptation to give up facing the reality:

How tempting it was, for example, simply to ignore the intolerably stupid blabber of the Nazis. But seductive though it may be to yield to such temptations and to hole up in the refuge of one’s own psyche, the result will always be a loss of humanness along with the forsaking of reality. (Arendt 1968, 23.)

Though flight from the public life is central theme both for *The Wall* and *Animals*, there is one crucial difference in the two narratives of Waters. If we take Arendt’s idea of remaining aware of the reality, the two narratives have different plots. The dog in the narrative is not ignoring the reality as he was “glancing through the rain [. . .] at the pigs on the wing”; keeping an eye out at the oppressive society. The dog succeeds where Pink fails as he can rely on the compassion in the safety of his home. Pink, however, is not as lucky. The second verse ends with the lines “open your heart I’m coming home”, which can be interpreted as Pink’s attempt to reach the humanity and compassion he is reaching for. This is followed by a solo piece with two guitars. Rose makes an interesting notion regarding the guitar solos of Pink Floyd. Rose applies Robert Walser’s idea that in heavy metal guitar solo is often used due to its freedom of motion as liberating musical vehicle against the oppressive bass, drums and rhythm guitar; the solo serves as symbolic transcendence (Rose 1995, 29). However, in case of Pink Floyd, the solo guitarist David Gilmour¹⁸ plays very slow and melodic solos, lacking the improvisatory nature solo's typically have:

As a result his solos give the impression of an *attempt* at transcendence or liberation (due to their typical position in the mix above the rest of the instruments), but a failed

¹⁸ Snowy White, the stage guitarist of Waters’ band, is quite devoted to the way Gilmour has originally played the solos on the album.

attempt when considered in the context of Waters' characteristically bleak texts. This is, perhaps, one of the reasons for the effectiveness of Waters' and Gilmour's collaborations. (Rose 1995, 30.)

When it comes to *Hey You*, the previous statement holds especially true. The rhythm guitar is playing a short repeating riff on lower strings, which together with bass and drums serve as the oppressive element; the heavy stone of isolation. The lead guitar starts to play the same riff in unison with the rhythm guitar, but occasionally breaking away from its pattern, with longer notes and brief moments of accelerated picking. The solo comes to an end with a note that is slid down on the neck. This symbolizes falling of the hero; a failure of his attempt to reach his destination, home. This is illustratively expressed in the title of the song *Nobody Home* and in the lines: “When I try to get through on the telephone to you, there will be nobody home”. As Pink’s home is empty of human contact and compassion, Pink fails remaining aware of reality. All his pleas “hey you” seem to remain unheard by others and even worse, they only seem to take place within his mind.

The failed attempt of liberation symbolized by solo gets a relief in the bridge of the song, which follows the solo with a vocal melody in major scale, ironic opposite to the grim major scale of the solo. The vocalist is switched from Robbie Wyckoff to Waters. The viewpoint is switched from the protagonist to an outside narrator:

But it was only fantasy

The wall was too high, as you can see

No matter how he tried he could not break free

And the worms ate into his brain

(Roger Waters’ the Wall 2014, [01:15:55 – 01:16:22].)

The first line “but it was only fantasy” establishes that the momentary attempt at reaching out was not real; it was only taking place in the mind of the protagonist. By saying “the wall was too high” and “no matter how he tried, he could not break free” narrator is showing the futility of the whole attempt. This is also the first time that the central motif of worms is mentioned in the narrative. In the BBC interview Waters defines the meaning behind the worms to some extent: “they were my symbolic representation of decay, because the basic idea behind the whole thing really is that, if you isolate yourself you decay.” (Vance 1979). Waters does not go any further to define what this decaying refers to. Waters’ statement of isolation leading to decay is quite similar to the loss of humanness and reality, which in Arendt’s prognosis follow from isolation or holing up “in the refuge

of one's own psyche". The result of the decay is shown visually in the projection on the wall. In between the bridge and the final verse of *Hey You* a new visual element appears on the wall breaking the serene visual expression of the still brick wall:

{The projected brick wall divides into two separate walls, which open up like two large doors stretching out into the darkness. From the darkness appears a distorted human figure, with white skin and hunched back. He charges towards the audience, but becomes stopped as he hits the screen; an invisible wall. The two walls close up like doors, creating a unified wall again.}

(Roger Waters' *the Wall* 2014, [01:16:22 – 01:16:55].)

The audience is offered a peek behind the wall, into the mind of an isolated person. The haggard human figure is indeed the visual portrayal of the character's state of mind. The emaciated figure bares resemblance to pictures of victims released from concentration camps. Arendt's description of the camps reality might offer some insight to what the narrative is trying to communicate by this figure. According to Arendt:

We attempt to understand the behaviour of the concentration-camp inmates and SS-men psychologically, when the very thing that must be realized is that the psyche *can* be destroyed even without the destruction of the physical man; that, indeed, psyche, character, and individuality seem under certain circumstances to express themselves only through the rapidity or slowness with which they disintegrate (Arendt 1967, 441).

It might be quite shocking that Arendt compares the psyche of SS-men and the inmates in the same sentence. However, she is not comparing their suffering, but the way their psyche has become destroyed by both the deprivation of the common world and compassion in the private realm. Thus, it is pointless to interpret their behaviour, as distinct from action, in terms of psychology, because there is no psyche to be understood. Arendt describes the end result of this disintegration as inanimate men (*ibid.*). In *The Wall* show the figure lurking in the darkness the narrative is illustrating somewhat similar death of the mind as Arendt is trying to communicate by her statement about the camps. At least Arendt's choice of words "disintegrate" is a similar metaphor for the death of the mind as Waters' metaphor for decay, the worms.

The song continues to the last verse, and surprisingly Waters continues in the role of Pink, though the role was sang by Wyckoff earlier. This is unusual, as ordinarily in the album the singing duties of Gilmour and Waters have presented voices of different characters¹⁹. Urick wonders this

¹⁹ A good example of this is the song *Mother* where Waters sings the role of Pink and Gilmour the role of the mother

inconsistency as well and he concludes that the reasons behind it might have to do with musical expression: “Gilmour’s mellifluous tone best suited for Pink’s initial plaintive pleas, and Waters’ more caustic delivery more in line with the character’s growing frenzy when help doesn’t arrive on the other side of his wall” (Urlick 2010). Urlick might be right. Waters delivers the final verse in a more frustrated manner:

Hey you, Out there on the road

Always doing what you're told

Can you help me?

Hey you, Out there beyond the wall

Breaking bottles in the hall

Can you help me?

Hey you, don't tell me there's no hope at all

Together we stand, divided we fall

(Roger Waters’ the Wall 2014, [01:16:55 – 01:17:43].)

The final verse imposes a strong sense of frustration, that Pink starts to experience as his calls are not answered. As Pink’s mind is dying, the last verse represents the final, sometimes most violent bursts of strength and struggle that a dying beast finds within itself before it realizes it has lost the battle. The requests to become “felt” and “touched” (in other words manifestations of compassion) have changed to direct cries of help: “can you help me”. The pleading tone of the first two verses has turned to more cynical and judgemental: “always doing what you’re told” and “don’t tell me there’s no hope at all”. These two comments can be viewed against Arendt’s concept of action and the criticism of behaviour discussed earlier: action is represented as something exceptional against behaviour, which is normal. If considered against the myriad connections to the album *Animals* these comments might be referring to the “sheep” and “dogs” of society, who fulfil their role without helping each other and without realizing they are being used.

The lyrics of the second verse concluded to a request: “open your heart, I’m coming home”, which referred to reaching for compassion. Pink’s attempt to reach home has failed. To understand Pink’s failure, we should further view Arendt’s concept of humanity. From Arendt’s view openness to others is the precondition of humanity. However, according to Arendt sharing joy is superior to sharing suffering, as “gladness, not sadness, is talkative” (Arendt 1968, 15). From

Arendt's perspective of humanity, the openness the protagonist is expressing seems to relate more to suffering. The phrase "itchy feet and fading smiles" hardly counts as gladness. The connection between Arendt's concepts of action and compassion becomes relevant to interpreting the message of this particular song. Arendt claims that this kind of compassion among pariahs makes action impossible. She argues that compassion is based on emotion; feeling pain for some else's suffering. Pain is passive for Arendt:

The decisive factor is that pleasure and pain, like everything instinctual, tend to muteness, and while they may well produce sound, they do not produce speech and certainly not dialogue. (Arendt 1968, 15–16.)

Arendt's statement on muteness of pain is very similar to Frye's conception of pathos. Frye describes pathos as a queer ghoulish emotion, which is characterized by a real or simulated failure of expression (Frye 1990, 38). Similar failure of expression is involved in almost every line of the lyrics, not to mention that they are expressed from behind the wall. The use of impressions such as "feel me" and "touch me" in the song quite well reflect the instinctual nature of this kind of compassion. Furthermore, they are connected to the sensational nature of pathos. The musical elements of the song also point to something instinctual. The song starts with a simple clean guitar switching between two chords. A short bass melody is introduced, not as a rhythm instrument, but playing a sliding solo in the higher strings. Applied on bass guitar, this produces a special kind of howling sound, resembling a sad or wounded animal calling out. Thus, musical expression can be considered signifying a kind of primitive suffering. Kramer (2011, 23) points out that there are of course musical signs, where musical expression clearly refers to something. This is similar to Frye's definition of sign, which signifies something outside the text. However, according to Kramer their value to interpretation is always very limited, as to reach meaning we need to interpret what the signified means in relation to the whole body of meaning (ibid.). What this means in this case is, that we can easily gather that the musical expression relates to some sort of primitive cry due the sounding index of the howling bass. However, this is not enough, as we also need to connect the meaning to the whole body of meaning, which is, in this case, the instinctual nature of the compassion the character is feeling.

In the BBC interview Waters describes the message behind *Hey You*: "All of us have sometimes formed sentences in our mind that we would like to say to someone else but we don't say it. That's no use; that doesn't help anybody" (Vance 1979). Waters' comment on the song *Hey You* is quite revealing if considered against Arendt's conception of passive compassion. The muteness of compassion Arendt is trying to describe comes down to passivity, which can well be compared against Arendt's view on action. The human nature and feelings of compassion among the injured and

insulted are not insignificant for Arendt, because they make the misery endurable, but in political terms they are “absolutely irrelevant” (Arendt 1968, 16–17). By this Arendt ultimately means that the brotherhood among the worldless people, though offers warmth among them, benefits the rest of the world in no way.

The lyrics of *Hey You* seem to move between self-pity and pity for other pariahs under similar conditions. The pathos when strongly applied becomes “a factitious appeal to self-pity, or tear-jerking” (Frye 1990, 38). Arendt compares the compassion of pariah to pity and quotes Cicero: “Why pity rather than give assistance if one can?” Arendt reforms Cicero’s question into form: “should human beings be so shabby that they are incapable of acting humanly as spurred and as it were compelled by their own pain when they see others suffer?” (Arendt 1968, 15.) In Arendt’s remark it is important to note the use of the word “acting”. The instinctual nature of pain and passive compassion of pariah become reflected against the plural concept of action. From this view Pink’s pleas “can you help me” to people, who are unable to act, who are “always doing what [they are] told”, seem quite hopeless. If we are unable to act; and more precisely to act together, all the hope is indeed lost, as Pink claims. Pink’s imperative: “don’t tell me there is no hope at all”, can be interpreted to mean that if no one will help him and if no one will act, they are as good as saying that there is no hope. This is also what the last line: “together we stand, divided we fall”, refers to: the power of acting together and the hopelessness of isolation. In Arendt’s *The Origins of Totalitarianism* the concept of action becomes a central connection between isolation and totalitarianism. According to Arendt the absence of action is a precondition for totalitarianism. Arendt points out that it has been frequently observed that terror can rule absolutely only over people who have been isolated from one another. They are powerless against it, as for Arendt power comes from men acting together (Arendt 1967, 474.) I believe that *The Wall* is trying to convey a similar message in its depiction of isolation and totalitarianism.

2.1.3. **Nobody out there: logic and absence of reality**

Arendt claims that totalitarian domination “bases itself on loneliness, on the experience of not belonging to the world at all, which is among the most radical and desperate experiences of man” (Arendt 1967, 475). The following song *Is there anybody out there* has a hint of the same kind

of radical desperation, as Arendt is describing. Waters labels this song as a mood piece (Vance 1979), but in the 1982 film version the involved symbolism is rather important for the development of the narrative:

{Pink is pressing his ear against a grey brick wall, which is wide that it stretches out and disappears into darkness. Some disturbing sound effects build the atmosphere of loneliness on the background. Pink charges towards the wall and bangs his hands against it repeatedly. Finally, he gives up rolling against the wall to the ground}

Is there anybody out there?

Is there anybody out there?

Is there anybody out there?

Is there anybody out there?

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [00:54:10 – 00:55:05].)

The scene is very dreamlike and obviously takes places symbolically in the character's mind. The protagonist has finally given up on reaching out to the other people after the brief moment of humanity seen in *Hey You*; he has become completely detached from the world and other people. He has become rootless, which is later stated in the song *Nobody Home*, where Pink concludes his accounting of his personal belongings on a melancholy note: "I've got fading roots". If we view this metaphor from the perspective of Arendt's thinking, rootlessness becomes interpreted as detachment not only from the world, but reality as well. According to Canovan (1995, 32) Arendt connected rootlessness to the new barbarism of modern masses. In *Men in Dark Times* Arendt argues that wordlessness is always a form of barbarism (Arendt 1968, 13). It is this barbarism that the pariah has to pay for the humanity:

The privilege is dearly bought; it is often accompanied by so radical loss of the world, so fearful an atrophy of all the organs with which we respond to it – starting with the common sense with which we orient ourselves in a world common to ourselves and others and going on to the sense of beauty, or taste, with which we love the world [. . .]
(Arendt 1968, 13)

What Arendt is describing, is the loss of common sense, the common reality, which is attainable only through other people. The only reason people can trust in their reality is that other people corroborate it. The starting point of common sense, *sensus communis*, is in other people. Common sense to Arendt means a sixth sense, producing sense of realness out of data produced by distinct senses. Common sense has a social aspect, but it doesn't simply mean sharing the same reality. Reality is produced by imagination, taking an active part. (Sjöholm 2015, 83–85.) This means that not everyone looks the reality from the same point of view, but from different positions. The plurality of the world, the

presence of others, is the only reason why we can trust our senses (Arendt 1967, 476). In *The Wall* the “light” has become buried together with the sense of beauty, which is illustrated by the darkness Pink finds himself in behind the wall. The loss of common reality becomes also indicated in the concert version of the narrative:

{As Waters sings his mantra: “Is there anybody out there”, moving picture of his two staring eyes becomes projected on the wall, staring through the audience, but without finding focus. Two bricks fall loose off the wall at the spot where his right eye is. Four spotlights, two in the front and two in the back, rake the audience restlessly.}

(Roger Waters’ *the Wall* 2014, [01:17:44 – 01:18:51].)



