

The “colder” a society becomes, the more pronounced its endeavor to preserve the characteristics of its traditional culture as unchanged as possible. A culture is considered the “hotter,” the greater its impetus toward a radical and rapid modernization of society is. It was this model which Claude Lévi-Strauss set against Eurocentric ethnography and its distinction between “primitive,” i.e., close-to-nature, and “developed” industrialized societies in *La Pensée sauvage* (1962; *The Savage Mind*, 1966).

Yet what follows from the assumption assume that this approach includes the possibility that “hot societies” may “cool off,” and vice versa? A “cooled-off” hot society might function like a clockwork exactly like before by believing in its modernization only ritually but actually merely reaffirming itself and remaining true to what it already knows.

According to Claude Lévi-Strauss, a “cold society” is, morally speaking, neither a good nor a bad society. The question is not which real results a society arrives at but the permanent intention guiding it. For the image a society forms of itself is an essential part of its reality.

Relying on free association and including the specific place, the city of Schwaz, and its silver thaler, tunnel, tools, and animals, the exhibition *Cold Society #2* artistically explores such possible cultural issues.

(Judith Hopf)

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