

Minima Moralia

By Theodor Adorno

Description: This original translation was created by Dennis Redmond in 2005. Note that the original German text is available from Suhrkamp Verlag: Theodor W. Adorno. *Collected Works*. Suhrkamp Verlag, Volume 4.

Translator's notes: The existing English translation of *Minima Moralia*, by E.P. Jephcott, is good, but stylistically somewhat dated. The goal of this newer version is to render the pungency and power of the original text in contemporary prose (the alternative is teaching the intricacies of mid-20th century academic English to 21st century students). I have tried to highlight certain theoretical passages and motifs which aren't quite as explicit in Jephcott's version (e.g. aufgehoben is rendered as "sublation", instead of Jephcott's "preservation"). Where necessary, I have also changed the sexist language of the original, replacing "he" with either "they" or "one", and added additional explanations of Latin and French terms. Above all, I have tried to do some small amount of justice to the poetry, musicality and beauty of Adorno's language, which is inextricably interwoven with Adorno's theoretical innovations. In the midst of the most cataclysmic war of human history, Adorno's prose radiates the promise of a happiness beyond catastrophe – a happiness which the total system, to this day, denies its constituent members, simply because it *is* this catastrophe.

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Dedication

The melancholy science, from which I make this offering to my friend, relates to a realm which has counted, since time immemorial, as the authentic one of philosophy, but which has, since its transformation into method, fallen prey to intellectual disrespect, sententious caprice and in the end forgetfulness: the teaching of the good life. What philosophy once called life, has turned into the sphere of the private and then merely of consumption, which is dragged along as an addendum of the material production-process, without autonomy and without its own substance. Whoever wishes to experience the truth of immediate life, must investigate its alienated form, the objective powers, which determine the individual existence into its innermost recesses. To speak immediately of what is immediate, is to behave no differently from that novelist, who adorns their marionettes with the imitations of the passions of yesteryear like cheap jewelry, and who sets persons in motion, who are nothing other than inventory-pieces of machinery, as if they could still act as subjects, and as if something really depended on their actions. The gaze at life has passed over into ideology, which conceals the fact, that it no longer exists.

But the relationship of life and production, which the latter degrades in reality into an ephemeral appearance of the former, is completely absurd. Means and ends are interchanged. The intuition of this ludicrous quid pro quo has not been totally expunged from life. The reduced and degraded essence bristles tenaciously against its ensorcelment in the facade. The change of the relations of production itself depends more than ever on what befalls the “sphere of consumption”, the mere reflection-form of production and the caricature of true life: in the consciousness and unconsciousness of individuals. Only by virtue of opposition to production, as something still not totally encompassed by the social order, could human beings introduce a more humane one. If the appearance [Schein] of life were ever wholly abrogated, which the consumption-sphere itself defends with such bad reasons, then the overgrowth of absolute production will triumph.

In spite of this, considerations which begin from the subject have as much that is false in them, so much as life becomes appearance [Schein]. Because the overwhelming objectivity of the contemporary phase of historical movement consists solely of the dissolution of the subject, without a new one appearing in its stead, individual experience necessarily relies on the old subject, the historically condemned one, which is still for itself, but no longer in itself. It thinks of its autonomy as still secure, but the nullity, which the concentration camps demonstrated to subjects, already overtakes the form of subjectivity itself. Something sentimental and anachronistic clings to the subjective consideration, no matter how critically sharpened against itself: something of the lament about the way of the world, which is not to be rejected for the sake of its good intentions, but because the lamenting subject threatens to harden in its being-just-so [Sosein] and thereby to fulfill once again the law of the way of the world. The fidelity to one's own state of consciousness and experience is forever in temptation of falling into infidelity, by denying the insight, which reaches beyond the individuated [Individuum] and which calls the latter's substance by name.

Thus argued Hegel, whose method schooled that of *Minima Moralia*, against the mere being-for-itself of subjectivity on all its levels. Dialectical theory, averse to everything which is singular, cannot permit aphorisms to be valid as such. In the best of cases they may be tolerated,

in the words of the Preface of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, as “conversation”. The latter’s time however is over. Nevertheless the book does not forget the totality-claim of the system, which does not wish anyone to escape it, any more than the rebellion against the latter. Hegel does not pay heed to the subject in accordance with the requirement, which he otherwise passionately defends: that of being in the matter [Sache] and not “always beyond it”, instead of “entering into the immanent content of the matter [Sache]”. If the subject is disappearing today, aphorisms take on the weighty responsibility of “considering that which is disappearing itself as essential”. They insist, in opposition to Hegel’s procedure and nevertheless in concordance with his thought, on negativity: “The life of the Spirit [Geistes] wins its truth only by finding itself in what is absolutely torn apart. It is not this power as the positive, which looks away from the negative, as when we say of something, that it is nothing or wrong, and now, done with that, pass over from there to something else; rather it is this power only when it stares the negative in the face, tarrying on it.”

The dismissive gesture, with which Hegel in contradiction to his own insight, constantly runs roughshod over the individual, derives paradoxically enough from his necessary bias for liberalistic thought. The conception of a totality harmonious throughout all its antagonisms compels him to rank individuation, however many times he designates it as the driving moment of the process, as something lesser in the construction of the whole. That in prehistory the objective tendency asserts itself over the heads of human beings, indeed by virtue of the annihilation of the individual, without the reconciliation implied by the concept of the generality and the particular ever being historically achieved, this is distorted in Hegel: with lofty iciness he opts once more for the liquidation of the particular. Nowhere does he doubt the primacy of the whole. The more dubious the transition from the reflecting singularization to the glorified totality remains, as much in history as in Hegelian logic, the more enthusiastically philosophy clings, as justification of the existent, to the victorious motorcade of the objective tendency. The development of the social principle of individuation into the victory of fatality already gives it occasion enough. Since Hegel hypostatizes bourgeois society as much as its founding category, the individuated [Individuum], he could not truly carry out the dialectic between the two. Admittedly, he assures us, with classical economics, that the totality produces and reproduces itself out of the interrelation of the antagonistic interests of its members. But he naively regards the individuated [Individuum] as such solely as that which is irreducibly given [Gegebenheit], which he just dismantled in his theory of cognition. In the individualistic society however the generality is realized not only through the interplay of individuals, rather the society is essentially the substance of the individuated [Individuum].

That is why social analysis can garner incomparably more from individual experience than Hegel conceded, while conversely the great historical categories, after all that has been perpetrated with them in the meantime, are no longer above suspicion of fraud. In the one hundred and fifty years which have passed since Hegel’s conception, something of the force of protest has passed over again into the individuated [Individuum]. Compared with the paterfamilial scantiness, which characterizes its treatment in Hegel, it has won as much richness, differentiation and energy as it has, on the other hand, been weakened and hollowed out by the socialization of society. In the epoch of its disassembly [Zerfalls], the experience of the individuated [Individuum] as well as what it encounters contributes once more to a recognition, which it had concealed, so long as it was construed seamlessly and positively as the ruling category. In view of the totalitarian unison, which broadcasts the elimination of difference as immediately meaningful, a measure of emancipatory social power may have temporarily withdrawn into the sphere of the individual. That critical theory tarries in it, is not only due to a bad conscience.

All this is not to deny what is debatable in such an attempt. I wrote the book for the most part during the war, under conditions of contemplation. The violence which drove me into exile simultaneously blocked me from its full recognition. I had not yet admitted to myself the complicity of those who, as if in a magic circle, speak at all of what is individual, in view of the unspeakable things which collectively occurred.

Each of the three parts starts out from the narrowest private realm, that of the intellectual in emigration. After this follow considerations of wider social and anthropological scope; they pertain to psychology, aesthetics, and science in its relationship to the subject. The concluding aphorisms of each section lead thematically, too, to philosophy, without claiming to be conclusive and definitive: all of these are intended to mark points of attack or to generate models for future exertions of the concept.

The immediate occasion for writing this book was the fiftieth birthday of Max Horkheimer on February 14, 1945. The composition transpired in a phase in which, due to external circumstances, we had to interrupt our common work. The book wishes to proffer thanks and fidelity, by refusing to recognize the interruption. It is testimony to a dialogue intérieur [French: internal dialogue]: there is no motif herein, which does not belong as much to Horkheimer as to the person who found the time for formulation.

The specific approach of *Minima Moralia*, the attempt to represent moments of a common philosophy from the standpoint of subjective experience, means that the pieces do not entirely measure up to the philosophy, of which they are nevertheless a part. This is expressed as what is loose and nonbinding in the form, along with the renunciation of an explicit theoretical context. At the same time, such asceticism should atone for something of the injustice, wherein one continued to work alone on something which can only be completed by both, and from which we shall not desist.

Minima Moralia

Reflections from the damaged life

Part One

1944

Life does not live
– Ferdinand Kürnberger

1

For Marcel Proust. – The son of well-to-do parents who, whether out of talent or weakness, chooses a so-called intellectual occupation as an artist or scholar, has special difficulties with those who bear the distasteful title of colleagues. It is not merely that his independence is envied, that the seriousness of his intentions is doubted and that he is presumed to be a secret envoy of the established powers. Such mistrust is borne out of resentment, yet would usually find its confirmation. However the actual resistances lie elsewhere. The occupation with intellectual [geistigen] things has meanwhile become “practical”, a business with a strict division of labor, with branches and numerus clausus [Latin: restricted entry]. Those who are materially independent, who choose out of repugnance towards the shame of earning money, are not inclined to recognize this. For this he is punished. He is no “professional” [in English in original], ranks in the hierarchy of competitors as a dilettante, regardless of how much he knows about his subject, and must, if he wishes to pursue a career, display a professional tunnel vision even narrower than that of the most narrow-minded expert. The suspension of the division of labor to which he is driven, and which the economic state of affairs allows him, within certain limits, to realize, is considered especially scandalous: this betrays the aversion to sanction the hustle and bustle dictated by society, and high and mighty competence does not permit such idiosyncrasies. The departmentalization of the Spirit [Geist] is a means of abolishing such there, where it is not ex officio or contractually obligated. It does its work all the more surely, as those who continually reject the division of labor – if only in the sense that they enjoy their work – reveal, by this selfsame measure, their vulnerabilities, which are inseparable from the moments of their superiority. Thus is the social order [Ordnung] assured: this one must play along, because one could not otherwise live, and that one, who could indeed live, is kept outside, because they don’t want to play along. It is as if the class which the independent intellectual deserted from revenges itself, by forcibly pushing through its demands precisely where the deserter sought refuge.

2

Grassy seat. – The relationship to parents is undergoing a sad, shadowy change. They have lost their awe through their economic powerlessness. Once we rebelled against their insistence on the reality principle, the sobriety which was always ready to recoil into the rage against those who do not renounce. Today however we find ourselves facing a presumably younger generation, which is in every one of its impulses unbearably more grown up than the parents ever were;

which has renounced, before things ever came to a conflict, and which derives their authority from that, implacably authoritarian and unshakeable. Perhaps one always experienced the parental generation as harmless and disempowered, once the latter's physical energy subsided, while one's own generation seemed to be threatened by youth: in the antagonistic society, the relationship of the generations is also one of competition, behind which stands naked violence. Today however things are regressing to a condition which does not know the Oedipus complex, but only the slaying of the father. One of the most telling symbolic atrocities of the Nazis was the killing of the extremely old. Such a climate produces a belated and rueful understanding with one's parents, similar to the one between condemned prisoners, disturbed only by the fear that we, ourselves powerless, may not be able to care for them some day as they cared for us, when they owned something. The violence which is inflicted on them makes us forget the violence they committed. Even their rationalizations, the once-hated lies with which they sought to justify their particular interest as the general one, show an inkling of the truth, the urge towards the reconciliation of conflicts, which the upbeat successor generation happily denies. Even the faded, inconsequential and self-doubting Spirit [Geist] of the elders is more approachable than the quick-witted stupidity of junior. Even the neurotic peculiarities and malformations of the older adults represent character, that which is humanly achieved, compared with pathetic health, infantilism raised to a norm. One realizes in horror that when one previously clashed with one's parents, because they represented the world, one was secretly the mouthpiece of a still worse world against the merely bad. Unpolitical attempts to break out of the bourgeois family usually only lead to deeper entanglement in such, and sometimes it seems as if the disastrous germ-cell of society, the family, is simultaneously the nourishing germ-cell of the uncompromising will for a different one. What disintegrates, along with the family – so long as the system continues – is not just the most effective agency of the bourgeoisie, but also the resistance which indeed oppressed the individual, but also strengthened the latter, if not indeed producing such. The end of the family cripples the counter-forces. The dawning collectivistic social order [Ordnung] is the mockery of one without class: it liquidates, along with the bourgeois, at the same time the utopia, which at one time drew nourishment from the mother's love.