Figure 10. The eyes of Waters projected on the wall

If we apply Arendt’s terminology, the two falling bricks might in this case refer to atrophy of senses, which follows from isolation. The raking spotlights search for some sort of focus point, without finding anything. This might indicate Pink’s desperate search for anyone or anything that could re-establish his connection with the world and reality. The weird unreality experienced by Pink is illustrated by the psychedelic sound effects accompanying the song.

In *The Origins of Totalitarianism* Arendt describes one capacity of human mind, which doesn’t rely on the common world. This is the ability of logical reasoning, the only reliable “truth” human beings can fall back on after having lost the common sense, the only connection to reality.

However, Arendt claims that this “truth” is empty as it reveals nothing but self-evident, and under the conditions of loneliness it starts to “develop its own lines of ‘thought’.” (Arendt 1967, 477.) The scene in the 1982 film starts to develop into direction, which quite accurately, though more symbolically, mirrors Arendt’s account on the consequences of isolation:

{A solo classical guitar, accompanied by very light orchestral expression, plays a plaintive pattern as upper view of Pink’s hotel room is shown moving across the whole room. All the pieces from things Pink had destroyed moments ago, have been neatly organized in lines that appear to be in logical order, but in a closer look make no sense at all. Cigarettes, dollar bills, torn pictures, broken vinyl records, smashed guitar parts and all the other trash form a seemingly pattern on the floor. Pink is crouched over his masterpiece giving it a final touch by positioning some stray chicken bones to fit the big picture. }

(Pink Floyd the Wall, [00:55:05 – 00:56:58].)

The solitaire classical guitar is a manifestation of Pink’s isolation. The scene can be interpreted as Pink’s attempt to find some truth in form of consistency under the conditions where nothing can be trusted as the reality has faded away along with the people guaranteeing it. In Arendt’s thinking logicity taking the place of reality is one of the elements loneliness to totalitarianism. According to Arendt defining consistency as truth means denying the truth altogether. Under the conditions of loneliness the deducing process always arrives at the worst possible conclusions. (Arendt 1967, 477.) This becomes reflected in the way she discusses the ideal subjects of totalitarian rule. It is “not the convinced Nazi or the convinced Communist, but people for whom the distinction between fact and fiction (*i.e.*, the reality of experience) and the distinction between the true and false (*i.e.*, the standards of thought) no longer exist” (Arendt 1967, 474).

In Arendt’s account the two connecting elements between loneliness and totalitarianism are absence of action, discussed in the previous chapter and absence of reality, discussed in this chapter. Additionally, there is a third element, absence of care, which is mostly topic of the next chapter. *The Wall* narrative also starts to link isolation to totalitarianism in the conclusion of *Is There Anybody Out There*. After finishing organizing the trash in his room Pink moves to bathroom:

{The music continues with solitaire classical guitar. Pink shaves his face, chest and eye brows. Blood drips on the sink. The music ends at this point with guitar descending endlessly to a lower chord after finishing by rising few notes on a high string. Pink appears out from the bathroom and his face is revealed. Pink has combed his messy black hair back. The expression on Pink’s face is hollow and this picture is enhanced by the absence of his eye brows. }

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [00:56:58 – 00:57:36].)

The endlessly descending guitar can be interpreted as the endless deducing process starting to take hold in Pink's mind. In this scene, Pink is starting to transform into the totalitarian leader we see him in the ending of the narrative: the sleek hair and shaved eyebrows. The shaving of body hair might symbolize rebirth of sort, becoming free of one's past and worldly trouble. If Arendt's thinking is applied to this scene, it might be interpreted as a desire for order and consistency, starting with one's own body. The shaving of eyebrows however, is the most important symbolic gesture pointing to the character's inner numbness. Eyebrows play a crucial part in understanding human facial expressions, and without seeing their position it is hard to tell what the person is feeling. The scene is depicting Pink's inability to express anything, and more over his inability to feel or think anything that could be expressed in the first place.

2.1.4. Comfortable Numb: Absence of identity and care

The character's inability to feel is perhaps best expressed in the song *Comfortably Numb*. On the level of actual events in the narrative Pink has been locked inside his hotel room, as Waters mentioned earlier. During *Comfortably Numb* Pink's manager and the crew break into the room and find Pink in a catatonic state sitting in his chair. A doctor is called in and they start getting him into shape to do a gig. This scenario is played out in the 1982 film, but the concert adaptation (2010–2013) shows bit more of the symbolic level of the song:

{The song starts with slide guitar moving towards higher note, signaling the madness of the protagonist. As Waters starts to sing the wall on the background opens up forming two separate walls again, much the same way as earlier during *Hey You*. However, this time instead of the walls stretching out to darkness they disappear into whiteness of light. Vocals, sang by Waters in the role of the doctor, have a strong delay effect, which enhances the sense that his voice is coming from a far.}

*Hello, is there anybody in there?
Just nod if you can hear me.
Is there anyone home?
Come on, now, I hear you're feeling down.
Well I can ease your pain
And get you on your feet again.
Relax, I'll need some information first.
Just the basic facts.
Can you show me where it hurts*

(Roger Waters' the Wall, [01:29:00 – 01:29:53].)

Superficially Waters is imitating a typical medical examination performed by a doctor. Pink, the patient, is unresponsive, and the doctor diagnoses him feeling down and promises to ease his pain. Pink's pain resulting from isolation is described in the previous songs quite vividly. If we follow the established approach looking Pink as manifestation of modern masses, his symptoms become relevant on a more political level. The isolated members of masses judge themselves in terms of individual failure and the world in terms of specific injustice, which leads to self-centered bitterness and an experience of superfluity; selflessness in a sense that one does not matter (Arendt 1967, 315). Similar elements of self-centered bitterness and deeming the injustice of the world are quite visible in the songs *Goodbye Cruel World* and *Hey You*.

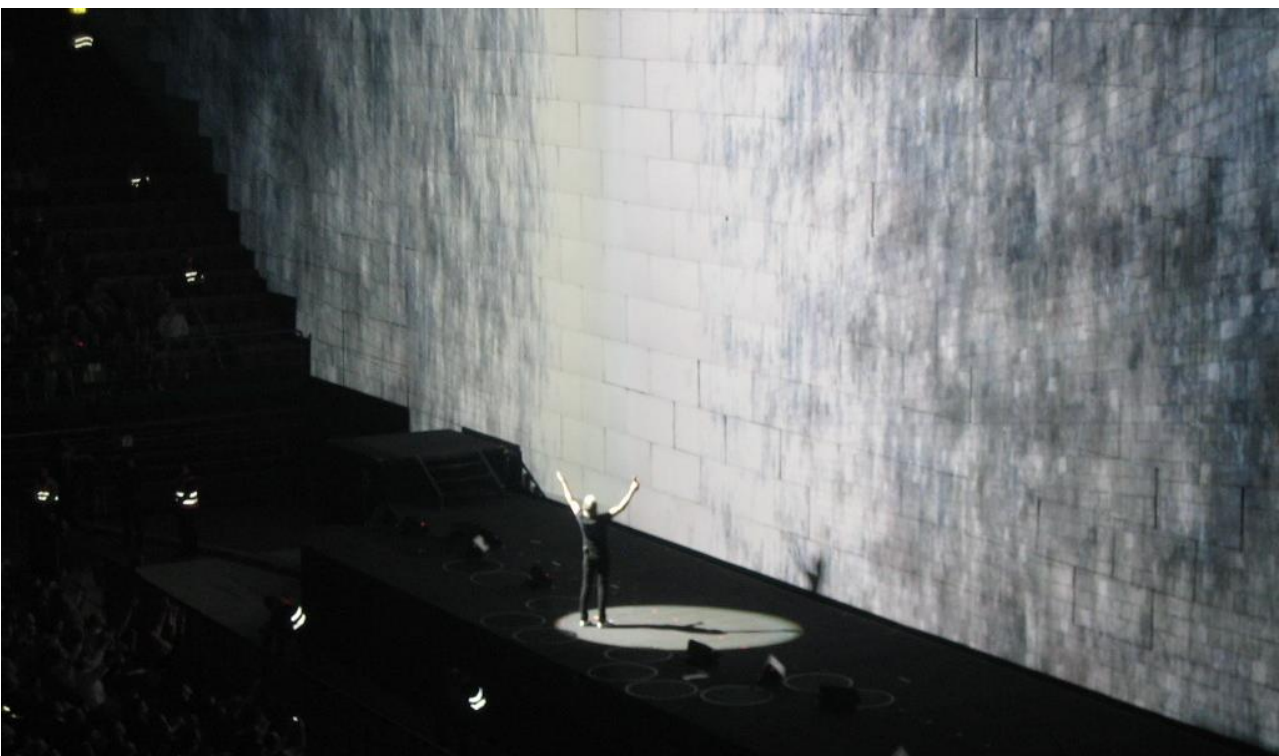


Figure 11. The light shining through the opened wall

The first time the wall opened up during *Hey You* there was nothing but darkness and the wasted isolated creature, which illustrated the decaying tendency of isolation. It allowed the audience a peek into the isolated mind of Pink. This time the light is shining through the walls, into the darkness of the stage. This might indicate changed roles. As Waters isn't singing the role of Pink, but the doctor, the audience takes on the role of the protagonist, who embodies the experiences of modern masses. The audience has taken on similar role in the *Empty Spaces*, where they stood for the modern masses as "the sea of faces". Waters' echoing voice speaks to the audience from the inviting white light.

The light might also be considered as hope; the hope Pink was denied in the song *Hey You*. Light shining at the end of a tunnel, in this case more like a corridor, is quite common archetype for near death experience; the heavenly light inviting the dying to the afterlife. It can also be interpreted as false hope, as the modern medical research suggests that this experience is in reality manifestation of normal brain functions which have become disturbed by a traumatic event (Mobbs & Watt 2010). This sort of interpretation for the light is valid especially if we see the worms as manifestation of decay and eventually the death of the mind. Without making any further assumptions on the nature of the light at this point, it is quite clear that the light serves as a metaphor for something inviting: A way out of the pain, the weight of the stone brought on by loneliness. This possibility of escape becomes embodied in the character of the doctor, who promises to ease Pink’s pain:

{Backed by sustained strings the lead guitarist is playing a very optimistic guitar solo on top of the wall. The two separated walls start to twist and rotate around each other. Waters starts to sing the verse, again in the role of the doctor. The whole audience joins Waters in screaming “Aaah!” Waters is pointing at the audience. As he says his final lines he looks straight into the camera}

*Ok, just a little pinprick.
There'll be no more... Aaah!
But you may feel a little sick.
Can you stand up?
I do believe it's working, good.
That'll keep you going through the show
Come on it's time to go.*

(Roger Waters’ the Wall 2014, [01:31:06 – 01:32:18].)

Waters pointing at the audience and looking at the camera further indicates that the viewer is playing the part of Pink. The scream “Aaah”, which is joined in by the audience, expresses the pain and bitterness, that the Pink is feeling. The doctor promises to relieve this pain. The trick is to become comfortably numb as the title of the song suggests. This song is connected to the third element connecting loneliness and totalitarianism in Arendt’s thinking. This is absence of care:

The old adage that the poor and oppressed have nothing to lose but their chains no longer applied to the mass men, for they lost much more than the chains of misery when they lost interest in their own well-being: the source of all the worries and cares, which make human life troublesome and anguished was gone (Arendt 1967, 315).

Arendt stresses the loss of care as a defining trait of rootless modern masses. For Arendt care is what ties people to the world. Arendt characterizes this loss of self-interest as “cynical or bored indifference in the face of death or other personal catastrophes” (Arendt 1967, 316). If we look at the song at hand from this perspective, it shows itself as an allegory for the loss of self-interest among the masses. The

chains of misery²⁰, or in Pink's case the walls of misery have been broken with a heavy price. It is indeed, the "little pinprick" which Pink receives that makes him numb; free of care: "there'll be no more Aaah!" The resulting state of mind is aptly represented in the chorus of the song:

{The chorus is sang from the perspective of Pink; by Gilmour in the original album and the film, but in the concert by the Robbie Wyckoff. The singer stands on top of the wall as bright light shines from behind his back. The music involves more major chords and high-lifting melody compared to the verse. The expression of the singer is softer compared to Waters. The longer the song progresses the more the walls become twisted around each other. As the singer sings his final sentence he disappears into the darkness.}

*There is no pain you are receding.
A distant ship, smoke on the horizon.
You are only coming through in waves.
Your lips move but I can't hear what you're saying.
When I was a child I had a fever
My hands felt just like two balloons.
Now I've got that feeling once again
I can't explain, you would not understand
This is not how I am.
I have become comfortably numb.*

(Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [01:32:18 – 01:33:29].)

The softer expression of vocals sang in major scale melody imply the calmness the character has reached. The lyrics describe how pain has become as distant as a "a distant ship", only sign of its existence is the tenuous "smoke in the horizon" the ship produces. Pink's euphoria triggered by the release from pain becomes indicated by the dizzy visual effect of spiralling walls.

²⁰ Notice the similarity of metaphors for misery used by Arendt and Waters. Both chains and walls can be used to contain and restrict people.

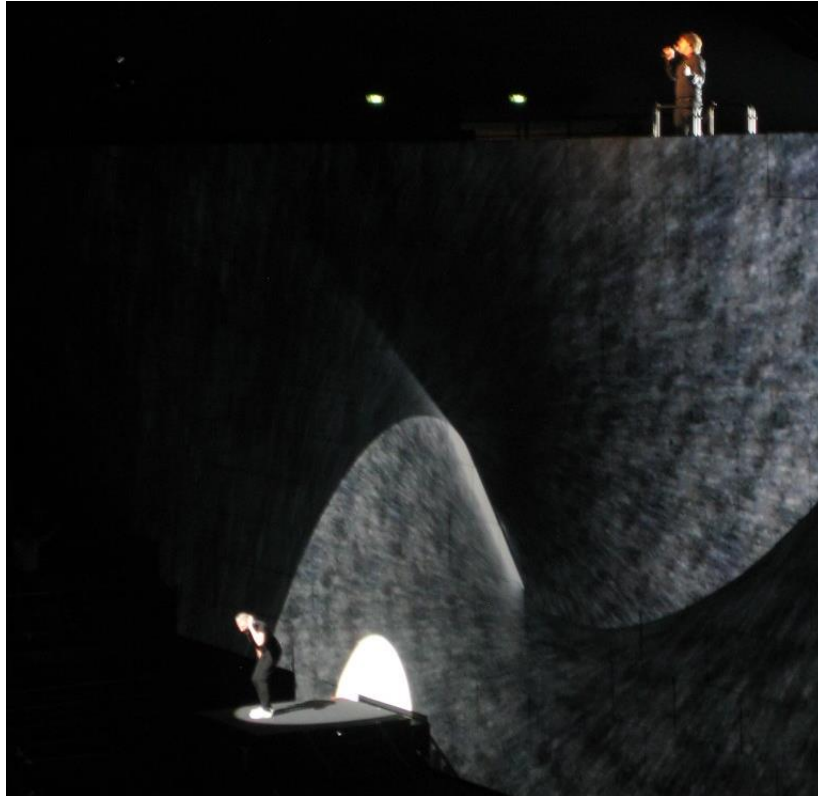


Figure 12. The spiralling wall

At this point it is useful to look at Arendt's distinction between solitude and loneliness. According to Arendt when man is in solitude he is "by himself"; meaning together with himself. This is connected to Arendt's idea that thinking, which is always conducted in solitude, is actually having a dialogue with oneself; a conversation between "me and my self". Yet, according to Arendt we depend on other people for confirming our selves; the identity, which "can never be mistaken for that of any other". According to Arendt solitude can become loneliness, if one becomes deserted by one's own self, when one has lost contact with the world of his fellow people. (Arendt 1967, 476.)

Arendt's line of thought about being deserted by one's own self can be applied to interpreting the message Waters is making in *Comfortably Numb*. The lyrics explain a situation where one feels off with oneself: "my hands felt just like two balloons/ now I've got that feeling once again". Here the lyrics use a bodily metaphor of fever swollen hands, which feel somehow surreal or alien to one's body, to describe a similar mental state: "this is not how I am".

It seems that the character has given up on even trying to reach out to others and explain how he feels: "I can't explain, you would not understand." This statement is similar with the way Arendt describes philosopher's solitude turning into loneliness. According to Arendt historical example of this took place among some nineteenth century philosophers, such as Hegel, who "began

to insist that nobody “understands” them (Arendt 1967, 476). The process is further clarified by Arendt:

What makes loneliness so unbearable is the loss of one’s own self which can be realized in solitude, but confirmed in its identity only by the trusting and trustworthy company of my equals. In this situation, man loses trust in himself as the partner of his thoughts and that elementary confidence in the world which is necessary to make experiences at all. Self and world, capacity for thought and experience are lost at the same time. (Arendt 1967, 477.)

In the last sentence, Arendt defines thought as the way one relates to oneself and the experience as the way one relates to the world. What she is saying is that if we lose either of those capacities we lose ourselves and the world, or vice versa, if we become disconnected from ourselves and the world we lose these capacities. The absence of care and self-interest become linked with absence of identity. How can one have any self-interest, when there is no “self” to be interested in. Thus, the absence of identity is fourth and most fundamental element connecting loneliness to totalitarianism in Arendt’s thinking. Within *The Wall* being comfortably numb is a metaphor for being free of worry, when at the same time being totally disconnected from the world and from oneself. All the elements described earlier have piled up and made the loneliness unbearable. Both the experiences and thoughts become distorted like the two walls twisting psychedelically around one another.

Up till now I have presented four elements, whose absence connects loneliness to totalitarianism in Arendt’s thinking. These are absence of action, reality, care and identity. In my interpretation of *The Wall* I managed to find depiction of similar elements. Absence of action becomes most clearly manifested in the song *Hey You*, absence of reality in *Is There Anybody Out There*, Absence of care and identity in *Comfortably Numb*. At the end of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* Arendt depicts where the mass experience of loneliness eventually leads:

The merciless process that into which totalitarianism drives and organizes masses looks like a suicidal escape from this reality. The “ice-cold reasoning” and the “mighty tentacles” of dialectics which “seizes you as in a vise” appears like a last support in a world where nobody is reliable and nothing can’t be relied upon. (Arendt 1967, 478.)

The solo concluding *Comfortably Numb* is one of the most outstanding solos in Pink Floyd’s discography. In the concert adaptation (2010–2013) a lot of visual symbolism takes place during this solo. I argue that similar escape into totalitarianism, becomes depicted in *Comfortably Numb* during the solo. Two facts support this interpretation. First, the song *Comfortably Numb* is

chronologically between the songs describing loneliness and the songs describing totalitarianism. It is the bridge connecting these two elements of the narrative. Secondly, when Waters is discussing the following song *In the Flesh – Part II*, which involves a lot of totalitarian imagery, he states: "The idea is that these kind of fascist feelings develop from isolation" (Vance 1979). At this point it is useful to bring up Frye's notion that we can only speak of an actual allegory when the writer explicitly indicates that by his imagery he also means something else (Frye 1990, 90). Waters as an artist portrays this picture with broad strokes of generality and symbolism fitting to the narrative. I don't expect the allegory to be very specific historic account of totalitarian domination, but rather a general view on the psychological factors involved in the process. This escape is depicted in the visual elements accompanying the song:

{Guitarist strikes an aggressive single note together with a sudden drum fill. A new guitar solo begins, this time with more intensity and it is played on top of the much darker chord rotation of the verse. Waters bangs on the wall with his two fists. He strikes the wall with his hands one more time and it erupts breaking into small shards. The guitar solo is set off to even more intensified expression by two very long bended notes. A bright yellow sun is shining and the colours of the sky have been filtered into sepia tones. The vision is very flashy and some people in the audience are even moved to tears. Large pillars erect from the ground, eventually blocking the view of the sun and only few rays of light are shimmering through behind the pillars. When the guitarist strikes the final chord these lights become dimmed.}

(Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [01:33:29 -01:36:18].)



Figure 13. The wall breaking down during the solo of *Comfortably Numb*

The solo guitar in the scene is very important narrative element as the song builds a lot of its symbolism on it. Once again, the bass and drums (rhythm guitar is left out) form the oppressive element, which is met with a transcending guitar solo. The solo in this song is one of most memorable of all the Pink Floyd solos, and it is also untypical in the way that it does not only imitate an attempt of transcendence as described by Rose, but actually succeeds in it. This success is also enhanced visually as the wall breaks into shreds revealing the majestic view of the sun shining from the horizon. At first, the rays of light shining behind the broken wall seem inviting symbolizing the catharsis brought on by the escape from pain and care. According to Frye in catharsis emotions become purged by being attached to objects (Frye 1990, 65). The negative emotions involved with loneliness have become attached to the object of wall, which is now shown to explode into pieces.

However, the protagonist finds out that he had fled one wall only to become confined behind another one, which is indicated by the erected pillars, which eventually block the view of the sun and turn into a new wall. Just a few moments later totalitarian banners are hanging on this very same wall during the song *In the Flesh – Part II*. The Pillars stand for the consistency of system, which totalitarian movement uses to lure in the masses. In the film (1982) version this process is narrated in a more apparent manner.

{As the concluding solo section starts Pink is dragged out of his room by two men. He has received the medicine to get him back on his feet. His skin is starting to show signs of decay. A quick frame shows pile of worms slithering around. Pink's skin is wholly decayed, when he is put in the back of a limousine waiting in the yard. Pink, resembling a decomposed body starts to tear off his rotten skin as the limousine is heading towards the concert hall. Pink appears from beneath the skin as reborn in his uniform: sleek black hair, black shirt and arm band. He is looking calmly at the road ahead.}

(Pink Floyd the Wall 2014, [01:10:52 – 01:12:40].)

The process both these versions of the narrative are attempting to depict is same. In the film version the motif of worms is used to show Pink's painful decaying process. Decaying in this context refers to loss of self-interest and loss of common sense; experience of reality. As the story progresses Pink becomes more and more detached both from himself and reality. This loss of reality is detectable in the lines "Your lips move, but I can't hear what you're saying".

Narrative I have described here involves two clear attempts of liberation, the first of which ends in failure. As the first attempt to reach compassion to amend for the pain of loneliness fails, the hero is left with only one possible option to withstand the pain. That is not to feel to become

numb. This is metaphor for giving away all care for the rest of the world and for oneself. The doctor who gave Pink the cure making him numb stated: “That’ll keep you going through the show”. The show becomes a central metaphor for totalitarianism discussed in the next chapter. After escaping the desperate conditions of loneliness, manifesting by the breaking of the wall, protagonist becomes trapped behind another wall, which this time consists of more formal pillars, compared to the simple brick wall of loneliness. This suggests that the focus of the symbol has shifted. The wall has absorbed new meanings.

2.2. The Great Show of Totalitarianism

And did you exchange a walk on part in the war for a lead role in a cage? (Waters 1975)

In this chapter I focus on the three central symbols, (the wall, the hammers and the worms), which have already been introduced earlier in the text. However, this time their meaning becomes reinterpreted in the context of totalitarianism. The theme of totalitarianism becomes embodied in Pink, the rock star, portrayed as an obnoxious fascist leader. This obnoxiousness according to Waters results from isolation and decay (Vance 1979). Waters' statement quite well connects causally the themes of loneliness and totalitarianism together. In his statements Waters calls his character systematically a fascist. This is a term needs some clarification.

Arendt puts distance between totalitarianism and fascism. According to Arendt a wave of totalitarian and semitotalitarian movements swept over Europe after the First World War. Among this group, Arendt counts the fascist movements, which spread from Italy to nearly all Central and Eastern European countries. However, though these fascist movements were by Arendt's definition totalitarian movements, they in fact did not establish totalitarian regimes as these countries did not control enough human material to allow total domination of population. According to Arendt non-totalitarian dictatorships sprung up in Mussolini's Italy, Rumania, Poland, the Baltic states, Hungary, Portugal and Franco Spain. Eventually, only Nazi regime in Germany and the Bolshevik regime in Russia were able, at least to some extent, establish totalitarian regimes in Europe. (Arendt 1967, 309–310.) Thus, in Arendt's view also fascist movements tend to be totalitarian, because totalitarianism serves as a way to organize masses until the movement seizes power and becomes a typical one party dictatorship “forced to a certain old-fashioned moderation lest they lost whatever people they had to rule” (ibid.).

Generally, people tend to put totalitarianism and fascism into same category. This is also what seems to be the case with *The Wall* narrative. The main author of the narrative, Waters, speaks of fascism, but he seems to be taking the model for imitation from especially totalitarian movements. The imitation of Nazi symbols and the totalitarian ideology become quite obvious in the song *In the Flesh*. Orwell's totalitarian themes have also clearly inspired Water's narrative. Both his novels *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* discuss totalitarianism, the former describes a totalitarian movement gaining power and the latter describes already established dystopian

totalitarian regime. The influence of *Animal Farm*, has already been discussed earlier, but the influence of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* becomes apparent in the following chapters.

A great deal of this totalitarian symbolism appears in the context of rock show. Before we can begin to further analyse these symbols, we need to clarify the literal context they are presented in. In the concert adaptation (2010–2013) the song *The Show Must Go on* is performed after the song *Comfortably Numb*, unlike in the 1982 film, where it was left out completely. In terms of plot structure the concert version seems to be a better composition as it creates a good continuum to the themes of *Comfortably Numb*. Pink starts to become aware of his new cage:

{A black shadow rolls down the wall, revealing the new erected stone pillars. An electric piano plays a gentle tune. The timbre resembles almost a sound of music box. A choir starts to sing mellow low key notes, creating a sense of calm, like in a lullaby. The choir and the lead singer are wearing paramilitary uniforms. Robbie Wyckoff sings the lead vocals, as Waters is not on stage. The restrained expression of the song comes to an end, when the oppressive, electric guitars strike a low chord and banners with totalitarian symbols on them are set down from the wall.}

Must the show go on?
Do I have to stand up
Wild eyed in the spotlight?
What a nightmare, why
Don't I turn and run?
It was just a mistake
I didn't mean to let them take away my soul
Am I too old, is it too late?
Ooh Ma, Ooh Pa, where has the feeling gone?
Ooh Ma, Ooh Pa, will I remember the song?
The show must go on

(Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [01:38:19 – 01:39:04].)



Figure 14. The banners on the wall at the end of *The Show Must Go On*

On the individual level the title of the song refers to the fact that the artist, Pink is unwilling to perform in the show, where he has been forced by his manager and with the help of the drugs given by the doctor, who was present in the previous song. Pink who has become comfortable in his isolation, is unwilling to expose himself before other people “wild eyed in the spotlight.” The narrative of *The Wall* is based on the tragic tendency of isolation, which advances toward the inevitable comic exposure. At this point Arendt’s less political insights on aesthetics become revealing. From Arendt’s notion that it is men and not a man that inhabits the earth, follows that to Arendt everything that is alive has an urge to appear; life is heading toward exposure. According to Sjöholm Arendt is tangled with the artist; the human double status; human is subject as well as object; perceiving and perceived. This is a consequence of ontology of plurality. In trying to fit itself into world of appearance, every being, instead showing its “inner self”, produces a surface meant to appear to others. (Sjöholm 2015, 12–13.) Pink’s “inner self” and surface become expressed by Pink during the first part of the *In the Flesh*:

If you wanna find out what's behind these cold eyes

You'll just have to claw your way through this disguise

(Roger Waters’ the Wall 2014, [00:09:18 – 00:09:29].)

Frye calls the type of character involved in such tragedies by the Greek word *alazon*, meaning an impostor; someone who pretends to be something he isn’t (Frye 1990, 38). In the lyrics Pink confesses he is hiding behind a disguise. Thus in his fascist mode Pink’s role in the narrative is to be *alazon*; hiding behind his mask and balancing between the imagination of his inner life and reality of outer

life. The title of the song *In the Flesh* plays with the idiom of seeing the performing artist in the flesh, as totally real and authentic. This is of course only ironical, as it is not the artist the spectator meets but a disguise instead. As Gadamer argues on the nature of play: "A man who is disguised does not want to be recognized, but instead to appear as someone else and be taken for him" (Gadamer 2004, 111).

According to Arendt (1958, 188) theatre is the political art par excellence as it is the only art whose sole subject are human beings and their relationships to others; "the political sphere of human life transposed into art." The depiction of totalitarianism in *The Wall* is based on a metaphor of a rock show, which might be seen as a form of theatre in the era of mass culture. Roger Waters himself calls *The Wall* as rock theatre. The double status of artist is closely connected to Gadamer's approach of art through a concept of play (*spiel*). There are two decisive elements in play: it always plays *something* (distinct to ordinary behaviour of the person) and it has a possibility to be played *to someone* (Gadamer 2004, 106–108). Play is, to Gadamer, a form of self-presentation, whether it is, for an example, child's play, football game or an opera. But it is the possibility that play is played to someone that sets the different forms of play apart.

Gadamer distinguishes games from play that is intended to be played for an audience. This intention is characteristic to art as play. (ibid.) This is in agreement with Arendt's thought that appearance is always displaying for a spectator; To appear means to act, talk, gesture, take space and take shape (Sjöholm 2015, 13). Gadamer makes an example of a play in a theatre, where it, so to speak, lets down one of its walls as it represents for audience:

Thus, it is not really the absence of a fourth wall that turns the play into a show. Rather, openness toward the spectator is part of the closedness of the play. The audience only completes what the play as such is. (Gadamer 2004, 109.)

Fourth wall is a concept referring to convention of theatre performance. It is an imagined wall between the performers and the audience, through which the spectator can see the performers, while the performers ignore the existence of the spectator. This fourth wall sometimes becomes broken, especially in experimental theatre, when the performer suddenly makes contact with the audience. (Mangan 2013, 172.) If we consider *The Wall* as theatre the fourth wall is broken at several points, which is not untypical for rock shows. However, what is the most characteristic trait of *The Wall* show, from its earliest adaptation in (1980–1981) tour to the latest adaptation (2010 – 2013), is the fact that for the most part of the second half of the show an actual physical fourth wall is in place. Instead of seeing the band play, the audience saw the fourth wall, making it impossible to

see the actual performer. This trick was used to amplify the message of the narrative especially during the depiction of loneliness I have described in the previous chapter. It was Waters' sense of alienation, which inspired him to come up with the concept of *The Wall*:

"There is an idea or there has been an idea for many years abroad that it's a very uplifting and wonderful experience and that there is a great contact between the audience and the performers on the stage and I think that that is not true. I think that in very many cases it's actually a rather alienating experience" (Vance 1979).