3

Fish in water. – Since the comprehensive apparatus of distribution of highly concentrated industry has dissolved the circulation-sphere, this latter begins an astonishing post-existence. While the economic basis for the occupation of go-betweens disappears, the private life of innumerable people becomes that of agents and go-betweens, indeed the realm of the private is wholly swallowed up by a mysterious enterprise [Geschäftigkeit: business, activity, busyness], which bears all the marks of the commercial kind, only in a situation where nothing is really being done. Those who are afraid, from the unemployed to professionals who in the next moment may come to feel the wrath of those whose investments they represent, believe they can win over the ubiquitous company executive only through sensitivity, assiduousness, accessibility, by one way or another, through the qualities of traders, and soon there is no relationship which is not seen in terms of other relationships, no impulse which is not subjected to prior censorship, in order not to deviate from approval. The concept of relationships, a category of mediation and circulation, never prospered best in the actual circulation-sphere, in the market, but in closed, monopoly-like hierarchies. Now that the entire society is becoming hierarchal, opaque relationships adhere everywhere, wherever there was still the appearance [Schein] of freedom. The irrationality of the system is expressed not less in the economic fate of particular individuals [Einzelnen] than in the parasitic psychology of such. Earlier, when there was still something like the disreputable bourgeois separation of occupation and private life, whose passing one would

almost like to regret, whoever pursued goals in their private life was eyed with distrust, as a loutish gatecrasher. Today whoever engages in something private, which does not have a discernible goal, appears as arrogant, foreign and improper. Whoever isn't "out" for something [wer nichts "will": literally, whoever doesn't want, wish, intend to do something] is almost suspect: no one trusts anyone else to help them get by, without legitimating themselves through counter-claims. Myriads of people make their living out of a condition, which follows the liquidation of occupations. These are the nice people, the popular ones, who are friends with all, the just ones, who excuse every sort of meanness as "human" [in English in original] and incorruptibly defame every non-normalized impulse as "sentimental" [in English in original]. They are indispensable thanks to their knowledge of all the channels and back doors of power, they guess its most secret judgements and live off the dextrous communication of such. They are to be found in all political camps, even there, where the rejection of the system is taken for granted and for that reason a lax and cunning conformism of its own has developed. Often they win over people through a certain benevolence, through the sympathetic sharing of the life of others: selflessness as speculation. They are clever, witty, sensible and flexible; they have polished the old trader-spirit with the achievements of the day-before-yesterday's psychology. They are ready for anything, even love, yet always faithlessly. They betray not from instinctual drives, but from principle: they value even themselves as a profit, which they do not wish to share with anyone else. They are bound to the Spirit [Geist] with affinity and hate: they are a temptation for the thoughtful, but also their worst enemies. For they are the ones who subtly apprehend and despoil the last hiding-places of resistance, the hours which remain free from the demands of the machinery. Their belated individualism poisons what still remains of the individuated [Individuum: individual, the individuated].

4

Final clarity. – The newspaper obituary for a businessman once read: "The breadth of his conscience competed with the goodness of his heart." The lapse committed by the mourners in the rarefied, elevated language called for at such times, the involuntary admission that the kind-hearted deceased was devoid of a conscience, expedites the funeral procession on the shortest path to the land of truth. When a man of advanced age becomes famous for being especially benign [abgeklärt: clarified, mellowed], one can presume that his life represented a series of scandals. He has gotten used to outrage. The broad conscience passes itself off as greatness of mind [Weitherzigkeit], which forgives everything, because it understands it all too well. A quid pro quo steps between one's own guilt and that of others, which is resolved in favor of whoever got the best of the deal. After such a long life, one just can't distinguish who did what to whom. In the abstract representation of universal injustice, every concrete responsibility collapses. The scoundrel twists it around, as if he experienced it himself: if you only knew, young man, what life is really like. Those however who are already distinguished in the middle of life by special benevolence, are usually drawing an advance on such benignity [Abgeklärtheit]. Whoever is not evil, does not live benignly [abgeklärt], but in a peculiarly bashful manner, hardened and intolerant. Due to a lack of appropriate objects, the latter hardly knows any other expression of their love than the hatred of inappropriate ones, through which they admittedly come to resemble what they hate. The bourgeoisie however is tolerant. Their love for people, as they are, originates in the hatred of rightful human beings.

5

Doctor, that is kind of you. – Nothing is harmless anymore. The small joys, the expressions of life, which seemed to be exempt from the responsibility of thought, not only have a moment of

defiant silliness, of the cold-hearted turning of a blind eye, but immediately enter the service of their most extreme opposite. Even the tree which blooms, lies, the moment that one perceives its bloom without the shadow of horror; even the innocent “How beautiful” becomes an excuse for the ignominy of existence, which is otherwise, and there is no longer any beauty or any consolation, except in the gaze which goes straight to the horror, withstands it, and in the undiminished consciousness of negativity, holds fast to the possibility of that which is better. Mistrust is advisable towards everything which is unselfconscious, casual, towards everything which involves letting go, implying indulgence towards the supremacy of the existent [Existierende]. The malign deeper meaning of comfort, which at one time was limited to the toasts of cozy sociability, has long since spread to friendlier impulses. When in the chance conversation with a man on the train, one acquiesces, in order to avoid a quarrel, to a couple of sentences which one knows ultimately certify murder, is already an act of treachery; no thought is immune against its communication, and uttering it at the wrong place and in the context of a false agreement is enough to undercut its truth. Every visit to the cinema, despite the utmost watchfulness, leaves me dumber and worse than before. Sociability itself is a participant in injustice, insofar as it pretends we can still talk with each other in a frozen world, and the flippant, chummy word contributes to the perpetuation of silence, insofar as the concessions to those being addressed debase the latter once more as speakers. The evil principle which has always lurked in affability develops, in the egalitarian Spirit [Geist], into its full bestiality. Condescension and making oneself out as no better are the same. By adapting to the weaknesses of the oppressed, one confirms in such weaknesses the prerequisite of domination, and develops in oneself the measure of barbarity, thickheadedness and capacity to inflict violence required to exercise domination. If, in the latest era, the gesture of condescension is dispensed with, and solely adaptation becomes visible, then it is precisely in such a perfect screening of power that the class-relationship, however denied, breaks through all the more irreconcilably. For intellectuals, unswerving isolation is the only form in which they can vouchsafe a measure of solidarity. All of the playing along, all of the humanity of interaction and participation is the mere mask of the tacit acceptance of inhumanity. One should be united with the suffering of human beings: the smallest step to their joys is one towards the hardening of suffering.

6

Antithesis. – For those who do not play along, there exists the danger of considering themselves better than others and misusing their critique of society as an ideology for their own private interest. While feeling their way towards making their own existence into the flickering picture of the right one, they should remain aware of its insubstantiality and know how little the picture can replace the right life. Such considerations however contradict the gravitational force of what is bourgeois within them. Those who are at a distance are as entangled as those who are actively engaged; the former have nothing over the latter, except the insight into their entanglement and the happiness of the tiny freedom, which lies in the recognition as such. Their own distance from business as usual is a luxury, solely spun off by that business as usual. That is why every impulse towards self-withdrawal bears the marks of what is negated. The coldness which it must develop is not to be separated from the bourgeois one. In the monadological principle, even where it protests, lurks the ruling generality. Proust’s observation, that the photographs of the grandfathers of a duke and a Jew from the entrepreneurial class look so similar, that no one thinks of the social ranking order, strikes at a far more comprehensive state of affairs [Sachverhalt]: all of those differences which comprised the happiness, indeed the moral substance, of individual existence, objectively disappear behind the unity of the epoch. We detect the decay of education, and yet our prose, measured against Jacob Grimm or Bachofen, has phraseologies in common

with the culture-industry which we did not suspect. Moreover we no longer know Greek or Latin like Wolf or Kirchhoff. We point out the transition of civilization into alphabetism and ourselves forget to write letters or to read a text of Jean Paul, as it must have been read in his time. We abhor the coarsening of life, but the absence of any objectively binding common decency [Sitte: morals] compels us at every step into modes of conduct, speech and calculation which are barbaric, measured by humane standards, and tactless, even by the dubious standards of the good society. With the dissolution of liberalism, the authentic bourgeois principle, that of competition, was not overcome, but passed over from the objectivity of social processes into the composition [Beschaffenheit: character, constitution] of pushing and shoving atoms – into anthropology, as it were. The subjugation of life to the production-process degradingly inflicts something of that isolation and loneliness on every single person, which we are tempted to consider the matter of our superior choice. The notion that every single person considers themselves better in their particular interest than all others, is as long-standing a piece of bourgeois ideology as the overestimation of others as higher than oneself, just because they are the community of all customers. Since the old bourgeois class has abdicated, both lead their afterlife in the Spirit [Geist] of intellectuals, who are at the same time the last enemies of the bourgeois, and the last bourgeois. By allowing themselves to still think at all vis-a-vis the naked reproduction of existence, they behave as the privileged; by leaving things in thought, they declare the nullity of their privilege. The private existence, which yearns to look like one worthy of human beings, simultaneously betrays the latter, because the similarity of the general implementation is withdrawn, which more than ever before requires an independent sensibility [Besinnung]. There is no exit from the entanglement. The only responsible option is to deny oneself the ideological misuse of one's own existence, and as for the rest, to behave in private as modestly, inconspicuously and unpretentiously as required, not for reasons of good upbringing, but because of the shame that when one is in hell, there is still air to breathe.

7

They, the people. [in English in original] – The circumstance that intellectuals mostly deal with other intellectuals should not mislead them into thinking they are worse than the rest of humanity. For they encounter one another primarily in the most embarrassing and degrading situation of all, that of competing supplicants, and are thereby nearly always compelled to show their worst side to each other. Other people, especially the simple folk whose virtues intellectuals are wont to praise, usually meet them in the role of someone trying to sell them something, who doesn't have to worry about the customer horning in on their turf. It is easy for the auto mechanic and the sales-girl at the liquor store to remain free of impudence: friendliness is in any case mandated from above. If on the other hand illiterates come to intellectuals in order to have letters written, these latter may indeed make a reasonably good impression. But the moment simple folk have to brawl for their share of the social product, they surpass anything in the canon of envy and hatefulness displayed by literati or musical directors. The glorification of the splendid *underdogs* [in English in original] ends up in glorifying the splendid system which made them so. The justifiable feelings of guilt of those exempted from physical labor ought not become an excuse for rural idiocy [famous phrase used by Marx to describe the stagnation of peasant life]. Intellectuals who write solely about intellectuals and give them their bad name in the name of that which is authentic [Echtheit] only strengthen the lie. A large part of the prevailing anti-intellectualism and irrationalism, all the way to Huxley, is set in motion by the fact that writers complain about the mechanism of competition without themselves being able to see through the latter, and so fall victim to such. In the field most their own, they have shut out the consciousness of *tat twam asi* ["Thou art this", quote from Upanishads]. That is why they then rush into Indian

temples.

8

If bad boys should tempt you. – There is an amor intellectualis [Latin: abstract love] for the kitchen staff, the temptation for those who work theoretically or artistically, to relax the intellectual [geistigen] claim on oneself, to lower one's niveau, to follow all manner of platitudes in the matter [Sache] and expression, which one had rejected as an alert appraiser. Since no categories, not even that of cultivation [Bildung: education], can be proscribed to intellectuals anymore, and a thousand demands of hustle and bustle endanger the concentration, the effort of producing something with a measure of integrity is so great, that scarcely anyone is still capable of it. The pressure of conformity, which burdens everyone who produces something, furthers lowers their demands on themselves. The center of intellectual [geistigen] self-discipline as such is understood to be disintegrating. The taboos which comprised the intellectual [geistigen] stature of a human being, often sedimented experiences and unarticulated recognitions, direct themselves continuously against one's own impulses, which one learned to condemn, which however are so strong, that only an unquestioning and unquestionable juridics [Instanz] can halt them. What applies to the life of the instinctual drives, applies no less to the life of the mind: the painter and composer, who forbid themselves the use of this or that color combination or chord contrast as kitschy, the author who finds that a linguistic configuration gets on their nerves as banal or pedantic, react so forcefully because there are layers within them which are drawn by such. The rejection of the hegemonic overgrowth of culture presumes that one has participated enough in the latter to feel it in one's fingertips, as it were, simultaneously drawing from this participation the forces to dismiss it. These forces, which make their appearance as such in individual resistance, are for that reason by no means of a merely individual sort. The intellectual conscience, in which they are integrated, has a social moment so much as the moral superego. It crystallizes in the conception [Vorstellung] of the right society and its citizens. If this conception is set aside – and who could still blindly subscribe to it – then the intellectual compulsion towards the bottom loses its inhibitions, and all the junk which the barbaric culture has left behind in the individuated [Individuum] comes into view: half-education, laxness, cloddish trustfulness, shoddiness. Mostly it is rationalized as humanity, as the wish to make oneself understandable to other human beings, as cosmopolitan responsibility. But the sacrifice of intellectual self-discipline is borne far too easily, to really believe that it is indeed one. This is drastically evident when observing intellectuals whose material situation has changed: as soon as they have convinced themselves even the slightest bit that they must earn a living by writing and nothing else, they send the same junk into the world, down to the last nuances, which in their lush times they once denounced with the utmost ferocity. Entirely like formerly wealthy emigres, who can finally be as greedy in foreign lands as they always wanted to be at home, so do those who are impoverished in Spirit [Geiste] march enthusiastically into the hell, which is their heaven.