This is a quite surprising statement from Waters. However, it might be interpreted through Gadamer's concept of play. According to Gadamer (2004, 103) play reaches its presentation through the players. However, the play does not have its being in the consciousness of the player but rather it draws player into its domination (Gadamer 2004, 109). Gadamer attempts to place experience of art somewhere between the artist and spectator:

When we speak of play in reference to the experience of art, this means neither the orientation nor even the state of mind of the creator or of those enjoying the work of art, nor the freedom of a subjectivity engaged in play, but the mode of being of the work of art itself (Gadamer 2004, 102).

Thus, Gadamer claims that for the experience of art the creator and performer needs to stop existing. Waters' comment might be describing similar experience. The play draws its spectators and executors into its domination while disregarding their individuality and personal identities. I think this catches the essence of the show metaphor in *The Wall*. On a political level the title of the song *Show Must Go on* reflects Water's combined criticism²¹ of capitalism and music industry, which become in some places very mixed with one another. The show refers, in this case, to the oppressive totalitarian system, which forces its members to keep the show, in other words the oppressive society, running.

The shadow slowly revealing the wall symbolizes Pink becoming aware of the new reality under totalitarian domination. The narrator Pink seems to be regretting the cure he has received by stating it was a mistake. He explains he didn't mean for them to take away his soul. This is apt metaphor if we consider it against the white light symbolizing the near-death experience, where the soul escapes from the body. However, in this context by soul Waters, who is an atheist, probably does not mean soul in any religious sense, but instead he means man's own capability for moral judgment; making one's own decisions. When we deem someone not having a soul, we are usually judging his

²¹ For example in the album *Wish You Were Here* where according to Rose (1995, 75) the alienation people feel from the increasing mechanization of the twentieth-century life is compared to economic "machine" of rock music.

lack of morality. The connection to agents of totalitarian regime becomes apparent in Arendt's report on Eichmann's trial in Jerusalem, in which she ironically characterizes Eichmann as a law-abiding citizen, who was only performing his duties (Arendt 2006, 135–137). Pink as *alazon* is not truly capable of exposing himself in the flesh, but only under the domination of the show, behind the mask of, playing the lead role. Similar symbolism is present in Arendt's description of Eichmann. Instead of exposing himself Eichmann acted as a bureaucrat leaning on orders and duty. Whatever Eichmann did he did, "as far he could see, as a law-abiding citizen". Eichmann was always careful to be covered by orders. (Arendt 2006, 135) This was to be understood as opposite of himself initiating any action. When the Final Solution was carried out Eichmann had consolidated himself with the thought that he was no longer a master of his own deeds and he was unable to change anything (Arendt 2006, 136).

What was missing was exactly the courage of exposing oneself to outside world. Instead Eichmann was hiding behind the peculiar anonymity, which resulted from giving away his conscience to the care of state. To answer the question *who Eichmann was*, it was precisely this irresponsibility which led Arendt to characterize Eichmann as a nobody. In *The Wall* narrative Pink's giving away his soul might indicate similar avoidance of responsibility. Such behavior is satirized in the propaganda posters saying "TRUST US" and the line "MOTHER KNOWS BEST" seen earlier. This sort of anonymity is also depicted in the masks worn by the school children in the film and the audience in the concert. The fact that the performers are now wearing uniforms might indicate that the transformation is complete: Pink has become a brick in the wall himself.

2.2.1. Up Against the Wall

On the individual level of the plot Pink has been dragged to perform in the show after his breakdown in the isolation of his hotel room. On the political level the show serves to mirror the state of modern society. The song *In the Flesh – Part II* transforms the typical situation of rock concert into a fascist rally. According to Jenkins the scenes of rallying have their historical inspiration in British skinhead groups turning some concerts into rallies in 1970's. (Jenkins 1996, 209–210). In the 1982 film *In the Flesh – Part II* starts right after *Comfortably Numb*:

{Pink dressed in long black leather coat is marching in a hallway followed by several young men, who have shaved heads and who are wearing black uniforms: black marching boots, black

shirts, black long trousers and arm bands. The arm bands have a sign of two crossed hammers on them. Pink has a cold expression on his face, which is emphasized by the absence of his eye brows. The sound of threatening orchestral music starts to get stronger. The lead melody is played by brass instruments to enhance the militaristic atmosphere. Pink arrives to a hall filled by fans acting like supporters of a movement. He is handed a baby to be kissed, which he does with fake smile on his face. Large banners showing the Hammer logo are hanging from the ceiling. Black curtains, also decorated by this sign, open up on the stage and the orchestra switches from threatening to a romantic tune. People start cheering as Pink steps on the stage. People in the audience greet Pink by crossing their fists and stretching them upwards; resembling the two crossed hammers. Some members of the movement are wearing long black pointed hoods, which resemble the ones worn by members of Ku Klux Klan.}

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [01:12:40 – 01:14:22].)

Already in the beginning of the scene a mass of central imagery is introduced. The most important one is the logo displaying two crossed hammers on a round red background: “hammer logo”. Hammer is a repeated motif in the narrative, but at this point it is displayed in a very specific function and context: as the main symbol of the movement. The logo has strong archetypal connection to symbols of totalitarianism. At first, the two crossed hammers together with the color of red resemble the swastika signs used by the Nazis. The logos are also presented in a similar context: on arm bands and on banners in large group events. The two crossed hammers also resemble the crossed hammer and sickle, the famous Soviet symbols, where the sickle stood for the peasantry and the hammer for the industrial workers.

Clearly the aim is to gather as many symbols of totalitarianism and racism under the imaginary “Hammer movement”. The hand sign used by the supporters of the movement has been taken from Orwell’s novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, whereas the Ku Klux Klan robes serve to remind the eminent racism involved in the movements. This is in line with Arendt’s conception of totalitarianism. According to Arendt it “makes little difference whether totalitarian movements adopt the pattern of Nazism or Bolshevism, organize the masses in the name of race or class, pretend to follow the laws of life and nature or of dialectics and economics (Arendt 1967, 313).

Pink, the leader of the movement, becomes the ultimate totalitarian archetype. He is depicted as overtly charismatic figure typical for totalitarian movements. His entrance on the stage is accompanied by fanatical cheers of his supporters and romantic music indicating his heroism:

{Pink gets behind the podium and starts to speak fiercely over the music. Immediately people in the

audience sit down. The music calms down a bit; a female choir sings long chords and kettle drums

make few strokes beneath slogans sang by the choir. Pink waves his hands intensively as he speaks. People cheer loudly after Pink's remarks. Pink is pointing behind him at the orchestra: }

*So ya, thought ya / Might like to go to the show.
To feel that warm thrill of confusion*

That space cadet glow.

I've got some bad news for you sunshine,

Pink isn't well, he stayed back at the hotel

And they sent us along as a surrogate band

We're gonna find out where you fans really stand.

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [01:14:23 – 01:15:01].)

Pink is presented in completely new light. Whereas his behavior has earlier been rather passive, he is now performing as a fierce totalitarian leader. A tragedy, with clearly articulated pathos is often concerned “with mania or obsession about rising in the world” or “a conflict of inner and outer life” (Frye 1990, 38). Pink's rock star persona, a symbol for the radiating magnetism and obsession of totalitarian leaders, serves as a social mask, hiding the dangerously disturbed reality beneath. Pink's appearance, the absence of his eyebrows, are part of his disguise, but also serves to remind and warn the viewer of Pink's numbness and loss of his identity, which took place earlier in the narrative. Frye points out that whereas in comedies we can see only the social mask of *alazon*, when the character becomes viewed from outside so to speak, in tragedies character's obsession becomes studied from inside. However, such tragic studies of obsession are typical for semi-dramatic medium such as monologue. (Frye 1990, 38–39.) Pink's expression of fascist leader yelling at his subjects takes the form of monologue, where he speaks and the audience listens. This obsession was studied from inside with isolated Pink, who now has been left back at the hotel and the audience is face to face with “a surrogate band”, a company of *alazons*

In the scene the behavior of the audience is a mixture of both fanaticism of rock fans and fanaticism expressed by followers of totalitarian movements. The difference between the film and concert version is that in the live adaptation the audience is both in the role of spectator and active part of the play. The audience seems to be aware of their role as many of them make the hand sign to enact the original scene, which they have seen earlier in the film version. In the narrative modern fan culture makes a good metaphor for parodying totalitarian movements as leaders of such movements were often surrounded by fanatical fascination of their supporters. However, Arendt is rather critical towards alleged almost super-natural fascination of totalitarian leaders or so called Hitler and Stalin cults, but she acknowledges that Hitler and Stalin were indeed popular, and this mass support is what enabled them to stay in power against so many crisis (Arendt 1967, 305–306).

On a political level the song *In the Flesh* makes use of the show metaphor. The lyrics describe a situation of how the fans are lured into the show, “to feel the warm thrill of confusion” and “that space cadet flow”. The lines refer to the expectations of the spectator; perhaps transcending the boring reality, to be absorbed in the play or even to be entertained. If the show is a metaphor for totalitarianism, the previous lines might be depicting a same kind of relief that the masses were after when they felt compelled to join totalitarian movements. Arendt’s account on the masses fooled by totalitarianism provides some insight to this metaphor. According to Arendt masses aren’t characterized by brutality or backwardness, but by their isolation and lack of normal relationships (Arendt 1967, 317). This experience of loneliness on a collective level has serious consequences:

Coming from the class ridden society of the nation-state, whose cracks had been cemented with nationalistic sentiment, it is only natural that these masses, in the first helplessness of their new experience, have tended toward an especially violent nationalism, to which mass leaders have yielded their own instincts and purposes for purely demagogic reasons (ibid.).

Throughout *The Wall* Pink has been a mirror of isolated masses, especially during his withdrawal from the world. Now he has switched to the role of a disguised mass leader, whereas the audience plays the role of the indifferent and fanaticized masses. The attractiveness of violent nationalism to the masses described by Arendt is quite analogous to the attractiveness of entertainment, the audience is after in *The Wall*. These both are utilized to lure the masses in, by the artist in *The Wall* or by the mass leaders in Arendt’s account. Obviously, Waters isn’t as specific with his symbolism as Arendt is in her more historic account. However, in both accounts the masses have become fooled by the mask of *alazon* and get something other than what they bargained for. This is indicated by Pink stating: “I’ve got some bad news for you, Sunshine”.

Frye notes that in Gothic thrillers we take the *alazon* at his own valuation, when the character gives away dark hints of interesting sins. The result is not so much a tragedy, kind of melodrama, “which may be defined as comedy without humor” (Frye 1990, 39). There is a similar element of gothic thriller present in Arendt’s account on totalitarianism. According to Arendt “the would-be totalitarian rulers usually start their careers by boasting of their past crimes and carefully outlining their future ones”(Arendt 1967, 307). Thus, their propaganda offers the audience a peek behind their mask. Pink’s comment: “we’re gonna find out where your fans really stand” is a premonition of his future intentions. As the narrative starts to move toward more comic expression, the element of pathos earlier identified with the isolated character of Pink is directed away from obnoxious Pink, toward his unsuspecting victims, that he starts to pick one by one from the audience:

{Pink leans forward and looks severely to the audience as he questions them. People in the audience start to point at the corner, where the paramilitary troops are already dragging out the ones who have been reported guilty. Four different spotlights scan the audience as Pink is pointing to more and more people within the viewers. More and more people become removed from the audience by men in black uniforms. Pink's voice becomes more aggressive and the choir sings in a more intensive tone. Pink swiftly strikes his arm in front of him after yelling his final judgment on the people and large explosive pyro-effects go off on front of the stage. The crowd stands up and starts to cheer madly. The musical expression is switched back to the same romantic tune as in the beginning of the song. }

Are there any queers in the theater tonight?
Get them up against the wall.
[choir:] *Against the wall!*
There's one in the spotlight,
he don't look right to me,
Get him up against the wall.
[choir:] *Against the wall!*
That one looks Jewish! / And that one's a coon!
Who let all of this riff-raff into the room?
There's one smoking a joint!
And another with spots!
If I had my way,
I'd have all of you shot!

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [01:15:01 – 01:16:30].)

Arendt (1967, 307) claims that the experience has proven the propaganda value of evil deeds and general contempt of moral standards to be independent of self-interest, which according to Arendt is typically seen the most psychological factor in politics. What is typical for the masses is the selflessness and attraction of evil. It seems that in Arendt's account the most enabling factor of totalitarianism does not lie in the leader, who is according to Arendt easily replaceable, nor in the “masterful and lying propaganda over ignorance and stupidity”, but in the mindset of the masses:

The disturbing factor in the success of totalitarianism is rather the true selflessness of its adherents: it may be understandable that a Nazi or Bolshevik will not be shaken in his conviction by crimes against people who do not belong to the movement or are even hostile to it; but the amazing fact is that neither is he likely to waver when the monster begins to devour its own children and even if he becomes a victim of persecution himself, if he is framed and condemned, if he is purged from the party and sent to a forced-labor or a concentration camp. (Arendt 1967, 306–307.)

Arendt's view is informing for understanding the behavior of the audience depicted in the scene. Pink introduces a new group one after another to be taken against the wall and the crowd cheers for this.

These purges are not depicted only for the purpose of highlighting inevitable racism of such movements, but highlight similar atrocity of evil as Arendt is describing. Furthermore, even after Pink reveals his will to have “all of you shot” the audience isn’t startled but more excited. The blindness of the audience before Pink’s atrocities is highly ironical portrayal of fanaticism of totalitarianism and modern fan culture, that the author Waters is himself part of.

From the narrative perspective in ironic comedy our fears and hates become concentrated through the nightmare dream to a figure of scape goat. According to Frye a boundary of art is passed “when this symbol becomes existential, as it does in the black man of a lynching, the Jew of a pogrom, the old woman of a witch hunt, or anyone picked up at random by a mob.” (Frye 1990, 44.) In *The wall* the scapegoats are: the queers, the Jewish, the coons, joint smokers, people with spots and any random “riff raff” Pink sees as unwanted. The irony of the act was not understood by everyone. According to Kärki some critics mistook the film to be neo-Nazi propaganda. The situation was not made any better by the fact that the film had cast real skinheads from Tilbury to act as the members of the “Hammer Guard”. (Kärki 2002, 193.) The acts depicting oppression of minorities in the narrative are highly satirical. This is also how Frye sees scapegoats in ironic comedies:

But the element of play is the barrier that separates art from savagery, and playing at human sacrifice seems to be an important theme of ironic comedy. Even in laughter itself some kind of deliverance from the unpleasant, even the horrible, seems to be very important. (Frye 1990, 45.)

Arendt also stresses the role of laughter. In an interview conducted by Roger Errera, Arendt remarks that people like Hitler, who committed great political crimes, shouldn’t be put on a pedestal and viewed as great criminals, but to be exposed to laughter. She then continues that she believes tragedy to deal with the sufferings of mankind in a less serious way than comedy.” (Errera 1974.) Waters is also tangled with the difference between tragedy and comedy with his repeatedly used symbol of pig. When the first chords of *In the Flesh* are struck a giant inflatable pig appears behind the stage. The pig is reference to Pink Floyd’s album *Animals*, where the pig stands as a symbol for the ruling class of capitalistic society, the class most responsible for upholding the condition of loneliness and competition within the society. According to Rose (1995, 109) the pigs become described as almost comic but ultimately tragic:

You're nearly a good laugh/ Almost a joker/ with your head down in the pig bin/ You're nearly a laugh/ But you're really a cry.



Figure 15. The pig hovering above the audience.

In *The Wall* show the inflatable pig is operated by a radio controller and it hovers ominously above the audience. The pig becomes quite comic symbol when it is coupled with signs pointing to contemporary events. For an example it was most recently used in Roger Waters's free concert in Mexico City on October 1, 2016, where the giant pig stood for Donald Trump, which was indicated by the hair style painted on the pig.

In *The Wall* show there was one symbol painted on the pig that created a lot of controversy: star of David. Waters was attacked for this use of the star by Rabbi Abraham Cooper, who accused Waters for anti-Semitism and Nazism. The controversy was bit different from the one relating to the original film, as here the symbol of the Jewish people was used as a symbol for oppression, whereas in the original film the Jews were the ones who were oppressed. Waters has been a firm critic of the state of Israel, about its military occupation of the Palestinian territories. In an open letter posted on Facebook, where he replies to Cooper's accusations, Waters argues that to him the symbol stands for Israeli government. There he also gives a quite exact interpretation of the pig's meaning in *The Wall* show:

Also the pig in question represents evil, and more specifically the evil of errant government. We make a gift of this symbol of repression to the audience at the end of every show and the people always do the right thing. They destroy it. (Waters 2013.)

In *The Wall* show the pig seems to point to any oppressive government. The nature of this oppression is indicated by the several other logos painted on the pig: Hammer logo, Shell logo, \$ -signs, "TRUST

US”, “DRINK KALASHNIKOV VODKA” and word “CAPITALISM” written above a picture where a man is pointing a gun at another man’s head. (Roger Waters’ *The Wall* 2014, [01:39:22 – 01:40:02].) The symbolism here is trying to connect totalitarianism to a form of government which advocates powerful corporations, dog eat dog type capitalism, militaristic solutions and firm control on over its subjects.

The much-repeated phrase “against the wall” together with Pink’s wish of having everybody shot indicates execution of unwanted people; lining up prisoners against the wall and having them shot by a firing squad. Furthermore, the phrase “against the wall” is very similar to the phrase in the song *What Shall We Do Now* where the lyrics ended with the words: “with our backs to the wall”. There the phrase was interpreted as the necessity of serving the economic process by endless labor and consumption. This is highly identical with the metaphor of show described in the beginning of the chapter. To Arendt the very essence of totalitarian movements was aimless process in much the same way as in expansive imperialism (Arendt 1967, 216). In Nazi regime the members were serving the process of nature and in Soviet regime they were serving process of economics (Arendt 1967, 313).

All in all, the wall becomes a symbol for the oppressive element of the never relenting process, the show. The show draws the performers and spectators to its domination, which is highly metaphorical if considered against totalitarianism depicted in *The Wall*. It makes everyone either a victim to be shot “against the wall”, or it enslaves them to serve the process with their “backs to the wall”. When the plot moves from tragic toward comic the obsession, which was earlier presented in term of pity, becomes now presented in terms of fear (Frye 1990, 39). This tendency moves hand in hand with the pathos which in isolated Pink was connected to feelings of pity, but now that pathos has shifted from Pink to his victims it becomes identified with fear. According to Frye the obsession identified with fear “takes the form of an unconditioned will that drives its victim beyond the normal limits of humanity” (ibid.). This obsession is at play, when Pink states, “we’re gonna find out where you fans really stand”. When we look at Arendt’s account on totalitarianism, we see that it is beyond the normal limits of humanity, where the inhabitants of totalitarian country are thrown. According to Arendt (1967, 468) they are caught in the process of nature or history for the sake of accelerating its movement; as such, they can only be executioners or victims of its inherent law” (Arendt 1967, 468). The victims and executioners become mere bricks in the wall.

2.2.2. Hammers and terror

In this chapter I discuss Arendt's concept of terror and reflect it against the symbolism involved in the narrative. The previous chapter discussed the obsessive process, which through oppression and fear forces masses as its victims or executioners. The fearful mindset of the executioners of the process becomes well depicted in the song *Run Like Hell*:

{The song starts with a staccato rhythm guitar, followed by a more cheerful guitar riff. The cheerfulness is enhanced by a simple and uplifting drum beat. The audience starts to make “the hammer salute” and cheer for their leader, while the members of the hammer guard uphold a serious face. Next the members of the audience are shown wearing the same mass masks seen earlier, while the faces of the hammer guard still remain uncovered. Three people are shown hanging in the gallows on a hill. A group of Hammer guard groups are shown running down a hallway carrying batons }

*You better make your face up in
Your favorite disguise.
With your button down lips and your
Roller blind eyes.
With your empty smile and your hungry heart.
Feel the bile rising from your guilty past.
With your nerves in tatters
As the cockle shell shatters
And the hammers batter down the door.*

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [01:16:31 – 01:17:53].)

The scene starts to divide people into groups more clearly: the blind followers and more initiated members of the movement. In the (2010-2013) concert version Waters reintroduces the animal categories of the album *Animals* to the Wall narrative. These categories can be applied on the original film as well. Rose sums up the categories in *Animals* album: the pigs represent the capitalist class of the society, which owns the means of production, the dogs bourgeoisie fighting towards the “American dream” and the sheep represent the unsuspecting proletariat, which are exploited by the pigs (Rose 1995, 94–95). During the song *Run Like Hell* an image of a pig, dog and sheep become projected on the wall one after another. Next to the pig is written “iLead”, next to the dog “iProtect” and next to the sheep “iFollow”. All of the animals are wearing iPod ear plugs. (Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [01:44:08 – 01:47:28].) The lowercase “i” is a reference to a line of Apple products. Presumably the apple branding images imply to the diverting and even brainwashing effect that modern consumerist way of life has on people. The interpretations Rose suggests for the animal categories might not be too accurate within the narrative of the concert. It seems that the pigs represent

any form of oppressive government, not only strictly capitalistic class, whereas the dogs could be understood as government's organized violence: police and military, as suggested by the slogan "iProtect". It is this group whose actions are most closely depicted in the song *Run Like Hell*. Furthermore, the sheep seem to refer not only to proletariat but to the fan-like masses.

Waters' way of dividing people into three groups of animals is rather telling in the context of totalitarianism, if considered against Arendt's idea of totalitarian domination abolishing action. Arendt points out that totalitarian domination can only be achieved when human being becomes "a specimen of the animal-species man" who are like marionettes characterized by conditioned reflexes (Arendt 1967, 459). With its incalculability, spontaneity is "the greatest of all obstacles to total domination over man" (Arendt 1967, 456). The use of slogans to accompany the animal: "iLead", "iProtect" and "iFollow" indicate the inability of these groups to act spontaneously.

Arendt's assessment of the relationship between the leader and the masses becomes relevant at this point. Totalitarianism eliminates the distance between the rulers and the ruled by a interdependence between the two; the masses can only be represented through their leader and as the ruler is the external representative of the masses he depends on their "will" (Arendt 1967, 325). This calls for total obedience from the ruled as the ruler and the ruled are inseparable. According to Arendt (1967, 374) totalitarian leader claims responsibility for every action, deed or misdeed committed by any member or functionary in his official capacity. This is done by gaining monopoly on reality:

The Supreme task of the leader is to impersonate the double function characteristic of each layer of the movement – to act as the magic defence of the movement against the outside world; and at the same time, to be the direct bridge by which the movement is connected to it (ibid.)

According to Arendt (1967, 375) this has the consequence that nobody ever experiences a situation in which he has to be responsible for his actions. This idea becomes repeated in Arendt's (2006, 153) report on Eichmann's trial, where he calls Hitler "the sole, lonely plotter of Final Solution" as she reduces everyone else as the mere executors of one man's conspiracy. In Third Reich the public realm was somewhat squeezed to a position of only one person. Only reference point to reality was the word of Hitler. According to Arendt totalitarian domination, unlike tyrannical, doesn't content itself in restricting the freedom but aims to abolish it altogether. The will of the Fuehrer can be embodied everywhere and at all times and every citizen feels himself directly confronted with the will of the leader. (1967, 404 – 405.)

The animal categories aren't prominently present in the 1982 film, but it is implicitly clear that the sheep would be embodied in the masked masses. The masks symbolize their lost individuality. This is also suggested in the lines: "you better make your face up in your favorite disguise". Thus, the alazon character of Pink is extended on his subjects. Though the masses are trying to close their eyes from the suffering around them they are unable to do this. The line "bile rising from the guilty past" presented together with vision of people in the gallows refers to inconvenient impulses of conscience the masses still feel.

Absence of conscience is a defining element of totalitarianism in Arendt's thinking. Arendt had pointed out it was the aim of Nazi regime's totalitarian policy to reduce morally respectable conduct as entirely worthless and useless (Parvikko 2008, 205). In the end, the new set of values had come to steer the conscience of the people in the Hitler's land that demanded conscience to tell everybody: "Thou shalt kill" (Arendt 2006, 150). Yet, the instincts of conscience hadn't yet all died down. Arendt suspects that majority of people in Germany were still tempted "*not* to murder, *not* to rob, *not* to let their neighbors go off to their doom." Arendt ends her account on moral collapse in rather haunting words: "But, God knows, they had learned how to resist temptation." (Arendt 2006, 150.) The previous scene depicted a similar situation. The masses in the audience had let their fellow people to be dragged "against the wall". The shattering of "cockle shell" might refer to using violent means in order to attain a goal, much in the same way as "breaking an egg to make an omelet". Their "nerves are in tatters" by instincts of conscience these violent means trigger, but they are able to resist them by hiding behind the anonymity of disguise; not taking responsibility.

In the narrative the group of organized violence, the dogs, becomes best embodied in the Hammer Guard, which is referred by the line: "The hammers batter down the door". Though the members of the Hammer guard are not wearing the same masks they are still hiding, not behind the masks, but behind their uniforms.

The inspiration for the "Hammer guard" has clearly been the paramilitary groups of the Nazis. This is most clearly indicated in their garb: black shirts and arm bands. According to Arendt the Fascist Shirt-organizations, so called paramilitary groups were not founded for any specific defensive or aggressive purposes but they were "instruments of the ideological fight of the movement." These uniforms also abolished civilian morals; eased the conscience of the murderers and made them more obedient toward authority. (Arendt 1967, 369 – 370.) Thus, if we view the groups involved in the scene, the troopers have no need for masks as the civilians did, for they could hide behind their uniforms.

The hammer has already been established as a symbol of oppression. In the context of totalitarianism the hammers have a more important and specified role as the tools of terror. The Hammer Guard is the living executor of this terror. In the film version (1982) several acts of terror are committed by the hammer guard during the song *Run Like Hell*:

{The troopers of “Hammer Guard” are rampaging around the town during night. They attack into an ethnic restaurant and beat up the people and break the windows. They drive ethnic people from their homes, break the windows and the furniture. A pile of slithering worms is shown for a brief moment. A black man is making out in the back seat of a car with a white woman. They are discovered by the Hammer Guard. The man is beaten up and the woman is raped. The Hammer Guard continues the rampage around the city.}

*You better run.
You better run all day and run all night.
And keep your dirty feelings deep inside.
And if you're taking your girlfriend out tonight
You better park the car well out of sight.
Cause if they catch you in the back seat
Trying to pick her locks,
They're gonna send you back to mother
In a cardboard box*

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [01:17:51 – 01:18:56].)

The scene in question presumably draws a lot of inspiration from *Kristallnacht* executed in Nazi Germany in 1938. Synagogues, shops and homes of the Jews were attacked by paramilitary groups. In the scene the setting is more contemporary and the victims are members of ethnic minorities. The operation of paramilitary groups is further described by Arendt. According to Arendt (1967, 372) paramilitary groups are organized like criminally gangs and used for organized murder. No opposition, compassion or free action is allowed to come in way when terror is let loose on the singled-out foes of the humankind: the inferior races, individuals “unfit to live” dying classes and decadent peoples” (Arendt 1967, 465). The sexual imagery involved in the scene refer to the totalitarian obsession of keeping the strain as pure as possible and consequently condemning mix race relationships.

According to Arendt (1967, 6) it is characteristic of totalitarianism that terror isn't used so much as means of frightening the opponents, but as an instrument to rule masses of people, who are perfectly obedient. In Arendt's thinking the aim of terror is to eradicate individuality in such way that no spontaneous action is possible (Canovan 1995, 89). The boundaries and channels of communication between people, which are precondition for plurality, are substituted by “a band of iron which holds them so tightly together, that it is as though their plurality had disappeared into One Man of gigantic dimensions”. To Arendt terror becomes total when it becomes independent of all

opposition; terror can let loose the force of nature or history, without any spontaneous human action coming to its way. (Arendt 1967, 464–466.)

The Wall narrative seems to be quite torn between tragedy and comedy in its depiction of totalitarianism; is it a good laugh or a cry? If the narrative is viewed from the perspective of the victims stigmatized with pathos it appears quite tragic. Frye calls the type of victim in tragic irony as *pharmakos*, scapegoat. It is typical for these victims that they are selected at random, or at least for inadequate reasons. The irony lies in the arbitrariness of the situation. Such *pharmakos* is typical “in stories of persecuted Jews and Negroes, in stories of artists whose genius makes them Ishmaels of bourgeois society.” (Frye 1990, 40.) In this sense Pink, the oppressed artist, masked as a totalitarian leader and the masked bloodthirsty masses become fused with their random victims, as all of them have in common that they have become oppressed and isolated from society. The competitive and normalizing bourgeois society has isolated the artist, Pink, as well as it has produced the superfluous modern masses, who now together unite to oppress other victims, who are in the narrative identified as “the Jews”, “the coons” etc. Jenkins makes a similar interpretation in his study:

The personal and the political are fully united, and we are thus offered an explanation of totalitarianism in terms of individual and developmental repression. Among the sheep like followers of the Hammer movement, we find the uniform and anonymous masks that we last saw imposed on the children in the schools. They are completely identified with the other dragooned masses: the bullied schoolchildren, the wartime cannon-fodder, and the robotic consumers of popular culture. (Jenkins 1996, 208.)

The circular manner of oppression is embodied in the sentence “all in all you’re just another brick in the wall”, which means that every act of oppression just leads to more oppression. *The Wall* in this case refers to the individual wall of isolation and the political wall of oppression. An oppressor has been a victim himself. Thus, oppression leads to a vicious circle of more isolation and more oppression. This is typical for the character of *pharmakos*. Frye describes the paradox involved in the character: *pharmakos* is “neither innocent nor guilty”. The innocence lies in the fact that what happens to *pharmakos* is far greater than what he provokes, but at the same time the *pharmakos* is guilty being a “a member of a guilty society, or living in a world where such injustices are an inescapable part of existence.” (Frye 1990, 40.) Frye’s definition of *pharmakos* is also applicable to Arendt’s account on totalitarianism. In an abstract sense the executors of the movement’s law are inseparable from the victims as both of them serve the same process: “The process may decide that those who today eliminate races and individuals are tomorrow those who must be sacrificed” (Arendt 1967, 468). Under totalitarian domination everyone becomes embodied in the figure of *pharmakos*.