9

Above all one thing, my child. – What is unmoral about lies does not consist of the injury to the sacrosanct truth. No society which forces its compulsory members to hand themselves over with language, in order to overtake them that much more quickly, has the right to call on such. It does not befit universal untruth, to insist on the particular truth, while nonetheless inverting the latter straightaway into its opposite. In spite of this, something repellent clings to the lie, and though the consciousness of this was indeed beaten into one with the old whip, this simultaneously said something about the master of the dungeon. The mistake lies in all too much honesty. Whoever

lies, is ashamed, because in every lie they must experience what is degrading in the existing state of the world, which compels them to lie, if they wish to live, while warbling “Be ever true and honest” [song scored by Mozart] in their ear. Such shame saps the energy of the lies of those who are more subtly organized. They do it badly, and only thereby does the lie come to be genuinely unmoral for others. It suggests the former think the latter are stupid, and serves to express disrespect. Among today’s cunning practitioners, the lie has long since lost its honest function, of concealing something real. No one believes anyone, everyone is in the loop. Lies are told only when someone wants others to know they aren’t important, that the former does not need the latter, and does not care what they think. Today the lie, once a liberal means of communication, has become one of the techniques of brazenness, with whose help every single person spreads the iciness, in whose shelter they thrive.

10

Separated-united. – Marriage, whose despicable parody lives on in a time when the basis of the human right of marriage has been withdrawn, serves today mostly as a trick of self-preservation: each of the two conspirators deflects the responsibility for any villainy which they might commit onto the other, while in truth they exist together opaquely and swampily. The only proper marriage would be one, in which both have an independent life for themselves, without the fusion which rests on an economically compulsory community of interest, but which instead would involve taking mutual responsibility for each other out of freedom. Marriage as a community of interest inexorably signifies the degradation of the interested parties, and what is perfidious about the existing state of affairs, is that no one, even if one knew of this, can avoid such degradation. Sometimes one might entertain the thought that it is only those who are emancipated from the pursuit of interests, that is to say the rich, who retain the possibility of a marriage without shame. But this possibility is entirely formal, because those who are privileged are precisely the ones to whom the pursuit of interests has become second nature – otherwise they would not maintain their privileges.

11

Table and bed. – As soon as human beings divorce, even the most kind-hearted, friendly and educated ones, a cloud of dust enshrouds and daubs everything it touches. It is as if the sphere of intimacy, the inattentive trust of the common life is transformed into a poisonous substance, once the relationships are broken, in which they rested. What is intimate between human beings is compassion, patience, refuge for personal characteristics. If it is distorted, then the moment of weakness therein hoves into view, and during divorces such a turn towards the outside is unavoidable. Things which were once signs of loving care, pictures of reconciliation, make themselves suddenly self-standing as values and show their evil, cold and pernicious side. After separations, professors break into the dwellings of their wives, in order to carry off objects from the desk, and well-appointed ladies denounce their men for tax-evasion. If marriage afforded one of the last possibilities of constructing humane cells in the inhuman generality, then the generality revenges itself in its disassembly [Zerfall], by taking control of that which was apparently an exception, the alienated social orders of justice and property which underlies it and which pours scorn on those who thought themselves secure from it. Precisely that which is safeguarded turns into the cruel requisite of being sacrificed. The more “generously” the lovebirds originally behaved with each other, the less they thought of ownership and obligation, the more horrid the humiliation. For it is even in the realm of the juridically undefined, in quarrel, defamation, in the endless conflict of interests flourishes. Everything shadowy, on whose ground the institution of marriage is raised, the barbaric access of the man to the property and

labor of the woman, the not less barbaric sexual oppression, which tendentially compels the man to take lifelong responsibility for someone with whom he once took pleasure in sleeping with – this this crawls out of the cellars and fundaments into the open, when the house is demolished. Those who once experienced the good generality in the restricted belonging to each other, are now compelled by the society to consider themselves scoundrels and to learn, that they are the same as the generality of unrestricted nastiness outside. The generality proves itself in divorce as the mark of shame of the particular, because the particular, marriage, is not capable of realizing the true generality in this society.

12

Inter pares. – [Latin: among equals] In the realm of erotic qualities, a revaluation seems to be occurring. Under liberalism, well into our day, married men from high society who were unsatisfied with their strictly brought up and correct spouses absolved themselves in the company of female artists, bohemians, sugar babies [süsse Mädeln: sweet maidens] and cocottes. With the rationalization of society this possibility of unregimented happiness has disappeared. The cocottes are extinct, the sugar babies probably never existed in Anglo-Saxon countries and other lands of technical civilization, while the female artists and those bohemians who exist parasitically in the mass culture are so thoroughly permeated with the latter's reason, that those who flee in longing to their anarchy, to the free accessibility of their own use-value, are in danger of waking up to the obligation of engaging them as assistants, if not at least recommending them to a film-executive or scriptwriter they know. The only ones who are still capable of something like irrational love are precisely those ladies who the spouses once fled on excursions to Maxim's [Maxim: famous restaurant in Paris]. While they are as tiresome to their own husbands, due to the latter's fault, as their own mothers, they are at least capable of granting to others, what all others have withheld from them. The long since frigid libertine represents business, while the proper and well brought up lady represents yearning and unromantic sexuality. In the end, the ladies of society garner the honor of their dishonor, in the moment when there is no more society and no more ladies.

13

Aid, assistance and advice. – Every intellectual in emigration is, without exception, damaged, and if one does not wish to be taught a cruel lesson behind the airtight doors of one's self-esteem, would do well to recognize this. One lives in an environment which necessarily remains incomprehensible, even if one can manage to find their way among trade union organizations or automobile traffic; one is forever getting lost. Between the reproduction of one's own life under the monopoly of mass-culture and objective, responsible work there lies an irreconcilable breach. One's language has been expropriated and the historical taproot from which one derived their powers of cognition has been taken away. The isolation becomes worse, the more that closed and politically-directed groups form, suspicious of their own members, hostile towards those branded as the members of others. The share of the social surplus allocated to foreigners is never enough to go around and drives them into a hopeless secondary competition amongst themselves, in the midst of the more general one. All this leaves telltale marks on every individual. Whoever escapes the shame of being reduced to the lowest common denominator [Gleichschaltung: "leveling", notorious term of Nazi propaganda] bears this exceptional condition as their particular brand: as an illusory and unreal existence in the life-process of society. The relations between those who have been expelled are even more poisoned than between those who are long-standing residents. All metrics become false, the vision blurs. That which is private asserts itself improperly, hectically, vampire-like precisely because it no longer really exists and

convulsively wants to prove otherwise. That which is public is consigned to the unspoken oath of fealty on the public platform. The gaze takes on the aspect of that which is manic and at the same time cold in all grasping, devouring, commandeering. Nothing helps outside of the steadfast diagnosis of oneself and of others; the attempt, through consciousness, to not so much elude the calamity as to deprive it of its catastrophic violence, that of blindness. One should exercise the most extreme caution in choosing one's private circle, insofar as one has a choice at all. One should beware above all of seeking out influential types from whom "one can expect something." The eye for potential advantages is the mortal enemy of the construction of relationships worthy of human dignity; though solidarity and consideration for others may ensue from these latter, they can never originate in thoughts of practical deals. No less dangerous are the mirror images of power, the lackeys, toadies and leeches who make themselves agreeable to those better off than themselves, in an archaic manner which could only flourish in the economically extraterritorialized conditions of emigration. While they bring their protector small advantages, they drag him down as soon as they are accepted, an ever-present temptation which is exacerbated by his own helplessness while abroad. If the esoteric gesture in Europe was often merely a pretext for the blindest self-interest, the concept of *austerité* [French: austerity], though far from being completely sea-worthy, remains nevertheless the most suitable lifeboat. Only a very few have, of course, an appropriate craft at their disposal. Most of those who climb aboard are threatened with starvation or madness.

14

Le bourgeois revenant. – [French: the returning bourgeois] The Fascist regimes of the first half of the 20th century have absurdly stabilized an obsolete economic form, multiplying the terror and misery the latter required for its continued preservation, now that its senselessness is plain as day. Private life however is also marked by this. Along with the reach of administration, the asphyxiating social order of the private, the particularism of interests, the long since obsolete form of the family, the right of property and its reflection in the character have all been shored up once more. But with a bad conscience, the barely disguised consciousness of untruth. Whatever was once good and proper in what was bourgeois – independence, persistence, thinking ahead, consideration – is rotten to its innermost core. For while bourgeois forms of existence are doggedly preserved, their economic prerequisites have fallen away. That which is private has gone over completely into that privation, which it secretly always was, and the stubborn grip on one's own interest is intermingled with the rage that one is no longer capable of perceiving that things could be different and better. The bourgeoisie have lost their naivete, and for that reason have become wholly obdurate and malevolent. The benevolent hand which even now cares for and nourishes their little garden as if it had not long ago turned into a "lot" [in English in original], but fearfully holds the unknown intruder at a distance, is already that which refuses to grant the political refugee asylum. Objectively threatened, the power elite and their functionaries become subjectively utterly inhuman. Thus the class comes into itself and makes the destroying will of the course of the world into its own. The bourgeoisie live on like ghosts who threaten catastrophe.

15

Le nouvel avare. – [French: the new miser] There are two kinds of greed. One is the archaic kind, the passion which begrudges nothing to oneself and others, whose physiognomic traits were immortalized by Moliere and theorized by Freud as the anal character. It comes to fruition in the miser [in English in original], the beggar who secretly owns millions, who is the puritanical mask, as it were, of the mysterious caliph out of fairy-tales. The miser is related to the collector,

the manic one or the great lover, like Gobseck is to Esther [characters in Balzac novel]. Now and then one still runs across them as curiosities in the local section of the newspaper. The greedy of today regard nothing as too expensive for themselves, but everything as too expensive for others. They think in equivalencies, and their entire private life stands under the law of giving less than they get back, but always just enough to get back something. Every little favor they dispense is marked by an unspoken, “is that really necessary?”, “do I really have to?”. Their surest sign is the rush to revenge themselves for some consideration they have received, in order to forestall even the slightest gap in that chain of exchange-acts, by which one is reimbursed. Because everything is rational [in English in original] and businesslike with them, they are – unlike Harpagon and Scrooge – neither to be convicted nor converted. Their amiability is a measure of their implacability. When push comes to shove, they put themselves irrefutably in the right and turn the law into injustice, while the madness of the shabby skinflint had the redeeming feature that, according to the tendency, the gold in the cash-box drew thieves to it, indeed that its passion could be stilled only in sacrifice and loss, just as the erotic desire for possession is stilled in self-abandonment. The greedy of today however no longer practice asceticism as excess, but with caution. They are insured.