Innocence and guilt become irrelevant in terror, because all concerned are subjectively innocent: “the murdered because they did nothing against the system, and the murderers because they do not really murder but execute a death sentence pronounced by some higher tribunal”; inevitable process of nature or history (Arendt 1967, 465–466). Thus, Arendt claims that under totalitarian domination fear is more widespread than ever, but it has lost its usefulness as a guiding principle of action, because it can no longer help to avoid danger (Arendt 1967, 467.) Similar absurdity of not being able to escape fear is articulated in the title of the song *Run Like Hell* as well as in the lines: “run all day, run all night”. The idea of not being able to avoid terror becomes indicated in the live adaptation (2010–2013) of the song. A text is projected on the wall: “SOMEONE MUST HAVE BEEN TELLING LIES ABOUT JOSEPH K. HE KNEW HE HAD DONE NOTHING WRONG BUT ONE MORNING HE WAS ARRESTED.” (Roger Waters’ *the Wall* 2014, [01:45:30 – 01:45:45].) The quote from Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* embodies the randomness how totalitarian system picks its victims.

Similar statement about randomness of totalitarian terror is also made by Arendt. People are taught to feel superfluous by punishing them even when they haven’t committed any crime and by exploiting them without any profit. In its effort to prove that everything is possible totalitarianism discovered that there are crimes, which could not be forgiven or punished and these crimes couldn’t be explained by “the evil motives of self-interest, greed, covetousness, resentment, lust for power, and cowardice”. (Arendt 1967, 459.) Waters seems to be pondering with similar question about the motives of evil. In the show a question is projected on the wall: “IS IT ANGER OR ENVY OR PROFIT OR LOSS THAT WE WOULD CHOOSE TO KILL THE CHILD?” (Roger Waters *the Wall* 2014, [01:47:54 – 01:48:00].) This is a reference to Waters’ earlier single *To Kill the Child*, where he speculates why a society, so concerned with consumption and luxury brands, would choose to kill a child. In the lyrics Waters makes a strong plea to protect children from terror: “*Take this child and hold him closely/ Keep him safe from the holy reign of terror*” (Waters 2004). Within the narrative, the text also refers to another visual element displayed during the song *Bring the Boys Back Home* earlier in the narrative. A quote of Dwight D. Eisenhower is projected on the wall accompanied by several pictures of starving children in the third world: “Every gun that’s made/ Every warship launched/ Every rocket fired/ Represents/ In the final sense/ A theft/ From those who hunger and are not fed/ Those who are cold and are not clothed.” On his Facebook account Waters describes that he understands this sentence meaning that every dollar spend on war is one dollar less for helping people in need (Waters 2010). Thus, Waters strongly contrast global problem of famine with militaristic armament.

There is one especially specific example of random terror, depicted in the show during *Run Like Hell*:

{A Video clip of the leaked video footage of 2007 US air attack, which killed two Reuters employees Saaed Chmagh and Namir Noor-Eldeen in Baghdad, is projected on the wall. The video involves captions of the conversation between the crew of Apache helicopter, where they claim that the individuals on the video are carrying assault rifles, though in reality they are only carrying cameras. One of the voices replies: "Light 'em all up!", which results to shooting the people down.}

(Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [01:49:02 – 01:49:39].)



Figure 16. Leaked video footage of US air crew shooting down Iraqi civilians.

The point Waters is making by presenting the video during the song is that some military operations conducted by liberal democracies seem like random terror. The video reveals that the atmosphere in the helicopter is relaxed and the soldiers are laughing at their kills. However, US military authorities concluded that the actions of the pilots and soldiers were in accordance with the laws of armed conflict and the rules of engagement. (McGreal 2010.) Though the soldiers had just murdered innocent people, they were not considered guilty, but they were only following orders. After the displayed attack a commemorative banner appears on the wall: "Namir Noor-Eldeen and Saaed Chmagh, We Will Remember You" Waters takes a submachine gun and shoots the banner down. (Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [01:49:02 – 01:49:39].) Waters is portraying an errant government, which is trying to

destroy all the evidence of the terror. He is not only criticising the US military for the attack, but for the way it dealt with its consequences. Though Reuters had tried to get access to see the video material of the event, which had caused the deaths of its employees, it was denied by US military. Eventually the truth came out when the video was published by WikiLeaks in 2010. Waters' message with this specific act might be interpreted from Arendt's view of totalitarianism. According to Arendt (2006, 232) totalitarian domination tried to establish holes of oblivion, where all the good and evil deeds would disappear, and all the resistance and sacrifice was made to seem practically useless. However, Arendt (ibid.) claims that no matter how hard the Nazis tried the holes of oblivion do not exist; there is always someone to tell the story and no sacrifice however useless is ever morally meaningless.

2.2.3. Worms and Ideology

In this chapter I discuss how *The Wall* narrative depicts totalitarian ideology. As I have argued in the previous chapter terror is used to suppress individuality and to make spontaneous action impossible. In Arendt's view terror is the essence of totalitarian government and ideology its substitute for principle of action. Ideology is what totalitarianism needs in order to prepare its subjects to the roles of victim or executioner; to control their action. (Canovan 1995, 87.) Arendt's definition of ideology is rather simple: "it is the logic of an idea". Ideology pretends to have knowledge of historical processes, "the secrets of the past, the intricacies of the present, the uncertainties of the future" only by using one idea as a premise; logically deducing everything from it (Arendt 1967, 469–470).

According to Arendt all the ideologies contain totalitarian elements but they are fully developed only in totalitarian movements (Arendt 1967, 470). Though racism and socialism were important parts of Nazi and Soviet ideologies, according to Arendt racism and socialism became emptied from their utilitarian content, such as interests of class or nation, when totalitarian movements made them part of their ideology (Arendt 1967, 348). The elements in Waters' imaginary Hammer movement seem to be racism and capitalism, which are in a similar manner stripped of their utilitarianism. The point Waters is making in *The Wall* seems to be connected with the theme of his latest poem *Is This Really What We Want*, where he describes the absence of utilitarianism within a rather caricatured war waging American ideology:

Kill everyone who doesn't want to be our acolyte.

Kill everyone who disagrees that what we say is right.

It's going to cost us trillions already has in fact,

but no price is too high to keep the faith intact.

(Waters 2016)

To Arendt the very essence of totalitarian movements was aimless process in much the same way as in imperialism (Arendt 1967, 216). It was this method of expansive process that the totalitarian movements adopted from imperialism. Only the reasons were rather different. In totalitarianism expansion's aim is not economic growth or accumulation of capital, but the reasons behind it are purely ideological. It means totalitarian regime can better control the factuality of the world. (Arendt 1967, 458.) If we interpret Waters' poem from this perspective, he is arguing that the United States spends trillions of dollars for mainly ideological reasons; "to keep the faith intact".

Arendt describes how ideology of totalitarian movements was attractive to mob and elite alike: "terrorism had become a kind of philosophy through which to express frustration, resentment, and blind hatred, a kind of political expressionism which used bombs to express oneself" (Arendt 1967, 332). *The Wall* parodies this kind of attitude in the slogan projected on the wall during the song *Another Brick in the Wall – Part II*: "IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED CALL IN AN AIRSTRIKE". From the perspective of Arendt's thinking it is apposite that *The Wall* show connects ideology with symbol of bombs during the song *Goodbye Blue Sky*. The song is performed in the first half of the concert. Nonetheless, its theme seems to be relevant at this point. An animated scene is projected on the wall alongside the song:

{Several bomber planes approach from the dark horizon. One after another they drop down different symbols: crucifix, hammer and sickle, dollar-signs, star of David, star and crescent, Shell logo, Mercedes Benz logo, McDonald's logo. Eventually the whole wall becomes covered in blood.}

Di' di' di' did you see the frightened ones?

Di' di' di' did you hear the falling bombs?

Di' di' di' did you ever wonder why we

Had to run for shelter when the

Promise of a brave, new world

Unfurled beneath the clear blue sky?

(Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [01:38:31 – 01:41:49].)

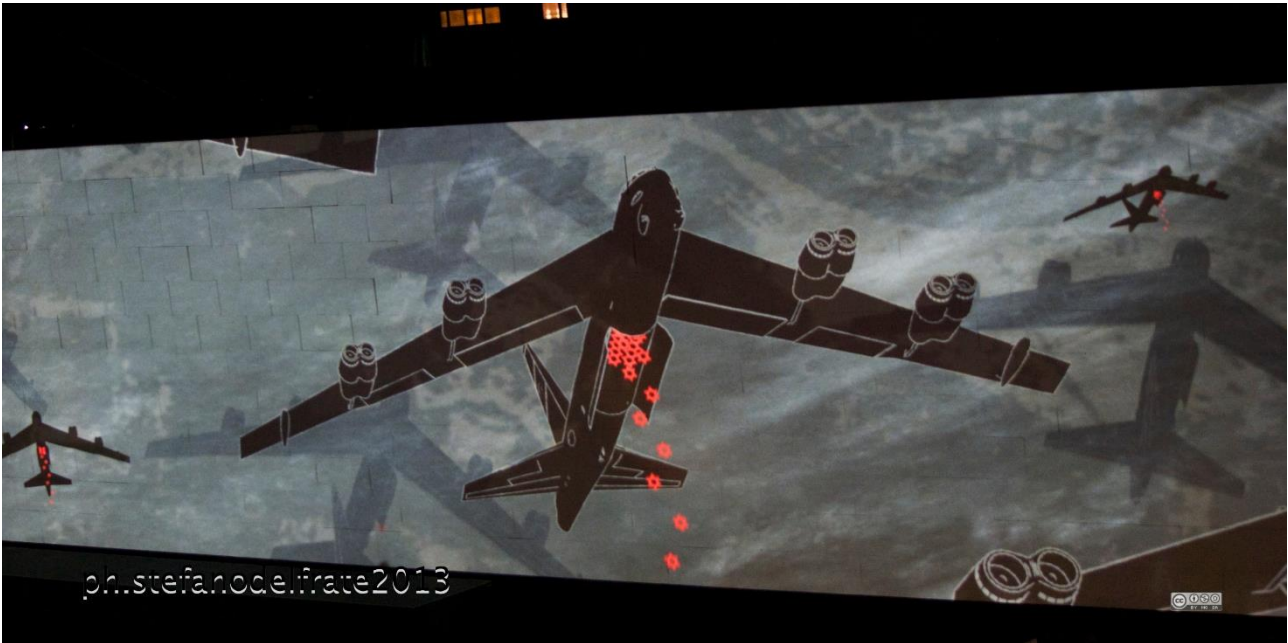


Figure 17. The bomber plane dropping down symbols

The several symbols of religion, nation and capitalism capsulize modern ideologies. The vessel used to deliver these ideologies, is a rather aggressive and violent symbol of bomber plane. The point Waters is making, I believe, mirrors the message of his poem I cited earlier:

because we believe in freedom human rights for everyone

well everyone that is, except the ones, we need to bomb

(Waters 2016)

Even the ideology of freedom and human rights appear to have acquired totalitarian elements in Waters' satirical poem. The poem might be interpreted as another way of putting the often-repeated paradox of the United States delivering democracy by bombs.

Arendt argues that the “aggressiveness of totalitarianism springs not from lust for power, and if it feverishly seeks to expand, it does so neither for expansion's sake nor for profit, but only for ideological reasons: to make the world consistent, to prove that its respective supersense has been right” (Arendt 1967, 458). A similar need of proving the ideology correct is also explicit in Waters' poem:

Anyway, I'm sure they're all agree it's a success,

when we've killed all the insurgents and tidied up the mess.

*Even though they may be crippled or rotten underground,
they'll be happy when democracy is the only game in town.
They can help to build our bases they can wash our fancy cars.
They can service all our carnal needs and pickup joints and bars,
against their religion. [smirk] Their religion's wrong.
I'm sure they'll get the hang of it, catch on before too long.
Then they can all watch baseball, they can build a Disneyland,
eat pizza and McDonalds drink bourbon start a band.*

(Waters 2016).

In the poem Waters ironically claims that the success of the western ideology becomes proven when all the people, even the ones that had to be bombed, adopt the western way of life: they denounce their wrong religion, and start eating at McDonald's etc. The similar logic is apparent in the visuals of the song *Goodbye Blue Sky* where the bomber planes drop down capitalistic symbols such as McDonald's, Shell and Mercedes Benz -logos. "The promise of a brave new world²²" comes with a high price: the blood of those who stand in the way of this process. Though western liberal democracy is not obviously totalitarianism, this does not stop Waters from pointing out totalitarian elements in it. Gadamer argues that the meaning of art actualizes in mimesis, the classical concept of imitation. It is not merely a copy of the original, but in order to be revelatory, it has to leave out and heighten (Gadamer 2004, 114). Waters is caricaturing western, mostly American, values and presenting them in totalitarian light.

At this point it is useful to make a distinction between two concepts relating to totalitarianism: ideology and propaganda. According to Arendt totalitarian movements and regimes use propaganda on outsiders of the movement: nontotalitarian strata of the population, nontotalitarian countries abroad, sympathizers of the movement "who are not ready to accept the true aims of the movement", even the members of the inner circle, who cannot be reliably dominated (Arendt 1967,

²² This is probably reference to Aldous Huxley's novel *Brave New World* (1932), which depicts a dystopian society where public has become oppressed by their addiction to amusement. Though such themes become touched upon in *The Wall*, these themes are more explicitly involved in Waters' solo album *Amused to Death* (1992). The name of the album was inspired by Neil Postman's book *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, which was in turn inspired by Postman's idea that Huxley's novel reflected contemporary world (Postman, A. 2006). Though Waters has probably read *Brave New World* before writing the lyrics of *Goodbye Blue Sky*, the reference at this point does not seem to relate to any specific theme in Huxley's novel.

342–343). Thus, propaganda does not truly convey movement’s ideology, but it is used to create a front. In *The Wall* this kind of propaganda is imitated in the posters displayed throughout the show on the wall and on the inflatable pig saying: “TRUST US”.

The initiated members of the movement, however, are in no need of propaganda, but they are ideologically indoctrinated (Arendt 1967, 343). According to Arendt indoctrination coupled with terror increases “the isolation and security from outside interference” (Arendt 1967, 344). Arendt argues that terror, even in pre-total forms, ruins the relationships between people, and “the self-compulsion of ideological thinking ruins all relationships with reality” (Arendt 1967, 474). Consequently, within the organizational framework of the movement the fanaticized members can be reached neither by experience nor argument (Arendt 1967, 308). Arendt’s conception of totalitarian ideology and its consequences provide an informative perspective to the next song of the narrative *Waiting for the Worms*:

{A sound of marching feet sets of the scene. A choir starts to sing a highfaluting tune. A truck pulls down on the road, and several troopers mount off. They start putting together an outdoor stage. After this the view rotates from depicting Pink yelling to a megaphone on the stage and troops marching down a quiet suburban street. The view is switched on a screaming fan crowd running around the hallways of the concert hall. }

Eins, zwei, drei, alle

Ooooh, you cannot reach me now

Ooooh, no matter how you try

Goodbye, cruel world, it's over

Walk on by.

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [01:18:57 – 01:19:28].)

Starting the song by counting in German is most likely a reference to Nazi Germany²³, though maybe not the sharpest one. The scene is depicting how the Hammer movement is organizing a rally. This depiction probably has its inspiration in the rallies organized by skinhead groups in England at the time. However, the lyrics of the song are more concerned with psychological factors involved in totalitarian ideology. The song describes the situation, members of the movement find themselves in. They are kept out of the common world through terror and indoctrination. The phrase “goodbye cruel world” from the earlier song is repeated. However, the line is now continued with an exhortation to the world to “walk on by”. This indicates that Pink is trying to keep his ideology intact by not allowing any outside interference.

In the concert adaptation (2010–2013) the rally is enacted on the stage:

²³ The aggressive nature that some people connect with German language might be due to the connotation the language has with the speeches of Hitler.

{Several giant worms appear from both sides of the wall moving towards the centre. The worms slither between the massive brick pillars projected on the wall. A choir of five people standing in formation and dressed in uniforms is led by the second lead singer.}

[Choir]*Sitting in a bunker here behind my wall*

[Waters]*Waiting for the worms to come.*

[Choir] *In perfect isolation, here behind my wall*

[Waters]*Waiting for the worms to come.*

(Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [01:50:47 – 01:51:35].)

The connection of isolation and totalitarianism is indicated in the line: “In a perfect isolation, here behind my wall”. The wall mentioned in the lyrics becomes a symbol for the two-sided isolation resulting from totalitarian domination. The access of the outside world to the inside reality is kept blurred by propaganda and the insiders are isolated from the outside world through indoctrination. The motif of worms is reappears together in the lyrics as well as in the visual images projected on the wall. However, this time the literal context is different. In the depiction of loneliness they symbolize the decay of the mind and reality. In the context of totalitarianism the fundamental meaning of the symbol has remained the same, but it now poses a more political aspect. If hammers were described as the forces of oppression by Waters, the worms he calls as “the thinking part” (Vance 1979). By this Waters refers to the ideological element in totalitarianism.

To better understand this we need to view the connection between reality and ideology in Arendt's thinking. Arendt states that masses no longer trust the reality of their sensual experience, but rather their imagination, which is only convinced by the consistency of system (Arendt 1967, 351). The power of totalitarian movement lies in its ability to shut the masses off from the real world and in blurring the line between the reality and fiction (Arendt 1967, 352–353).

From this perspective the worms symbolize the disturbed relief that the consistency of ideology provides at the expense of common sense and personal judgment. According to Arendt (2006, 52) during the war people had been shielded against reality in German society, although it was with self-deception, stupidity and lies, which were necessary for upholding the fiction. This line of thought is connected to Eichmann as well. In the new land based on Fuhrer's order, Eichmann lost the need to feel anything at all (Arendt 2006, 135). According to Arendt (2006, 126) Eichmann could set his conscience to rest, because the respectable society around him reacted the same way as he did. Remembering this time of harmony between his fiction and perceivable reality Eichmann was able to stick to his self-deception throughout the trial. It was his safeguard against others and reality (Arendt 2006, 49–58).

The song *Waiting for the Worms* depicts a similar sense of calmness brought on by the illusion of harmony between the ideology and outside world. This sense of euphoria becomes also

indicated by the softness of the choir element in the song. The worms in the narrative represent ideology's consequences on the psyche of the members. These consequences are similar with the consequences of isolation: loss of ability to act, loss of reality, loss of care and loss of identity. However, in the context of totalitarianism the absence of these elements has more severe results, at least according to Arendt. Arendt claims that thoughtlessness and remoteness from reality "can wreak more havoc than all the evil instincts taken together" (Arendt 2006, 288).

Arendt's warning indeed becomes quite relevant, when Pink starts to pronounce the objectives of the Hammer movement:

{The music turns from highfaluting to a simplistic and threatening marching rhythm with long power chords of overdriven guitar. The choir of troopers sings in bass note the beginning of every sentence, "waiting", as Waters continues yelling his propaganda through a megaphone on the stage. The worms are slithering between the pillars in the background}

Waiting to cut out the deadwood.

Waiting to clean up the city.

Waiting to follow the worms.

Waiting to put on a black shirt.

Waiting to weed out the weaklings.

Waiting to smash in their windows

And kick in their doors.

Waiting for the final solution

To strengthen the strain.

Waiting to follow the worms.

Waiting to turn on the showers

And fire the ovens.

Waiting for the queers and the coons

and the reds and the Jews.

Waiting to follow the worms.

(Roger Waters' the Wall, [01:56:36 – 01:52:25].)

Arendt's concept of language rules quite well explains the short euphemistic statements that the lyrics consist of. According to Arendt The Nazi regime had difficulties in constraining the natural feelings of pity, which arouse when persecutors could see suffering. Himmler came up with a trick turning the instincts of conscience around, where instead of thinking what horrible things the person had done, he could think what horrible things he had to watch in pursuance of his duties (Arendt 2006, 106). The language rules, which were ordinary used to camouflage the content of Final Solution to outsiders, became important to conscience of the persecutors as well.

Arendt (2006, 108) mentions that switching the word *murder* to phrase *granting a mercy death*, had a decisive effect on the mentality of the killers.

Pink also utters such euphemism to his megaphone: “Waiting to cut out the deadwood” and “Waiting to clean up the city” etc. The line “waiting to put on a black shirt” refers to freedom from conscience which results from hiding behind the uniform. The paratroopers singing in a unified bass note the word “waiting” signifies that they have embraced their role as executors of the movement’s law. They are waiting for the orders, not acting on their own. The expression of their voice is monotonous reaction like short bursts. Waters in the role of the leader finishes the sentences. Their unified performance depicts quite aptly the loss of identity and plurality under totalitarian rule. In *The Human Condition* Arendt describes the fate of plurality under totalitarian domination. In Third Reich public realm had become singular, thus no public realm at all: “The end of the common world has come when it is seen only under one aspect and is permitted to present itself in only one perspective” (Arendt 1958, 58). In *The Wall* narrative the ruling perspective belongs to the protagonist. According to Jenkins (1996, 208) Pink externalizes his own repression into hatred and distrust of every alien group.

These alien groups become mentioned in the lyrics: the queers, the coons, the reds the Jews. For the purposes of totalitarian ideology it does not matter, who the enemy is. This is also explained by Waters in a recent interview where he compares Donald Trump to Hitler:

The method for taking over the state and for it becoming a totalitarian police state, is always the same, and it's always the identification of 'the other' as the enemy. In Trump's case, it's the Chinese, the Mexicans, and Islam – it doesn't matter who it is. With Hitler, it was the Jews, the Communists, the Gypsies, anybody who had a physical deformity, or whatever it might be, the homosexuals – they were all lumped together. (Blistein 2016.)

As totalitarian movement adopts some group of people as its enemy, it logically follows from its ideology that this group should be exterminated. If the inmates are seen as vermin, they should be killed with poison gas. Within the totalitarian ideology nothing could be more sensible and logical. (Arendt 1967, 457.) According to Arendt totalitarian movements followed their ideology in “logical consistency, which to the onlooker, looked preposterously ‘primitive’ and absurd” (Arendt 1967, 417). There is a sense of horrible absurdity in the lines “turn on the showers and fire the ovens”. These euphemistic statements refer to exterminating the ideological enemies of the Hammer movement. These conclusions rise from the ideological premise of an enemy. The line “follow the

worms” refers to this deduction process. Though *The Wall* does not seem to differentiate between propaganda and ideology, the content of Waters’ more aggressive expression seems to be more ideological, compared to the following sequence sang in a softer voice by Wyckoff. Instead of making radical ideological deductions, the lyrics continue to depict a typical propaganda applied by totalitarian movements:

*Would you like to see Britannia
rule again, my friend?*

[Roger Waters:]*All you have to do is follow the worms.*

*Would you like to send our coloured cousins
home again, my friend?*

[Roger Waters:]*All you need to do is follow the worms.*

(Roger Waters’ *the Wall* 2014, [01:52:26 – 01:53:10].)

The lyrics make a tempting offer. To *make Britannia great again*, one only needs to follow the worms, which becomes interpreted as succumbing to the ideology of the movement. Waters sings the lines relating to worms, so it is possible that Wyckoff and Waters perform different roles, which might relate to Arendt’s conception of propaganda and ideology.

The first stanza of the lyrics supports Romero and Cabo’s argument that the narrative is closely related to post-war Britannia coming in terms of no longer being an imperial power. To some extent their argument is valid. However, a significant effort has gone into making the narrative more universally relevant as I have argued throughout this research. Gadamer’s concept of occasionality explains quite well the universality of *The Wall*. Gadamer argues that though someone might explain us the particular historical context, it would be only secondary for the meaning as a whole. Art forms, which are intended for specific occasion “are fundamentally forms of the universal occasionality characteristic of the work of art inasmuch as it determines itself anew from occasion to occasion.” The works unique relation to the occasion can never be finally determined if it is capable of yet further fulfillment (Gadamer 2004, 140–142.) *The Wall* as a narrative has been especially universal in this sense. It has been able to “determine itself anew” from century to century.

As the ideological premises of the Hammer movement have been carefully outlined by Pink, the depiction of totalitarianism reaches its culmination:

{The audience joins to enact the narrative, which they have seen in the film, when they start to chant the word: “Hammer!” Electric guitar start to play a short dark riff, which is repeated over

and over again. The walls are covered on posters stating: "TRUST US". An animation of marching hammers is projected on the wall. The audience is chanting "Hammer" repeatedly while making the sign of crossed fists. Suddenly Waters yells out: "Stop!"}

(Roger Waters' the wall 2014, [01:53:38 – 01:54:13].)



Figure 18. The animation of marching hammers projected on the wall

The image of hammers marching in the rhythm of the repeating guitar riff mirrors the violent ideology of totalitarianism. The audience once again joins the narrative by chanting the slogan of the Hammer movement. This indicates that the masses have become completely marooned by the ideology of the movement and the result is depicted as an endless process of hammers marching in formation.

Just as the depiction of oppressing process of totalitarianism has reached its peak, the hero, Pink, suddenly demands the show to "Stop". The view is cut to a public restroom, where the hero, the artist, the poet sits in a toilet booth crying and reciting his poems from his *little black book*:

I wanna go home, take of this uniform and leave the show

but I'm waiting in this cell because I have to know

have I've been guilty all this time

(Roger Water's the Wall 2014, [01:54:13 – 01:54:44].)

Taking off the uniform indicates that Pink wants to stop pretending and regain his identity. The show becomes the symbol of the unrelenting process, which has taken Pink and everyone in the audience to its service. This lyrics of this song are connected to Waters' earlier work, *Wish You Were Here* (1975) which I have quoted in the beginning of the chapter *The Great Show of Totalitarianism*. Pink is ready to be emancipated from the lead role in the cage. However, first, he has judge his own actions.

3. Tearing Down the Wall

The Trial is the culmination point of the narrative. During the song Pink judges himself. In the 1982 film the song is accompanied by an animated scene created by Gerald Scarfe. The same animation is also projected on the wall in the live adaptation (2010–2013) the narrative:

{As the door of the toilet booth, which Pink is sitting in, becomes opened by a security guard, Pink does not encounter the guard, but is instead accompanied into a trial completely composed in his inner existence. Pink is depicted as a resigned ragdoll, who with his head down makes his way to the trial.}

(Pink Floyd The Wall 1982, [01:24:01–01:24:12].)

The narrative is visually expressed in a form of cartoon animation, which indicates to the spectators that we are no longer dealing with external reality but rather with inner reality of the hero. The passive character of ragdoll is the embodiment of Pink's identity, which has become suppressed by isolation and totalitarian ideology.

The scene introduces a variety of other characters, which are all fragments of Pink's imagination. Some of them are based on his memories, like the characters of Pink's school teacher, his mother and wife, who are all called upon to testify against Pink. Waters adopts different accents and tones to his voice in his portrayal of each character. Musically the song differs from the rest as it is fully orchestrated, whereas orchestral instruments have only played minor roles in the previous songs. Consequently, the song resembles more an opera piece than a typical rock song. The setting is built around rather official Victorian time English court procedure. The first character to be introduced is the prosecutor, who is not based on any person from Pink's past, but rather represents the repressive element in Pink's mind. His tone is at the same time arrogant and submissive:

Good morning, Worm your honor

The crown will plainly show the prisoner who now stands before you

Was caught red-handed showing feelings

Showing feelings of an almost human nature.

This will not do

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [01:24:46 – 01:25:11].)

This accusation made by the prosecutor, can be viewed as tragic irony. Frye identifies tragic irony within Kafka's *The Trial*, where the prosecution of the hero "is not the result of what he has done, but in the end of what he is, which is an 'all too human' being" (Frye 1990, 41). In addition to involving similar tragic element, Kafka's²⁴ *The Trial*, has probably served as an inspiration to the title and symbolism of the song. During the previous song *Stop* Pink's humane impulses of conscience were starting to take over and he could not continue on the path of cold totalitarian reasoning. It is Pink's humane side that the prosecutor condemns when he states: "this will not do". Hostility towards humane feelings is a typical theme in literature depicting totalitarianism. An example of this is Orwell's (1949) *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which depicts a system, which strives toward obliterating any feelings of love its subjects might have between one another. This is also comparable with Arendt's account of totalitarianism. Arendt argues that the aim of totalitarian ideologies isn't transmutation of society but "the transformation of the human nature itself" in a society, where banality of homo homini lupus [A man is a wolf to another man] is constantly realized (Arendt 1967, 458 - 459).

The trial proceedings become cut by Pink's self-explorations, where he realizes how mentally disturbed he has become:

Crazy, toys in the attic I am crazy,

Truly gone fishing.

They must have taken my marbles away.

(Pink Floyd *The Wall* 1982, [01:25:40 – 01:25:55].)

In the concert adaptation (2010–2013) Waters has attempted to bring *The Trial* to more political level. The animation projected on the wall involves a new sequence. Spectators are offered a peek on the other side of the wall, where a similar haggard figure as seen during *Hey You* is crouching next to a wall and giving the finger to the viewers. A text "iHate" is written on the wall. (Roger Waters' *the Wall* 2014, [01:56:27 – 01:56:52]). The letter "i" relates once again to the alienating consumerist system, which results in mass-scale hatred, which has no clear object besides the whole world. The figure is abstractly giving the finger at everyone and everything. However, there lies a danger in the existence of these kind of frustrated masses. In her more historic perspective to the matter, Arendt describes how the Nazi and communist movements in 1930s recruited their members from the indifferent masses, who "other parties had given up as too apathetic or too stupid for their attention"

²⁴ There is also a text written on the hovering pig stating: "Kafka Rules!"

(Arendt 1967, 311). Presumably the objective of Waters in adding this new sequence is to show that the struggle depicted in *The Trial* is relevant on a larger political scale.