16

On the dialectic of tact. – Goethe, who was quite aware of the threatening impossibility of all human relationships in the dawning industrial society, sought to represent tact in the Wilhelm Meister novels as the providential information [rettende Auskunft: rescuing information, saving accommodation] between alienated human beings. This information seemed to him as one with relinquishment, with renunciation of undiminished closeness, passion and unbroken happiness. To him, what was humane consisted of a self-restriction, which adjudicated the unavoidable course of history – the inhumanity of progress, the atrophy of the subject – as its own affair [Sache]. But what has occurred since then makes Goethean relinquishment look like fulfillment. Tact and humanity – to him the same – have meanwhile gone down precisely the road which, according to his belief, they were to preserve us from. For tact has its precise historical hour. It is the one in which the bourgeois individuated [Individuum] rid itself of absolutist compulsion. Free and solitary, it stood for itself, while the forms of hierarchical respect and devotion developed by absolutism, divested of their economic foundation and their threatening force, are still extant enough to make living together inside privileged groups bearable. Such a paradoxical opening debut [Einstand], as it were, of absolutism and liberality can be detected everywhere from Wilhelm Meister to Beethoven’s attitude towards the conventional schemata of musical composition, and indeed even in the logic of Kant’s subjective reconstruction of objectively binding ideas. Beethoven’s regular recapitulations following dynamic developments, Kant’s deduction of the scholastic categories out of the unity of consciousness, are in an eminent sense “tactful”. The prerequisite of tact is a convention which is both fractured and yet still extant. This has now irretrievably decayed, and lives on only in the parody of forms, a capriciously dreamed up or recollected etiquette for the ignorant, like the preaching of advice columnists in newspapers, while the common understanding which might have borne those conventions in their humane hour has passed over into the blind conformity of auto-owners and radio listeners. The dying out of the ceremonial moment appears at first glance to benefit tact. The latter is emancipated from everything heteronomous, everything which is rote learning in the bad sense [schlecht Auswendigen], and tactful behavior could only be one which guided itself according to the specific constitutive features [Beschaffenheit] of each human relationship. Such emancipated tact however runs into the same difficulties which everywhere plague nominalism. Tact meant not simply subordination to ceremonial convention: the latter has been unstintingly ironized by

all modern humanists. The achievement of tact was on the contrary as paradoxical as its historical position. It demanded the actually impossible reconciliation between the unauthenticated claim of convention and the unruly one of the individuated [Individuums]. Tact could not at all be measured, outside of that convention. This latter represented, however insubstantially, that which is general, which comprises the substance of the individual claim. Tact is the determination of difference. It consists of knowing deviations. But when, once emancipated, it confronts the individuated absolutely, without a generality from which it could be deciphered, it falls short of the individuated and finally does the latter injustice. The inquiry into one's health, when this is no longer required and expected by one's upbringing, turns into nosiness or an insult, and the silence on touchy subjects turns into empty indifference, as soon as no rule governs what one should or should not speak about. Individuals thus begin to react with hostility to tact, and not without reason: a certain kind of politeness does not give them the feeling of being addressed as human beings, but evokes an intuition of the inhumane condition in which they find themselves, and those who are polite run the risk of seeming impolite, because they still make use of politeness like some outmoded prerogative. Ultimately, emancipated, purely individual tact turns into a mere lie. What can be marked of it today in the individuated, is what it specifically silences – the actual and still more the potential power, which each person embodies. Behind the demand to confront the individuated as such, without any preamble, absolutely as befits such, lies an eager supervision, checking whether each word tacitly gives an account of what the addressee, amidst an all-encompassing hierarchy hardened in itself, is saying, and which are the addressee's chances. The nominalism of tact aids the triumph of that which is most general, the naked reach of administration, even in the most intimate constellations. The write-off of conventions as outmoded, useless and extraneous ornaments only confirms the most extraneous of all things, a life of immediate domination. That the discontinuation of this caricature in schoolboyish camaraderie makes existence even more unbearable, as the mockery of freedom, is merely a further sign of how impossible it has become for human beings to live together under current conditions.

17

All rights reserved. – The signature of the epoch is that no human being, without any exception, can determine their life in a somewhat transparent sense, as was earlier possible by gauging market relationships. In principle everyone, even the mightiest of all, is an object. Even the profession of general affords no sure protection anymore. No defenses are stringent enough in the Fascist era to protect headquarters from air strikes, and commanders who behave with traditional caution are hanged by Hitler and beheaded by Chiang Kai-shek. It follows that anyone attempting to somehow make it through – and even the continuation of life has something nonsensical about it, as in dreams wherein one witnesses to the end of the world and crawls out afterwards from an underground cellar – should simultaneously be prepared, at any moment, to extinguish their life. That is the sad truth which emerges from Zarathustra's exuberant doctrine of the free death. Freedom has contracted into pure negativity, and what at the time of the Jugendstil [art nouveau] was known as dying in beauty, has reduced itself to the wish to shorten the endless degradation of existence as much as the endless misery of dying, in a world in which there are far worse things to fear than death. – The objective end of humanity is only another expression for that which is the same. It attests to the fact that individual persons have, as individuals – as these latter represent the species-being [Gattungswesen] of humanity – lost the autonomy through which they could have realized the species.

Asylum for the homeless. – How things are going for private life today is made evident by its arena [Schauplatz]. Actually one can no longer dwell any longer. The traditional dwellings, in which we grew up, have taken on the aspect of something unbearable: every mark of comfort therein is paid for with the betrayal of cognition [Erkenntnis]; every trace of security, with the stuffy community of interest of the family. The newly functionalized ones, constructed as a tabula rasa [Latin: blank slate], are cases made by technical experts for philistines, or factory sites which have strayed into the sphere of consumption, without any relation to the dweller: they slap the longing for an independent existence, which anyway no longer exists, in the face. With prophetic masochism, a German magazine decreed before Hitler that modern human beings want to live close to the ground like animals, abolishing, along with the bed, the boundary between waking and dreaming. Those who stay overnight are available at all times and unresistingly ready for anything, simultaneously alert and unconscious. Whoever flees into genuine but purchased historical housing, embalms themselves alive. Those who try to evade the responsibility for the dwelling, by moving into a hotel or into a furnished apartment, make a canny norm, as it were, out of the compulsory conditions of emigration. Things are worst of all, as always, for those who have no choice at all. They live, if not exactly in slums, then in bungalows which tomorrow may already be thatched huts, trailers [in English in original], autos or camps, resting-places under the open sky. The house is gone. The destruction of the European cities, as much as the labor and concentration camps, are merely the executors of what the immanent development of technics long ago decided for houses. These are good only to be thrown away, like old tin cans. The possibility of dwelling is being annihilated by that of the socialistic society, which, having been missed, sets the bourgeois one in motion towards catastrophe. No individual person can do anything against it. Even those who occupy themselves with furniture designs and interior decoration, would already move in the circle of artsy subtlety in the manner of bibliophiles, however opposed one might be against artsiness in the narrow sense. From a distance, the differences between the Viennese workshops and the Bauhaus are no longer so considerable. In the meantime, the curves of the pure purposive form have become independent of their function and pass over into ornaments, just like the basic shapes of Cubism. The best conduct in regards to all this still appears to be a nonbinding, suspending one: to lead a private life, so long as the social order of society and one's one needs will allow nothing else, but not to put weight on such, as if it were still socially substantial and individually appropriate. "It is one of my joys, not to be a house-owner," wrote Nietzsche as early as *The Gay Science*. To this should be added: ethics today means not being at home in one's house. This illustrates something of the difficult relationship which individual persons have vis-a-vis their property, so long as they still own anything at all. The trick consists of certifying and expressing the fact that private property no longer belongs to one person, in the sense that the abundance of consumer goods has become potentially so great, that no individual [Individuum] has the right to cling to the principle of their restriction; that nevertheless one must have property, if one does not wish to land in that dependence and privation, which perpetuates the blind continuation of the relations of ownership. But the thesis of this paradox leads to destruction, a loveless lack of attention for things, which necessarily turns against human beings too; and the antithesis is already, the moment one expresses it, an ideology for those who want to keep what is theirs with a bad conscience. There is no right life in the wrong one.

Do not knock. – Technification is making gestures in the meantime precise and rough – and thereby human beings. They drive all hesitation out of gestures, all consideration, all propriety

[Gesittung]. They are subjected to the irreconcilable – ahistorical, as it were – requirements of things. Thus one no longer learns to close a door softly, discreetly and yet firmly. Those of autos and frigidares have to be slammed, others have the tendency to snap back by themselves and thus imposing on those who enter the incivility of not looking behind them, of not protecting the interior of the house which receives them. One cannot account for the newest human types without an understanding of the things in the environs which they continually encounter, all the way into their most secret innervations. What does it mean for the subject, that there are no window shutters anymore, which can be opened, but only frames to be brusquely shoved, no gentle latches but only handles to be turned, no front lawn, no barrier against the street, no wall around the garden? And which auto-driver has not felt the temptation, in the power of the motor, to run over the vermin of the street – passersby, children, bicyclists? In the movements which machines demand from their operators, lies already that which is violent, crashing, propulsively unceasing in Fascist mistreatment. Not the least fault for the dying out of experience is due to the fact that things assume a form under the law of their purposiveness which restrict their interaction to mere application, without the surplus – were it that of freedom of behavior, were it that of the autonomy of the thing – which might survive as the kernel of experience, because it is not consumed by the moment of action.

20

Struwwelpeter. [Shock-headed Peter, story by Hoffman] – When Hume sought to defend epistemological contemplation against his urbane English contemporaries, something ever and anon disreputable to gentlemen [in English in original] as “pure philosophy”, he used the argument: “Accuracy is, in every case, advantageous to beauty, and just reasoning to delicate sentiment.” That was itself pragmatic, and yet it contains implicitly and negatively the entire truth concerning the Spirit [Geist] of praxis. In the profit-based economy, the practical social orders [Ordnungen] of life, while claiming to benefit human beings, cause what is human to wither, and the wider they spread, the more they cut off everything which is tender. For tenderness between human beings is nothing other than the consciousness of the possibility of non-purposive relations, which strikes those who are caught up in purposes as consolation; the legacy of ancient privileges, which promises a condition without privilege. The abolition of privilege by the bourgeois ratio ultimately abolishes this promise too. When time is money, it seems the right thing to do to save time, above all one’s own, and one excuses such thriftiness with all due respect for the other. One is straightforward. Every veil which steps between human beings conducting business is felt to be a disturbance of the functioning of the apparatus, in which they are not only objectively incorporated, but to which they belong with pride. That they greet each other with the hellos of tried-and-true indifference instead of doffing their hats, that they send each other interoffice memos devoid of addresses or signatures instead of letters, are the endemic symptoms of the sickness of contact. Alienation manifests itself in human beings precisely in the fact that distances fall away. For only so long as they are not overwhelmed with giving and taking, discussion and conclusion, access and function, would enough space remain between them for that fine mesh of threads, which connects them to each other, and whereby that which is external [Auswendige] truly crystallizes as what is assimilated [Inwendiges]. Reactionaries such as the followers of C.G. Jung have noticed something of this. “It is a typical feature,” goes an *Eranos* essay by G. R. Heyers, “of those not fully formed by civilization, that a theme may not be immediately dealt with, indeed may not even be mentioned; on the contrary the conversation must move in spirals by itself towards its actual object.” Instead, the shortest connection between two people is now the straight line, as if they were points. Just as the walls of houses are nowadays poured out of cement molds, so too has the social mortar between

human beings been replaced by the pressure, which holds them together. What is different, is no longer even understood, but appears, if not quite as the Viennese culinary specialty with a tinge of something headwaiterly, then as childish trustfulness or impermissible closeness. In the form of the offhand comments concerning the health and disposition of the spouse, which precede the business lunch, the opposition to the social order of purposes has itself been seized by such, adduced into the latter. The taboo against talking shop and the incapacity to talk to each other are in truth the same thing. Because everything is business, it may not be named as such, rather like the rope in the house of someone who has hanged themselves. Behind the pseudo-democratic demolition of formulaic modes [Formelwesen], archaic courtliness, and useless conversations which are not unfairly suspected of being gossip, behind the apparent clarification and transparency of human relations, which no longer permits anything which is undefined, stands the arrival of open barbarity. The direct answer, which tells others the facts of the matter to their face, without digressions, hesitations, or reflections, already has the form and sound of the commands, which under Fascism the dumb issued to the silent. The matter-of-factness [Sachlichkeit] between human beings which clears away the ideological ornamentation between them, has itself already become an ideology of those who wish to treat human beings as things.

21

No exchanges allowed. – Human beings are forgetting how to give gifts. Violations of the exchange-principle have something mad and unbelievable about them; here and there even children size up the gift-giver mistrustfully, as if the gift were only a trick, to sell them a brush or soap. For that, one doles out charity [in English in original], administered well-being, which papers over the visible wounds of society in coordinated fashion. In its organized bustle, the human impulse no longer has any room, indeed even donations to the needy are necessarily connected with the humiliation of delivery, the correct measure, in short through the treatment of the recipient as an object. Even private gift-giving has degenerated into a social function, which one carries out with a reluctant will, with tight control over the pocketbook, a skeptical evaluation of the other and with the most minimal effort. Real gift-giving had its happiness in imagining the happiness of the receiver. It meant choosing, spending time, going out of one's way, thinking of the other as a subject: the opposite of forgetfulness. Hardly anyone is still capable of this. In the best of cases, they give what they themselves would have wished for, only a few shades of nuance worse. The decline of gift-giving is mirrored in the embarrassing invention of gift articles, which are based on the fact that one no longer knows what one should give, because one no longer really wants to. These goods are as relationless as their purchasers. They were shelf warmers [Ladenhueter] from the first day. Likewise with the right to exchange the gift, which signifies to the receiver: here's your stuff, do what you want with it, if you don't like it, I don't care, get something else if you want. In contrast to the embarrassment of the usual gifts, their pure fungibility still represents something which is more humane, because they at least permit the receiver to give themselves something, which is to be sure simultaneously in absolute contradiction to the gift.

In relation of the greater abundance of goods, which are available even to the poor, the decline of gift-giving may appear unimportant, and considerations on such as sentimental. However, even if it became superfluous in a condition of superfluity – and this is a lie, privately as well as socially, for there is no one today whose imagination could not find exactly what would make them thoroughly happy – those who no longer gave would still be in need of gift-giving. In them wither away those irreplaceable capacities which cannot bloom in the isolated cell of pure interiority, but only in contact with the warmth of things. Coldness envelops everything which they do, the friendly word which remains unspoken, the consideration which remains

unpracticed. Such iciness recoils back on those from which it spread. All relations which are not distorted, indeed perhaps what is reconciliatory in organic life itself, is a gift. Those who become incapable of this through the logic of stringency [Konsequenz: consequence, corollary], make themselves into things and freeze.

22

Baby with the bathwater. – One of the central motifs of cultural critique since time immemorial is that of the lie: that culture produces the illusion of a society worthy of human beings, which does not exist; that it conceals the material conditions on which everything human is constructed; and that by seeking to console and assuage, it ends up preserving the bad economic determinacy of everyday existence. This is the notion of culture as ideology, which at first glance both the bourgeois doctrine of violence and its opponent, Nietzsche and Marx, seem to have in common. But precisely this notion, like all hand-wringing against lies, has a suspicious tendency to itself become an ideology. This is evident in the realm of the private. Thoughts concerning money and the conflicts attendant on such invariably reach deep into the most heartfelt erotic, sublime and spiritual [geistige: spiritual, intellectual] relationships. The cultural critic could demand, following the logic of consequence and the pathos of the truth, that all relations ought to be reduced to their material origins, without any consideration and directly according to the interests of the participants. After all, meaning is never free from its genesis, and it would be easy to show the trace of injustice, sentimentality, and frustrated and therefore doubly poisonous interest in everything which overlays or mediates that which is material. Yet if one wished to act radically on this insight, one would uproot all that is true along with everything untrue, everything which, however powerlessly, dares to try to escape the demesne of universal praxis, indeed all the chimerical anticipations of a worthier state of affairs, and would thereby fall back into that barbarism which one reproaches culture for mediating. In the bourgeois cultural critics after Nietzsche this unexpected reversal was always evident; Spengler enthusiastically endorsed it. But Marxists are not immune to this either. Once cured of the social democratic belief in cultural progress and confronted with the rising tide of barbarism, they face the constant temptation to advocate such as the “objective tendency” and, in an act of desperation, to expect salvation from the mortal enemy who, in the guise of the “antithesis”, is supposed to blindly and mysteriously arrange a happy ending. Invoking the material element against the Spirit [Geist] as a lie bears a kind of dubious affinity with political economy, which one subjects to immanent critique, comparable to the complicity between the police and the underworld. Since the banishment of utopia and the unity of praxis and theory was made compulsory, one has become all too practical. The fear of the powerlessness of theory yields the pretext of declaring fealty to the almighty production-process and thereby fully concedes the powerlessness of theory. Traces of malice are not entirely foreign to authentic Marxist discourse, and today there is a growing resemblance between the spirit of business and the sober, juridical critique, between vulgar materialism and the other kind, in which it becomes increasingly difficult to properly separate subject and object. – To identify culture solely with lies is most disastrous at the moment when it really becomes absorbed by such, and this identification is enthusiastically lauded in order to compromise every thought which resists such. If one calls material reality the world of exchange-value, and culture, that which refuses to accept the domination of such, this refusal is indeed illusory so long as the existent continues to exist. But since the free and equal exchange is itself a lie, whatever denies it stands at the same time for the truth: lies accordingly become a corrective on the lie of the world of commodities, and consequently denounce such. That culture has hitherto failed is not a grounds for demanding its failure, by strewing the store of milled flour on spilled beer like Katherlieschen [reference to fairy-tale]. Human beings who belong together should neither be

silent about their material interests nor reduce themselves to their lowest common denominator, but should reflectively grasp their relationship and thereby move beyond such.

23

Plurale tantum [Latin: only in the plural] – If society is truly one of rackets, as a contemporary theory teaches, then its truest model is precisely the opposite of the collective, namely the individual [Individuum] as monad. By pursuing the absolutely particular interest of every single individual, the essential nature [Wesen] of the collective can be most precisely studied, and it requires no great leap to decipher the organization of the various conflicting drives under the primacy of the reality-oriented ego from the beginning as an innervated band of robbers with a leader, followers, ceremonies, oaths, oath-breaking, interest-conflicts, intrigues and all the other paraphernalia. One need only observe outbreaks, in which the individual [Individuum] reacts energetically against the environment, as for example rage. The enraged always seem to be their own gang-leaders, whose unconscious has received the command to strike mercilessly, and from whose eyes gleams the satisfaction of speaking for the many, which they indeed are. The more someone is taken up with their aggression, the more perfectly they represent the repressing principle of society. In this sense, perhaps more than in any other, the rule applies: that which is most individual would be the most general.

24

Tough baby [in English in original] – A certain gesture of manliness, be it one's own, be it that of another, deserves mistrust. It expresses independence, surety of the power of command, the silent conspiracy of all men with each other. Earlier one anxiously called it, awe-struck, the whims of lords, today it is democratized and is played by film heroes for the benefit of the lowliest bank employee. The archetype for this is the good looking man in a smoking jacket, who enters his bachelor's pad alone one late evening, turns on the indirect lighting, and pours a whisky-soda: the carefully recorded fizzing of the mineral water says what the arrogant mouth does not; that he despises whatever does not smell of smoke, leather and shaving cream – above all, women, and for that very reason they swarm all over him. For him, the pinnacle of human relations is the club, the site of a respect founded on a considerate inconsiderateness. The joys of such men, or on the contrary of their models, which hardly anyone alive really matches, for human beings are always better than their culture, have altogether something of the latent act of violence. By all appearances, this is threatened to others, though he has long since had no need to do so, sprawled on his easy chair. In truth it is past violence against himself. If all pleasure sublates earlier displeasure [Unlust], then here displeasure is raised – as pride in bearing it – unmediated, untransformed, stereotypically into pleasure: unlike wine, every glass of whiskey, every puff on the cigar still recalls the reluctance, which it must have cost the organism, to accustom itself to such powerful stimuli. According to their own constitution, the he-men would thus be what they are usually presented as in film scripts, masochists. The lie is concealed in their sadism, and it is as liars that they truly become sadists, agents of repression. That lie is nothing other than repressed homosexuality, which emerges as the only approved form of what is heterosexual. In Oxford one can differentiate between two kinds of students: the “tough guys” [in English in original] and the intellectuals; the latter are equated almost without further ado to those who are effeminate. There is a great deal of evidence that the ruling class polarizes itself according to these extremes on the road to dictatorship. Such disintegration is the secret of integration, of happiness of unity in the absence of happiness. In the end the “tough guys” [in English in original] are the ones who are really effeminate, who require the weaklings as their victims, in order not to admit that they are like them. Totality and homosexuality belong together. While the

subject falls apart, it negates everything which is not of its own kind. The opposites of the strong man and the compliant youth fuse into a social order, which unreservedly asserts the masculine principle of domination. By making everyone, without exception – even presumed subjects – into its objects, it recoils into total passivity, virtually into what is feminine.

25

Think not of them. – It is well-known that the former life of emigres is being annulled. Earlier it was the warrant of arrest, today it is intellectual [geistige: intellectual, spiritual] experience which is declared non-transferable and simply out of bounds. What is not reified, what cannot be counted and measured, falls away. Not satisfied with this, reification extends even to its own opposite, the life which is not immediately actualized; whatever continues to live on, merely as thought and memory. For this they have devised a unique rubric. It is called “background” and appears as an appendix in questionnaires, after gender, age and occupation. The violated life is still dragged along by the victory car of the united statisticians, and even that which is past is no longer safe from the present, which, by remembering it, consecrates it once more to forgetting.

26

English spoken. [in English in original] – In my childhood I often received books as gifts from elderly British ladies, with whom my parents maintained relations: richly illustrated children’s books, and even a tiny green Bible bound in leather. All were in the language of the gift-givers: none of them thought to ask whether I could actually read them. The peculiar inaccessibility of the books, which sprang at me with pictures, huge titles and vignettes, without giving me any chance to decipher the text, led me to believe that these weren’t really books at all, but rather advertisements, perhaps for machines, like the ones my uncle produced in his London factory. Since I have come to live in Anglo-Saxon countries and to speak English, this consciousness has not dimmed but rather strengthened. There is a girl’s song from Brahm, based on a poem by Heyse, which goes: “Oh heart’s woe, you eternity / only self-other is bliss for me”. In the most popular American version, this is rendered as: “O misery, eternity! / But two in one were ecstasy.” The passionate, medieval-era nouns of the original have been turned into brand names of hit songs, which sing the praises of the latter. In the light they switch on, the advertising-character of culture radiates .

27

On parle francais. [French: one speaks in French, French is spoken] How closely sex and language are intermingled becomes apparent when reading pornography in another language. No dictionary is needed to read Sade in the original [i.e. French]. Even the most refined expressions for that which is indecent, whose awareness is imparted by no school, no parents’ house, and no literary experience, are understood intuitively, just as in childhood, when the most euphemistic expressions and observations regarding sexual matters shoot together into the correct representation. It is as if the imprisoned passions explode, upon being called by these names, blind words like the wall of one’s own repression, striking violently and irresistibly into the innermost cell of meaning, which it itself resembles.

28

Paysage. [French: countryside] – What is missing in the American landscape is not so much the absence of historical memories, as the romantic illusion has it, as the fact that no hand has left a trace in it. This relates not merely to the absence of farm-fields, the stubbly and often tiny scrub-like forests, but above all the streets. These are always immediately blasted out of the landscape,

and the more successful their smoothness and breadth, the more relationless and violent their shimmering path stands in contrast to its all too wild, overgrown environs. They bear no imprint [Ausdruck: expression, imprint]. Because they know no traces of shoes or wheels, no gentle footpaths along their edge as a transition to the vegetation, no side-paths into the valley below, they lack that which is mild, softened, rounded in things, on which hands or their immediate tools have worked. It is as if noone had combed the landscape's hair. It is disconsolate and inconsolable. This corresponds to the manner of its perception. For what the hurrying eye has merely viewed from the car cannot be retained, and the latter sinks as tracklessly, as the traces on such fade away.

29

Dwarf fruit. – It is the courtesy of Proust to spare the reader the embarrassment of thinking themselves more adroit than the author.

In the nineteenth century the Germans painted their dream, and it always turned into a vegetable. The French needed only to paint a vegetable, and it was already a dream.

In the Anglo-Saxon lands, the whores look as if they dispensed the punishments of hell along with the sins.

Beauty of the American landscape: that the immeasurable size of the entire land is inscribed, as expression, even in the smallest of its segments.

In the memory of emigration, every German venison roast tastes as if it was freshly felled by the Freischuetz.

Nothing is true in psychoanalysis except its exaggerations.

One can tell if one is happy by listening to the wind. This latter reminds the unhappy of the fragility of their house and pursues them in fitful sleep and violent dreams. To the happy, it sings the song of their safety and security [Geborgensein]: its raging whistle registers the fact that it no longer has any power over them.

The silent din, long familiar to us from our dream-experiences, blares in our waking hours from the newspaper headlines.

The mythical message of doom renews itself in the radio. Whoever broadcasts something important in an authoritarian manner, broadcasts trouble. In English solemn [in English in original] means ceremonial and threatening. The power of the society behind the speaker turns by itself against the listener.

That which has most recently happened is always portrayed as if it had been destroyed in a catastrophe.

The expression of that which is historical in things is nothing other than past torment.

In Hegel, self-consciousness was the truth of self-certainty, according to the words of the *Phenomenology [of Spirit]*, the “native realm of truth.” No sooner had they ceased to understand

that, than the bourgeoisie were self-conscious at least in the pride that they owned property. Today self-conscious [in English in original] means only the reflection on the ego as an embarrassment, as the innervation of powerlessness: to know, that one is nothing.