Worms have up until now been used as an abstract symbol for decay of the mind. In *The Trial* this decay becomes embodied in the character of the judge, who is depicted as a giant worm. He is also spoken to as “Worm your honor” by the prosecutor. Waters states that just as much the memories of the people from Pink’s past, the judge is part of him as well (Vance 1979). The high stature of the worm in Pink’s imagination might indicate how effectively ideology and terror have transformed his mind. The judge is depicted as an intimidating and authoritative figure.

{When the judge pronounces his sentence, an oppressive electric guitar riff starts to dominate the song. Waters has also used a pitch effect on his voice, which makes it sound monstrously low. At this point the Judge is depicted as a giant human ass. His face is portrayed as two buttocks and his mouth as an anus.}

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [01:27:43 – 01:28:21].)

Despite the intimidating elements, there is a trace of humour involved in the depiction of the judge. Presumably Scarfe has ended up portraying the judge this way inspired by Waters’ lyrics, where the judge states: *The way you made them suffer, your exquisite wife and mother, fills me with the urge to defecate!*” (ibid.). By these lines Waters has probably attempted to describe character’s self-hatred and contempt at his own failure, which becomes best embodied in the character of the judge. This is comparable to the way Arendt saw the masses. Masses judge themselves in terms of individual failure. The judgment passed on Pink by the judge, or more accurately by Pink himself, is ultimately surprising:

Since, my friend, you have revealed your deepest fear

I sentence you to be exposed before your peers.

Tear down the wall!

(Pink Floyd the Wall 1982, [01:28:21 – 01:28:39].)

Pink’s fear of exposing himself can be perhaps best interpreted against Arendt’s conception of hero, which she presents in *The Human Condition*. Arendt describes the origin of the word hero, which was a name given to each man who participated the Trojan enterprise:

The connotation of courage [. . .] is in fact already present in a willingness to act and speak at all, to insert oneself into the world and begin the story of one’s own [. . .]

courage and even boldness are already present in leaving one's private hiding place and showing who one is, in disclosing and exposing one's self. (Arendt 1958, 186.)

In the concert adaptation (2010–2013) the audience joins to chant with the song: “Tear down the Wall!” The song climaxes when the physical wall constructed during the show falls accompanied by a sound of rumble. The band performs the final song *Outside the Wall* in front of the rubble of the wall:

{The whole band stands in line in front of the stage. The music is performed with acoustic instruments: guitar, a solo trumpet and mandolin. This gives an authentic and down-to-earth feel to the song. Furthermore, the additional visual elements are rather minimalistic. In the background on the round screen there's shadow of child cheerfully spreading her arms towards the sky. On a strip of the intact wall there's a posterised picture of a girl wearing a hijab. The picture is most likely of young Pakistani activist, Malala Yousafzai. The hovering pig is torn down by people in the audience }

*All alone or in twos,
The ones who really love you
Walk up and down outside the wall.
Some hand in hand
And some gathered together in bands.
The bleeding hearts and artists
Make their stand.
And when they've given you their all
Some stagger and fall, after all it's not easy
Banging your heart against some mad bugger's
wall*

(Roger Waters' the Wall 2014, [02:00:28 – 02:07:26].)



Figure 19. The band performing in front of the stage

Urick (2010) argues that *outside the wall* works more as a thematic than narrative epilogue. The political message of the narrative does indeed reach its conclusion in this song. According to Frye the theme of the comic is usually presented in the form of incorporating a central character to society. However, sometimes this comedy stands only just at the end of the narrative, as in Dante's *Commedia*. (Frye 1990, 42.) Though the narrative for most part is tragic it ends in comedic incorporation of the hero. The ethos of *The Wall* as much as it involves the depiction of isolation and its harmful effects on a personal and political level, concludes depicting its exact opposite. *Outside the Wall* stresses the power of cooperation and caring: People walking hand in hand and gathering together in bands. The lyrics state that the bleeding hearts and artist make their stand. This can be interpreted on individual and political level of the narrative. On individual level it means that people should try to reach out to the ones who have become isolated and help them back to the world. On a political level this means standing against oppressive systems, which cause whole masses of people to become isolated and hateful toward the rest of the world. This is also indicated by the hovering pig, which has come down low enough for people to tear it down.

In Arendt's terms this would relate to power of plurality. Arendt argues that power only comes to existence when people come together to act, and it vanishes as soon as they disperse. To Arendt power is the greatest weapon against any form of tyranny, which relies on people being isolated from one another. Arendt argues that it is ironical to call nonviolent revolting against materially strong rulers as passive resistance because "it is one of the most active and efficient ways of action ever devised, because it cannot be countered by fighting". (Arendt 1958, 200– 202.) In her report on Eichmann's trial Arendt gives an example of the power involved in non-violent resistance. According to Arendt under the Nazi occupation the Danish government had decided to protect the Jews, and the Danes made every effort to make all the preparatory moves difficult for the Nazis (Arendt 2006, 171– 172). When Himmler finally decided it was time to tackle the Jewish question in Denmark, he confronted resistance from a surprising direction. It was now the Nazi officials, who had been living in the country for years, that started to refuse cooperating in exporting Jews to their death. This interference enabled the Danish to ship the Jewish into Sweden in time. (Arendt 2006, 172 – 174.) Politically and psychologically this presented an example to Arendt, where the Nazis had met with open resistance and the result was that they changed their minds (Arendt 2006, 175).

Here Arendt's conception of evil becomes apparent. It wasn't actually in the nature of these German officials to be evil. The ideal of toughness was a trait learned by self-deception. But this self-deception could become tempted if it was offered an alternative. Parvikko (2008, 206) sums up Arendt's view: in order to understand and resist totalitarianism, one should not follow the majority,

but to look what minority is doing in spite of everything. The example of Denmark proves that action of few might have unpredictable results to actions of many. The lesson of this example is that what can be learned, can be unlearned as well.

The thematic conclusion of *The Wall* is that people should never stop banging their “hearts against some mad bugger’s walls”. The oppressive system is taken on one bugger at a time. Especially artists and “the bleeding hearts”, meaning sensitive people with strong moral convictions, should have a major responsibility in this action. The band performing on the stage for everyone to see symbolizes this public and plural action. In the concert Waters has also given encouraging examples of this action. The presumed picture of Pakistani activist, Malala Yousafzai²⁵ serves to honor the work she has done for promoting education for girls. In October 2012 she survived an attack by a Taliban gunman, who shot her in the head (Trimel 2013). The challenges faced by Yousafzai’s become quite well reflected in the lines: “*And when they've given you their all, some stagger and fall, after all it's not easy*”.

The 1982 film ends with a scene depicting people, including small children cleaning up the streets after a riot. This according to Jenkins reflects the London riot of 1980s as part of British reality (Jenkins 1996, 210). Jenkins makes a bleak interpretation about the ending of the film. According to him the tearing down the wall might signify physical annihilation, perhaps suicide. He also suggests that in the closing scene, the wall is being built once again in the minds of new generation: the children, who are picking after the wastes of riot (Jenkins 1996, 209–210). Jenkins acknowledges, however, that there is an alternative meaning for the ending, which was especially highlighted in 1990 Berlin concert: breakthrough to a new kind of liberation, free of past divisions. (Jenkins 1996, 211). In my view the latter interpretation is closer to the truth. Though the ending of the film is ambiguous and the narrative has a circular nature, which is highlighted by the fact that the original album starts and ends with the same tune. Additionally Waters’ voice is asking at the end of album: “isn’t this . . .”, which is continued in the beginning of the album “where we came in?” These elements of ambiguity and circularity might support Jenkins’ thesis: the wall is being built anew.

In my view the ending is mostly comic. Waters’ own statement about this is also similar: “At the end of it all his judgement on himself is to deisolate himself; in fact, it is a very good thing”

²⁵ In 2013 Malala Yousafzai recieved the Amnesty International ‘Ambassador of Conscience’ award jointly with a social justice activist Harry Belafonte. At the gala they were presented by Roger Waters and U2 frontman Bono. (Trimel 2013.)

(Lance 1979). Though the ending has clearly been reinterpreted by the author in many of its adaptations, it has always remained comic, as far as I can see.

Having said this, there is a sense of uncertainty in the ending, which resists attempts of happily-ever-after interpretation. The narrative does not make a promise that the isolating tendencies of masses are now solved forever, but at the same time it does not mean that they are doomed to isolate themselves as the previous generation has done. They are free to make their own choices, and consequently the risk of totalitarianism and isolation is still exist as a threat. Depicting a child at the end has remained with narrative to its latest adaptation (2010–2013), where a shadow of young girl is displayed on the round screen above the stage. This might be considered as an apt metaphor for Arendt's concept of beginning, which is highly related to her concept of action. At the end of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* Arendt makes a claim that totalitarian form of government as it has been born and produced in history is now ever-present danger and is only too likely to stay with us from now on. However, she concludes in an optimistic remark. According to Arendt every history, even totalitarianism, necessarily contains a new beginning, which is a promise:

Beginning before it becomes a historical event, is the supreme capacity of man; politically it is identified with man's freedom. *Initium ut esset homo creates est* – “that a beginning be made man was created” said Augustine. This beginning is guaranteed by each new birth: it is indeed every man. (Arendt 1967, 478–479.)

According to Canovan (1995, 95) Arendt's account on the development of the modernity and linking of economic growth with totalitarianism is heavily metaphorical. And as we remember, in metaphor two things become identified with each other but also as themselves (Frye 1990, 123). Much the same metaphorical connection exists in *The Wall* narrative. The linking of elements modern experience of loneliness in an oppressive society to totalitarianism in the narrative, might be understood as a warning, that there is an ever-present danger lurking within these oppressive conditions. However, it does not mean that people would necessary be constrained by these conditions.

Warning as a word involves a strong supposition, that there is still something to be done about it. The Marx's idea of history as a single process stretching back into the past and forward into the future, is something that Arendt strictly denied. Canovan, who regards Arendt more as a storyteller rather than a historian, stresses Arendt's belief that human beings have capacity to act and make a new beginning, so the future is in principle unpredictable. (Canovan 1995, 95.) According to my interpretation *The Wall* encourages and celebrates this kind of action. At the beginning of my work I

stated that the main focus of my research will be on the revealing the meaning of totalitarianism in The Wall narrative. To reveal meaning, without committing the error of defining it, leaves room for the unpredictability of human action.

Conclusion

Totalitarian solutions may well survive the fall of totalitarian regimes in the form of strong temptations which will come up whenever it seems impossible to alleviate political, social, or economic misery in a manner worthy of man (Arendt 1967, 459)

The goal of this study was twofold: how is totalitarianism depicted in *The Wall* narrative and second, what is the political message, dianoia, of this depiction. The depiction of totalitarianism revolves around the symbol of the wall, the title symbol of the narrative. Within the narrative the symbol of the wall embodies most explicitly individual loneliness and the distorted reality, which results from it. This is metaphorically likened with the political isolation in totalitarianism. From early childhood, the protagonist, Pink becomes increasingly isolated from the oppressive society. In the latest adaptation (2010–2013) of the narrative the main characters in Pink's life have become politically allegorical. Pink's oppressive teacher stands for the normalizing society, which does not allow any spontaneous action. Pink's smothering over-protective mother stands for a state, which does not trust its citizens, and wishes to paternalistically (or maternalistically) control them under the pretext of security. The narrative also depicts commercialized and oppressive society, which leaves Pink no other choice but to withdraw from the public world.

From this point forward the depiction of totalitarianism becomes more dominating aspect of the narrative. In isolation Pink becomes deprived of human connection he longs for. His isolation gradually turns into loneliness and his access to reality becomes more and more distorted. Finally, he succumbs to the prevailing cynic ideology, which becomes portrayed in all its horror under the metaphor of show. The lead actor of the show is Pink and his Hammer movement. It does not matter whether we view Pink as the leader or the supporter of this movement. For the most part the narrative takes place in his mind: metaphor for any human being's inner life. Pink is himself the lead actor, the executioner and the victim of the totalitarian Hammer movement.

In the context of totalitarianism the symbol of the wall absorbs new meanings. Coupled with the metaphor of rock show, it becomes a manifestation of the inescapable terror and tempting ideology of totalitarianism. The symbol of hammers become central in the depiction of totalitarianism as they symbolize the forces of oppression and terror which drive people to become the human material, the victims or executors of the totalitarian show. In the minds of the members of the

movement, the wall becomes manifested as an ideological wall. This ideological wall consists of indoctrination and propaganda, which protect the members of totalitarian movements from the outside world and vice versa. In *The Wall* narrative the ideological thinking and its tendency to blur access to reality become embodied in the symbol of worms. This loss of relationships to other people and to reality is reflected on both levels of the narrative: on the individual level concerned with loneliness and on the political level concerned with totalitarianism. As such the narrative is highly metaphorical, presenting two layers of meaning at the same time. This becomes best indicated in the line “all in all it’s just another brick in the wall” which ultimately refers to the vicious circle, where oppression leads to loneliness and loneliness leads to more oppression.

We have come across the ultimate question: “What is the point of the story?” The difference between Waters’ and Arendt’s accounts can be seen in which side, individual or political, has more weight on the metaphor. To overtly simplify the case: Arendt mainly applies symbolism of loneliness to revealing what totalitarianism is like, whereas Waters originally applied symbolism of totalitarianism to describe what loneliness is like. However, *The Wall* narrative developed towards more political dianoia during the three decades; the weight of the metaphor has shifted. Whereas Arendt’s motivation with her more historic account was to depict totalitarianism and understand its reasons, Waters seems to have some ulterior political motives with his depiction of totalitarianism. Waters’ narrative takes a despised event from the past to reflect it on events that are taking place in contemporary society²⁶. In Arendt’s view there is a quite clear distinction between contemporary liberalism and totalitarianism. However, Waters uses successfully over the top totalitarian symbols of terror to point out that modern contemporary governments apply solutions, which look like totalitarian. Thus, the system we live in appears to be totalitarian in many respects: ideological expansion, militaristic solutions, normalization and mass-surveillance of citizens.

The Wall makes some examples of political social and economic problems, in contemporary societies. Some are more general, such as the depiction of Third World famine, but others are more exact cases such as the deaths of de Menezes or Saaed Chmagh and Namir Noor-Eldeen. By incorporating these cases into the narrative depicting totalitarianism, Waters has probably hoped to draw attention to these grievances. Furthermore, he has also attempted to point out that the solutions applied in these cases by contemporary liberal governments look very totalitarian. Even though contemporary societies are not fundamentally totalitarian, (which is beside the point, as

²⁶ Similar example from the field of theatre might be the play *The Crucible* written in 1953 by American playwright Arthur Miller. The play centres the of Salem witch trials, but on another level it is an allegorical criticism for McCarthyism: the US government persecuting suspected communists.

Kramer remarked the aim of interpretation is not to know how the world is like), they are presented as such in *The Wall* narrative. This is what we are interested in when interpreting: how the world is recognized, experienced, represented, addressed, symbolized. However, the ultimate dianoia of *The Wall* becomes revealed in the comic conclusion of the narrative. We should always remain vigilant for these totalitarian solutions and make a united stand against them.

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