With many people, it's already an exercise in shamelessness, when they say I.

The mote in your own eye is the best magnifying glass.

Even the most impoverished person is capable of recognizing the weaknesses of the most powerful; even the dumbest, the mental errors of the most clever.

The first and only principle of sexual ethics: the accuser is always wrong.

The whole is the untrue.

30

Pro domo nostra. [Latin: concerning our home] – When the brassy mouths of the symphony orchestras of many countries were stilled by the previous war – a war which seems, like every war, peaceful compared to the one which followed – Strawinski wrote *History of a Soldier* for a sparse, shock-laden chamber ensemble. It became his best score, the only truly binding surrealist manifesto, whose convulsive-dreamlike compulsion endowed music with something of the negative truth. The prerequisite of the piece was poverty: it demolished the official culture so drastically because it was barred from the latter's material wealth, as well as from the ostentation which was hostile to culture. Therein lies a clue for intellectual [geistige] production after the current war, which has left behind a measure of destruction in Europe which even the gaping holes of that music could not have imagined. Today progress and barbarism are so intertwined as mass culture that only barbaric asceticism against this latter and against the progression of the means may again produce that which is unbarbaric. No work of art, no thought which does not innervate the rejection of false wealth and first-class productions, of color films and television, of millionaire magazines and Toscanini, has a chance to survive. The older media, not geared for mass production, win new relevancy: that of the not yet encompassed and of improvisation. They alone could outflank the unified front of trusts and technics [Technik]. In a world in which even books no longer look like books, the only books are those which are no longer such. If the invention of the printing press stood at the beginning of the bourgeois era, then soon its repeal through mimeography will come due, the only appropriate and inconspicuous means of dissemination.

31

Cat out of the bag. – Even solidarity, socialism's most honorable mode of conduct, is ill. At one time it wished to realize the doctrine of brotherhood, to wrest it from the generality in which it was an ideology, reserving it for the particular, the Party, which was supposed to solely represent the generality in the antagonistic world. Groups of human beings were solidaristic because they committed their lives together, and because their own lives were, in view of the tangible possibility, not the most important thing, so that they were prepared to sacrifice themselves for each other without the abstract obsession of the idea but also without individual hope. Such giving up of self-preservation had as a prerequisite the recognition and freedom of the decision: lacking these, the blind interest of the particular reimposes itself. Meanwhile however solidarity has passed over into the trust that the Party has a thousand eyes, into enlistment into uniformed

workers' battalions which are assumed to be stronger, in swimming along with the current of world-history. Whatever is to be temporarily gained in security from this, is paid for with permanent fear, sycophancy, mutual backscratching and ventriloquy: the energies which one could have used to feel out the weakness of the enemy are used to anticipate the moods of one's own leaders, before whom one trembles deep down more than before the old enemy, intuiting that in the end the leaders both here and there will come to an accommodation on the backs of those they have integrated. The reflex of this can be felt between individuals. Whoever is considered progressive – according to the stereotypes to which people are classified in advance, without even signing the imaginary contract which seems to bind the true believers, who are themselves to be recognized by something imponderable in gesture and speech, a kind of rough-hewn, obedient resignation, like a password – always has the same experience. The true believers, or those in related factions who are all too similar, meet you and expect solidarity from you. They appeal expressly and implicitly to the common progressive agenda [Einverständnis]. However, the moment when you hope for the slightest sign of the same solidarity from them, or even mere sympathy for your own share of the social product of suffering, they show you the cold shoulder, which is the only thing left remaining of atheism and materialism in the age of restored popes. Those who are organized want intellectuals of prominence to issue proclamations on their behalf, but the moment they fear they have to issue proclamations for themselves, the latter are capitalists, and the same prominence on which they speculated is now ludicrous sentimentality and stupidity. Solidarity is polarized in the desperate fidelity of those for whom there is no way back, and in the virtual extortion of those who want nothing to do with prison wardens, nor wish to deliver themselves to robbers.

32

Savages are not better human beings. – One can find in Black [i.e. African] students of national economy, in Siamese [Thai] students at Oxford, and in devoted art-historians and musicologists of petty bourgeois background generally the inclination and readiness to combine the appropriation of what is new and to be learned with a boundless respect for what is established, validated or recognized. An unreconciled inner sensibility [Gesinnung] is the opposite of wildness, neophyte status or “non-capitalist zones”. It presupposes experience, historical memory, the lability of the intellect and above all a thorough share of the social surplus. It is observed time and again that those recruited young and innocent into radical groups defect the moment they become aware of the force of tradition. One has to have this latter in oneself in order to hate it properly. That it is the snobs rather than the proletarians who have a taste for avant-garde aesthetic movements sheds light on politics, too. Latecomers and newcomers alike have a worrisome affinity for positivism, from the devotees of Carnap in India to the bold defenders of the German masters Matthias Grünewald and Heinrich Schütz. It would be poor psychology to presume that what one is excluded from arouses only hate and resentment; it also awakens a possessive, impatient sort of love, and those who repressive culture keeps at a distance can turn, easily enough, into the latter's most narrow-minded partisans. This resonates even in the overcompensating High German of the worker who as a socialist wants “to learn a bit”, to take part in the so-called cultural heritage, and the banality of the Bebels consists not so much in their foreignness to culture than in the enthusiasm with which they presume it as a fact, identifying with it and indeed thereby inverting its meaning. Socialism is in general as little immune from this transformation as the theoretical slippage into positivism. It can happen easily enough that in the Far East Marx takes the place vacated by Driesch and Rickert. At times it is to be feared that the interrelationship of the non-Occidental peoples in the antagonisms of industrial

society, in itself long overdue, will primarily benefit the rational increase of production and transport and the modest raising of living standards, rather than those to be emancipated. Instead of expecting miracles from pre-capitalist peoples, the mature capitalist ones ought to be on their guard against their own sobriety, their slipshod affirmation of what is traditional, and the successes of the West.

33

Far from the firing-line. – Reports of air raids seldom fail to mention the names of the firms which manufactured the aircraft: Fokker-Wolf, Heinkel, and Lancaster appear where one once talked about cuirassiers, lancers and hussars. The mechanism of the reproduction of life, its exploitation and annihilation, is immediately the same, and industry, the state and advertising are fused accordingly. The old exaggeration of skeptical liberals, that war is merely a business, has come true: the power of the state has given up even the appearance [Schein] of independence from particular profit interests and puts itself into the latter's service, which it always did in reality, now ideologically as well. Every glowing mention of the chief firm involved in the razing of cities enhances its good calling, for whose sake the best contracts for the reconstruction are doled out.

Like the Thirty Years' War, so too does this war – whose beginning no one will be able to remember anymore, once it comes to an end – disintegrates into discontinuous field campaigns, separated by blank pauses; the Polish campaign, the Norwegian, the French, the Russian, the Tunisian, the Normandy Invasion. Its rhythm, the alternation of spasmodic action and complete standstill, due to a lack of geographically accessible enemies, has itself something mechanical about it, which characterized the means of war in the particular and which has very likely evoked once more the preliberal form of the campaign. This mechanical rhythm however completely determines human conduct towards the war, not only in the disproportion between individual bodily strength and the energy of motors, but deep into the most secret cells of the modes of subjective experience. The sheer incommensurability of the body to the war of attrition the previous time around [i.e. WW I] already made authentic experience impossible. No one could have talked about it the way the battles of the artillery-general Napoleon Bonaparte were recounted. The long interval between war memoirs and the armistice is not an accident: it testifies to the laborious reconstruction of memory, which remains conjoined to something powerless and even inauthentic in all those books, regardless of whatever horrors the writer witnessed. WW II however is as completely devoid of experience as a machine is to the movements of a body, which it resembles only in periods of illness. The less the war retains any sense of continuity, history, the "epic" element, but to a certain extent starts all over again at each phase, the less can it leave behind a continuous and unconsciously preserved picture of memory. Everywhere, with each explosion, it has broken through the protective shield in which personal experience formed, the duration between the healing forgetting and the healing memory. Life has transformed itself into a timeless succession of shocks, between which gape holes, paralyzed intermediary spaces. Nothing however is perhaps more catastrophic for the future than the fact that soon literally no one will be able to think of this, that every trauma, every unprocessed shock of that which recurs, is a ferment of coming destruction. – Karl Kraus was right to call his play *The Last Days of Humanity*. What is happening today should be called *After Doomsday*.

The total concealment of the war through information, propaganda, commentary, the film crews in the leading tanks and the heroic death of war reporters, the mishmash of manipulated-enlightened public opinion and unconscious action, all this is another expression for desiccated experience, the vacuum between human beings and their doom, in which their doom actually

consists. The reified, frozen mold of events, as it were, substitutes for this itself. Human beings are turned into the actors of a monster documentary film, which no longer knows any viewers, because even the very last one has to participate on the silver screen. The genesis of the belabored talk of the “phony war” lay in precisely this moment. It originated to be sure from the Fascist technique of dismissing the real horrors of the war as “mere propaganda”, precisely in order to facilitate those horrors. Yet like all tendencies of Fascism, this too has its origin in elements of reality, which ends up prevailing only by virtue of that Fascist attitude, which sneeringly hinted at such. The war really is “phony” [in English], but its “phyness” [in English] is more terrifying than any terror, and those who make light of this only contribute that much more to the calamity.

Had Hegel’s philosophy of history encompassed this epoch, then Hitler’s robot-bombs would have taken their place, next to the death-scene of Alexander and similar images, among the empirically selected facts in which the symbolic state of the world-spirit is immediately expressed. Like Fascism itself, the robots are self-steering and yet utterly subjectless. Just like the former, they combine the utmost technical perfection with complete blindness. Just like the former, they sow the deadliest panic and are completely futile. – “I have seen the world-spirit”, not on horseback but on wings and headless, and this at once refutes Hegel’s philosophy of history.

The thought that after this war life could continue on “normally”, or indeed that culture could be “reconstructed” – as if the reconstruction of culture alone were not already the negation of such – is idiotic. Millions of Jews have been murdered, and this is supposed to be only the intermission and not the catastrophe itself. What exactly is this culture waiting for anyway? And even if there was time left for countless people, is it conceivable that what happened in Europe would have no consequences, that the sheer quantity of victims would not recoil into a new quality of the entire society, into barbarism? As long as like follows like, the catastrophe perpetuates itself. One need only consider retribution for the murdered. If just as many of the others were to be killed, then the horror would turn into an institution and the precapitalist schemata of blood for blood, which from its inception in prehistoric times still reigns only in the most distant mountain provinces, be reintroduced and expanded, only with entire nations as subjectless subjects. If however the dead are not avenged and mercy is shown, then an unpunished Fascism has despite everything stolen its victory, and after it has once been shown how easily it is done, it will be perpetuated in other places. The logic of history is as destructive as the human beings which it begets: wherever their inertia tends to go, it reproduces the equivalent of past calamities. Normality is death.

As to the question as to what should be done with a defeated Germany, I would know only two ways to answer. First: I would at no price and under no circumstances be an executioner or deliver legal pretexts for executioners. Second: I would not wish to hold back, least of all with the apparatus of the law, anyone who wished to avenge past atrocities. That is a through and through unsatisfying, contradictory answer, as ill-fitting to the generalization as to the praxis. But perhaps the fault already lies with the question and not primarily with me.

Weekly show at the movies: the invasion of the Marianas, among them Guam. The impression is not one of battles, but of mechanical highway and demolition work undertaken with an immeasurably increased vehemence, even of “fumigation”, pest control on a telluric scale. Operations are carried out until grass no longer grows. The enemy functions as patient and corpse. Like the Jews under Fascism, he appears only as the object of technical-administrative

measures, and when he defends himself, his counter-actions have the same character. Therein is the Satanic element, that to a certain extent this war requires more initiative than war in the old style, that it costs the subject all its energy, as it were, to achieve subjectlessness. The realization of Edward Grey's humane dream, of a war without hate, is complete inhumanity. – Autumn 1944.

34

Johnny-Head-in-Air. [Character in Heinrich Hoffman's *Struwwelpeter*] – Between cognition [Erkenntnis: recognition, knowledge] and power exists not only the interrelation of servility, but also one of truth. Many cognitions, even if they formally strike the mark, are void due to their lack of proportion with the distribution of forces. When the exiled doctor says, "For me, Adolf Hitler is a pathological case," then the clinical evidence may ultimately confirm his statement, but its disparity to the objective catastrophe which spreads over the world in the name of the paranoid one, makes the diagnosis ridiculous, wherein the diagnostician merely puffs themselves up. Perhaps Hitler is a pathological case "in himself", but most certainly not "for himself". The vanity and impoverishment of many of the demonstrations against Fascism in emigration are interrelated. Those who think in the form of free, distanced, disinterested judgements, were unable to assimilate the experience of violence – which really and truly rendered such thinking powerless – in these forms. The almost insoluble task consists of refusing to allow oneself to be rendered dumb, either by the power of others or by one's own powerlessness.

35

Return to culture. – The assertion that Hitler has destroyed German culture is nothing but an advertising trick of those who wish to rebuild it from their telephone-desks. What Hitler extirpated in art and culture had long led an apochryphal and cut-off existence, whose last hiding-spaces were swept away by Fascism. Whoever did not play along, had to go into inner emigration years before the outbreak of the Third Reich: at the very latest, since the stabilization of the German currency, which coincided with the end of Expressionism, German culture had stabilized itself in the spirit of the Berlin illustrated magazines, which conceded little to the strength through joy [notorious Nazi slogan], national auto highways, and upbeat exhibition-classicism of the Nazis. In its broadest measure, German culture pined for its Hitler precisely where it was most liberal, and it would be an injustice to reproach the editors of *Moss* and *Ullstein* or the reorganizers of the *Frankfurter News* for following the sensibilities of the times. They were already this way, and their line of least resistance to the intellectual goods they produced meshes seamlessly into the line of least resistance to political rule, whose ideological methods included, in the Fuehrer's own words, above all comprehensibility for the most stupid. This has led to a catastrophic confusion. Hitler has extirpated culture, Hitler drove Mr. Louis into exile, therefore Mr. Louis is culture. And so he is. A glance at the literary production of those emigrants who, by dint of discipline and a strict compartmentalization of spheres of influence, have come to represent the German Spirit [Geist], show just what one can expect from the happy rebuilding process: the introduction of Broadway methods on the Kurfurstendamm [main road of Berlin], which by the 1920s was distinguishable from the former only by its lesser means, not better ends. Whoever intends to do something against cultural fascism, must come to grips with Weimar, the "Bombs on Monte Carlo" and the Press Ball, if one does not wish to discover that, in the end, ambiguous figures such as Fallada under Hitler said more than the spotless German personalities, who succeeded in transferring their prestige.

The health unto death. – If something like a psychoanalysis of today’s prototypical culture were possible; if the absolute hegemony of the economy did not mock every attempt at explicating conditions by the psychic life of their victims; and if the psychoanalysts themselves had not long ago sworn fealty to those conditions – then such an investigation would have to show that contemporary sickness exists precisely in what is normal. The libidinal achievements which are required of the individual [Individuum], who behaves in a manner sound in body and mind, are such that they can be perfected only by virtue of the deepest mutilation, of an innervation of castration by the “extroverts” [in English in the original]; by comparison, the old task of identification with the father was indeed the child’s play which it was rehearsed as. The “regular guy” [in English in original], the “popular girl” [in English in original] must repress not only their desires and cognitions, but also all of the symptoms generated by repression in bourgeois times. Just as the old injustices are left unchanged by the generous mass display of light, air and hygiene, but are concealed precisely by the gleaming [blinkende] transparency of rationalized enterprise, so too has the most internalized [inwendige] health of the epoch cut off the flight into sickness, without changing the slightest bit of the latter’s etiology. The darkened exits have been wiped out as an embarrassing waste of space and displaced into the bathroom. This confirms the suspicion which psychoanalysis long harbored, before it itself turned into a piece of hygiene. Where the light is brightest, is where the fecal secretly rules. The verse: “Misery remains. As it ever was. / You can’t completely uproot its laws / But you make it an invisible cause”, applies in the household of the psyche even more than where the abundance of goods obscures, for the time being, constantly increasing material differences. To this day, no science would suffice to plumb the depths of the hell in which those deformations are produced, which surface later as cheerfulness, decisiveness, sociability, as successful adaptation to what is unavoidable and as unvarnished common sense. There is reason to presume that these derive from still earlier phases of childhood development than the origin of neuroses: if these latter are the result of a conflict in which the drive is beaten down, then the former bespeaks a condition which is as normal as the damaged society which it resembles, that of a prehistorical assault, as it were, which smashes the forces of the psyche before a conflict can even occur, and the later state of unconflictedness reflects the predetermined social being, the a priori triumph of the collective instance, not healing through cognition [Erkennen: recognizing, understanding]. The iron nerves and calm under fire which are the crucial prerequisites for applicants of highly paid positions, are the picture of the asphyxiated silence, which the employers of the human resources manager later impose politically. The sickness of the healthy is solely to be diagnosed objectively, in the disproportion between the rational way they lead their lives and the possibly reasonable determination of their lives. But the trace of the sickness betrays itself nonetheless: they look as if their skin were printed with a rash in regular patterns, as if in mimicry of what is inorganic. It requires little to imagine those bent on proving their quicksilver liveliness and overpowering energy as prepared corpses, to whom the news of their not quite successful demise has been withheld for reasons of population policy. At the root of ruling health lies death. All of its movements resemble the reflex-movements of beings, whose hearts have stopped. Hardly ever does a furrowed brow – testimony to some fearsome and long-forgotten effort – or a moment of pathetic stupidity in the middle of fixed logic, or indeed a helpless gesture, preserve the disturbing traces of disappeared life. For the socially designated sacrifice is so universal, that it manifests itself in the society as a whole and not in the individual person. It has taken over the sickness of all individuals, as it were, and in it, in the bottled-up madness of Fascist actions and in all its innumerable precursors and mediations, the subjective catastrophe inscribed in the individuated [Individuum] is integrated with the visibly objective one. There is hardly consolation in the thought that the

sickness of what is normal is not necessarily the opposite of the health of those who are sick, but rather that the latter only represents, for the most part, the schemata of the same catastrophe in a different form.

37

This side of the pleasure-principle. – The repressive traits in Freud have nothing to do with that lack of benevolence [Güte], which the ever-industrious revisionists refer to in the strict sexual theory. Those who are benevolent by profession fabulate profits on the basis of closeness and immediacy, precisely where no one knows anything about anyone else. They betray their victims by affirming, in the weakness of the latter, the course of the world which made them so, and inflict just as much injustice on the latter, as the truth they omit. If Freud lacked such benevolence, then on this score at least he would be in the company of critics of political economy [i.e. Marx], which is better than that of Tagore and Werfel. On the contrary, what is fatal is that, in opposition to bourgeois ideology, he materialistically pursued conscious behavior into the basis of its unconscious grounding in the drives, yet simultaneously accords with the bourgeois contempt for the drives, which is itself the product of precisely those rationalizations, which he demolishes. He partakes, in the words of the *Introductory Lectures*, of “the general estimation... that social goals stand higher than fundamentally, self-servingly sexual ones.” As an expert psychologist, he takes the contrast between social and egoistic as a given, statically. He no more recognizes in it the work of repressive society than the trace of the disastrous mechanisms, which he himself had described. Or rather, he oscillates, theoryless and bending to prejudice, between negating the renunciation of the drives as a repression contrary to reality, or else praising it as a sublimation which encourages culture. Something of the Janus character of culture lives objectively in this contradiction, and no amount of praise to healthy sensuality can gloss over it. In Freud however this results in the devaluation of the critical standard for the goal of the analysis. Freud’s unenlightened enlightenment plays into the hands of bourgeois disillusionment. As the late opponent of hypocrisy, he stands ambiguously between the will for outright emancipation of the oppressed and the apology for outright oppression. Reason for him is a mere superstructure, not so much, as official philosophy charges, because of his psychologism, which penetrates deeply enough into the historical moment, but on the contrary because he discards the only purpose, both distant from meaning and reasonless, in which the means of reason could prove itself to be reasonable: pleasure. As soon as this latter is disparagingly classified as a trick of species preservation, dissolved into sly reason, as it were, without naming the moment therein, which reaches beyond the circle of that which has lapsed back into nature [Naturverfallenheit], the ratio degenerates into rationalization. Truth is consigned to relativity and human beings to power. Only those who locate utopia in the blind somatic pleasure, which has no intention and which stills this last, would be capable of an idea of truth which stood the test. In Freud’s work, however, the double enmity towards the spirit [Geist: mind] and towards pleasure, whose common root was precisely what psychoanalysis delivered the means to comprehend, unwillingly reproduces itself. The passage in *Future of an Illusion*, where the commercial traveler’s maxim that heaven is to be left to the angels and the sparrows is cited with the miserable wisdom of a bitter old man, is the companion piece to that passage from the *Lectures*, where he condemns in horror the perverse practices of the jet set. Those who are equally disgusted by pleasure and heaven, in fact function best as objects: one can frequently observe something empty and mechanized in successfully analyzed patients, which should be reckoned not on account of their sickness, but on their healing, which breaks what it emancipates. The much-ballyhooed therapeutic transference – whose resolution comprises, and not for nothing, the crux of analytic labor – the elaborate situation, in which the subject

voluntarily and calamitously completes that cancellation of themselves, which once seemed to be involuntarily and happily realized by devotedness, is already the schema of a reflective mode of conduct, which liquidates, just like the followers of the supreme leader, all spirit [Geist: spirit, mind] as well as the analysts, who betrayed it.

38

Invitation to dance. – Psychoanalysis likes to give itself credit for returning to human beings their capacity for enjoyment, since this latter is disrupted by neurotic sickness. As if the mere term “capacity for enjoyment”, assuming the thing even exists, did not suffice to degrade such in the worst possible way. As if a happiness, which is due to the speculation on happiness, would not be the opposite of happiness, a further trespass of institutionally planned modes of conduct into the ever-shrinking domain of experience. What sort of condition must the ruling consciousness have achieved, when the binding proclamation of extravagance and champagne-inebriation, formerly reserved for attaches in Hungarian operettas, is raised to a maxim of the right life in brute earnest. Decreed happiness looks exactly like what its name suggests: to partake of it, the fortunate neurotic must also sacrifice the last bit of reason left remaining by repression and regression, and for the sake of the psychoanalyst, has no choice but to find inspiration in the trashy film, the expensive but bad meal at the French restaurant, the serious “drink” [in English in original] and sexuality reduced to doses of “sex” [in English in original]. Schiller’s comment, “Life is beautiful nonetheless”, always a piece of paper-mâché, has become idiocy, ever since it has been trumpeted in chorus with that omnipresent advertising, in whose fanfares even psychoanalysis, despite its better possibilities, joins in. Since people have altogether too few inhibitions rather than too many, without being a jot healthier for this, then a cathartic method must, if it does not wish to be measured in terms of successful adjustment and economic success, aim at making human beings aware of unhappiness, of the general kind as well as that which is indissolubly their own; and to take from them the apparent satisfaction, by virtue of which the hideous social order perpetuates itself within them, as if its external grip were not already powerful enough. Only in the surfeit of false pleasure, in the contrariness to what is offered, in the intuition of the inadequacy of happiness, even where it is still one – let alone there, where it is bought by giving up the supposedly sickly resistance against its positive surrogate – would the thought dawn, of what one might experience. The injunctions on “happiness” [in English in original], in which the sanatorium director who prescribes good living and the frantic propaganda bosses of the entertainment industry chime as one, bear the traits of the raging father, who shrieks at the children, because they aren’t running downstairs in transports of joy when he comes home from work in a bad mood. Part of the mechanism of domination is that one is forbidden to recognize the suffering which that domination produces, and there is a straight line connecting the evangelical lecture on the joy of life to the construction of slaughter-houses for human beings so far off in Poland, that everyone in one’s own ethnic group can convince themselves they don’t hear the screams of pain. That is the schema of the undisturbed capacity for enjoyment. Those who name it as such, however, are triumphantly diagnosed by the psychoanalysts as merely suffering from an Oedipal complex.

39

Ego is id. – It is customary to link the development of psychology to the rise of the bourgeois individual [Individuums: individual], in antiquity and since the Renaissance. One should not overlook the contrary moment, which psychology holds in common with the bourgeois class, and which today has developed into exclusivity: the oppression and dissolution of precisely the individuated [Individuums], in whose service the reciprocal relationship of cognition [Erkenntnis:

cognition, knowledge] to its subject was based. If all psychology since Protagoras elevated human beings by thinking of them as the measure of all things, then it has also simultaneously and from the very beginning turned the latter into objects, analytic material, and consigned them, once they are lined up as things, to nullity. The denial of objective truth through the recourse to the subject implies its own negation: no measure remains for the measure of all things, it decays into contingency and turns into untruth. This however points back to the real life-process of the society. The principle of human domination, which developed into an absolute, has thereby turned its point against human beings as the absolute object, and psychology has participated in sharpening that point. Under the gaze of the former, the ego, its leading idea and its a priori object, has always been turned into something non-existent. By drawing on the fact that the subject is not really one in the exchange-society, but is in fact an object, psychology could deliver the weapons which enabled that society to turn it into one, and to keep it down. The decomposition of human beings into capabilities is a projection of the division of labor on its presumed subjects, inseparable from the interest in deploying them with ulterior motives, above all in order to be able to manipulate them. Psychotechnics is no mere decayed form of psychology, but immanent in its principle. Hume, in whose work every sentence testifies to genuine humanism and yet simultaneously dismisses the ego as a prejudice, expresses in such contradictions the essence of psychology as such. In this he still had the truth on his side, for what the ego sets itself up as, is in fact mere prejudice, the ideological hypostasis of the abstract centers of control, and the critique of this last demanded the demolition of the ideology of “personality”. But this demolition simultaneously makes the residue that much more susceptible to control. This becomes flagrant in psychoanalysis. It confiscates the personality as the lifelong lie, as the highest rationalization which holds together the countless rationalizations, which enable individuals [Individuum] to achieve the renunciation of the drives and to align themselves with the reality-principle. Precisely by proving such, however, it simultaneously confirms to human beings their own non-existence. It alienates [entäussern: to alienate, disclose, realize] them from themselves, denouncing their autonomy along with their unity and subjecting them completely to the mechanism of rationalization – that of adjustment. The intrepid critique of the ego in itself passes over into the demand, that the other’s ought to capitulate. In the end the wisdom of the psychoanalysis truly becomes what the Fascist unconscious of the tabloid magazines considers it to be, to the technics of a special racket among others, which irrevocably binds helpless and suffering human beings to itself, in order to command them and exploit them. Suggestion and hypnosis, once rejected as apochryphal, like a sideshow magician at the town market, return in their grandiose system once again like the short feature in the blockbuster film. The ones who help because they know better, turn into the ones who humiliate others through bossy privilege. What remains of the critique of the bourgeois consciousness is only that shrugging of the shoulders, by which all doctors have announced their secret complicity with death. – In psychology, in the boundless fraud of what is merely interiorized [bloss Inwendigen] (it is not for nothing that this has to do with the “properties” [in English in original] of human beings) is reflected what the organization of bourgeois society has since time immemorial practiced on external property. As a result of social exchange, the former has developed the latter, only with an objective reserve clause, which every bourgeois intuits. The individual person is thereby on loan, as it were, from its class, and those who are its functionaries are ready to take it back, as soon as generalized property endangers its principle, which consists precisely of withholding. Psychology repeats in personal traits, what happened to property. It expropriates individual persons, by apportioning its happiness to them.

Always say it, never think of it. – Since depth psychology has, with the help of film, soap operas and Horney, plumbed the deepest crevices, organized culture is cutting off the last possibility human beings have of experiencing themselves. Prefab enlightenment transforms not only spontaneous reflection, but also the analytic insights, whose power is equivalent to the energy and passion which it took to achieve them, into mass-produced products, and the painful secrets of individual history, which orthodoxy is already wont to reduce to formulas, into humdrum conventions. The dissolution of rationalizations becomes itself a rationalization. Instead of performing the labor of self-constitution, well-schooled experts cultivate the capacity to subsume all drive-conflicts under concepts such as inferiority complex, mother-fixation, “extrovert” [in English in original] and “introvert” [in English in original], which they fundamentally cannot access at all. The horror of the abyss of the self [Ich: I, ego, self] is removed by the consciousness, that it’s only a question of arthritis or “sinus troubles” [in English in original]. Conflicts thereby lose that which was threatening. They are accepted; by no means healed, but merely slotted into the surface of a normalized life like an inevitable piece of inventory. Simultaneously they are absorbed, as a general ill, by the mechanism of immediate identification of the individual with the social instance, which has long since taken hold of the presumably normal modes of conduct. In the place of that catharsis, whose success was never guaranteed in advance, steps the winning of pleasure [Lustgewinn], of being an exemplar of the majority in one’s own weakness; not in order to earn the prestige of the interesting pathological case, as with the sanatorium inmates of yesteryear, but on the contrary in order to prove that one belongs to the group precisely by means of those defects, and to transfer the power and greatness of the collective to oneself. Narcissism, which loses its libidinal object due to the disassembly of the ego, is replaced by masochistic pleasure of no longer being an ego, and the younger generation guards its egolessness with rare enthusiasm, as a lasting and common possession. The realm of reification and normalization is extended in this manner into its most extreme contradiction, that which is assumed to be abnormal and chaotic. What is incommensurable is made, precisely as such, commensurable, and the individual [Individuum] is hardly capable of an impulse anymore, which could not be named an example of this or that publicly acknowledged constellation. Meanwhile, such an externally adopted and perfected identification – one beyond, as it were, its own dynamic – ultimately abolishes, along with the genuine consciousness of the impulse, this last as well. It turns into the reflex of stereotypical atoms to stereotypical stimuli, to be flipped on and off like a switch. Moreover, the conventionalization of psychoanalysis triggers its own castration: sexual motives, partly denied, partly approved, become entirely harmless, but also entirely void. Along with the fear, which they could provoke, also disappears the pleasure, which they could obtain. Psychoanalysis thus becomes the victim of precisely that substitution of the appropriate superego via the dogged adoption of a relationless external one, which it taught itself to understand. The latest grandly conceptualized theorem of bourgeois self-critique has turned into a means of transforming bourgeois self-alienation in its latest phase into an absolute, while thwarting the intuition of the age-old wound, which contains the hope of a better one in the future.

Inner and outer. – Out of piety, laziness, and calculation, philosophy continues to muddle through in an ever narrower academic framework, and even there, it is increasingly being replaced with organized tautology. Whoever entrusts themselves to credentialed profundity, fall victim just as a hundred years ago to the compulsion to be, at every moment, just as naive as one’s colleagues, on whom one’s career depends. But extra-academic thinking, which would like

to elude such compulsion as well as the contradiction between high-flown materials and narrow-minded [spießbürgerlicher: petty bourgeois] treatment, is threatened by a scarcely less urgent danger: by the economic pressure of the market, which at least the professors in Europe were sheltered from. Philosophers who want to earn a living as authors, must offer at every instant something rarefied, something exquisite, maintaining themselves through the monopoly of rarity, as it were, as opposed to that of credentials. The noisome concept of the inspirational sound-bite [geistigen Leckerbissens: spiritual tidbit, taste of enlightenment], dreamed up by pedants, ends up scoring an embarrassing point against its naysayers. If the good old Schmock [hack journalist in play by Freytag] groaned under the newspaper editor's demand, to write with constant brilliance, then he also registers in all naivete the law which implicitly presides over the works of the cosmogonic Eros and the Cosmos Atheos [reference to mystical work by Klages], the shape-shifting of the gods and the secret of the gospel according to St. John. The life-style of the belated bohemian, which is forced upon non-academic philosophers, soon gives the former a fatal affinity to that which is artsy, spiritually kitschy, sectarian and half-educated. The Munich before WW I was a breeding grounds for that spirituality [Geistigkeit], whose protest against the rationalism of the schools culminated, via the cult of the costume festivals, in Fascism even faster than the half-hearted system of old Rickert. So great is the power of the advancing organization of thought, that those who wish to stay outside are driven to the vanity of resentment, to the babbling of self-promotion, and ultimately the vanquished ones to con games. When the professors posit the principle of sum ergo cogito [Latin: I think, therefore I am] and fall prey in the open system to agoraphobia, and in thrownness [Geworfenheit: notorious Heideggerian term] to the preindustrial community [Volksgemeinschaft: folk community, notorious term of Nazi propaganda], then their opponents go astray, unless they are very much on guard, in the real of graphology and aerobics [rhythmischen Gymnastik]. The compulsive types there correspond to the paranoids here. The wistful opposition to factual research, the legitimate consciousness that scientism forgets what is best, exacerbates through its naivete the split from which it suffers. Instead of comprehending the facts, behind which others are barricaded, it hurriedly throws together whatever it can grab from them, rushing off to play so uncritically with apochryphal cognitions, with a couple isolated and hypostatized categories, and with itself, that it is easily disposed of by referring to the unyielding facts. It is precisely the critical element which is lost in the apparently independent thought. The insistence on the secret of the world hidden beneath the shell, which dares not explain how it relates to the shell, only reconfirms through such abstemiousness the thought that there must be good reasons for that shell, which one ought to accept without question. Between the pleasure of emptiness and the lie of plenitude, the ruling condition of the spirit [Geistes: mind] permits no third option.

Nevertheless the glance at what is remote, the hatred of banality, the search for that which has not yet been grasped, for what has not been encompassed by the general conceptual schema, is the last chance for thought. In an intellectual [geistigen] hierarchy, which continually holds everyone responsible, then irresponsibility alone is capable of immediately calling the hierarchy itself by name. The sphere of circulation, whose marks are borne by intellectual outsiders, opens the last refuges to the spirit [Geist], which it is selling off, at the moment when these no longer really exist. Whoever offers something which is one of a kind, which no one wants to buy anymore, represents, even against their will, freedom from exchange.

philosophy: reflection and speculation. The land of truth is soberly consigned to determinations of reflection, and speculations are tolerated therein with an ill grace, solely as a mere formulation of hypotheses, which are to be thought up outside of working hours and solved as quickly as possible. Whoever might believe that the speculative realm is preserved, undisputed, in its extra-scientific realm – left in peace, as it were, by the hustle and bustle of universal statistics – is thoroughly mistaken. Speculation is hit hard from the outset by the separation from reflection. It either degrades into the compliant parroting of traditional philosophical schemes or degenerates, in its distance from facts which have been rendered blind, into the babble of a non-binding private world view. Not content with this, the scientific enterprise incorporates speculation into itself. Among the public functions of psychoanalysis, this is not the least. Its medium is the free association. The road into the unconscious of the patient is constructed by excusing them of the responsibility for reflection, and the analytical formation of theory follows the same track, whether it takes its cue from the progression and blockages of those associations, or whether the analyst, even the most gifted ones like Groddeck, trust to their own associations. Relaxed on the analyst's couch, one rehearses what was once achieved by the most extreme exertion of thought by Schelling and Hegel in the lecturer's podium: the decoding of the phenomenon. But such a relaxation of tension affects the quality of the thinking: the difference is hardly less than that between the philosophy of revelation [Schelling's later philosophy] and the gossip of the mother-in-law. The same movement of the Spirit [Geistes], whose "material" was formerly to be raised to the concept, is itself degraded to a mere material for the conceptual social order. Whatever ideas cross one's mind, are good enough for experts to decide whether the originator is a compulsive character, an oral type or a hysteric. By virtue of the slackening of responsibility, which lies in the separation from the reflection, from the control of understanding, speculation is consigned to science as an object, whose subjectivity is extinguished along with it. Thought, by allowing the administrative schema of the analysis to recall its unconscious origins, forgets to be thought. From the true judgement, it turns into a neutral material. Instead of mastering itself by performing the labor of the concept, it powerlessly entrusts its own processing to the doctor, who already knows everything anyway. Thus speculation is conclusively broken and turned into a fact, which can be filed in one of the branches of classification as a piece of evidence of what is always the same.

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Fear-mongering does not apply. – What the truth might objectively be, remains difficult enough to discern, but when dealing with human beings one should not allow oneself to be terrorized by this. There are criteria there, which seem satisfying at first. One of the most reliable is the reproach that an expression is "too subjective". If this is laid down with that indignation, which echoes with the furious harmony of all reasonable people, then one has reason to be satisfied with oneself for a couple of seconds. The concepts of what is subjective and what is objective have been completely inverted. Objective means the non-controversial side of the phenomenon [Erscheinung], its unquestioned imprint, taken as it is, the facade constructed out of classified data, therefore the subjective; and they call subjective, whatever breaks through such, emerging out of the specific experience of the thing, divesting itself of prejudged convention and setting the relation to the object in place of the majority decision concerning such, which they cannot even see, let alone think – therefore, what is objective. How vacuous the formal objection to subjective relativity is, can be observed in its own actual field, that of aesthetic judgements. Those who have subjected themselves in earnest, out of the energy of their precise reaction, to the discipline of a work of art, to the compulsion of its shape, of its immanent law of form, find the objection against what is merely subjective in their experience dissolving like a threadbare

appearance [Schein], and every step they take further into the matter, by virtue of their extreme subjective innervation, has incomparably greater objective power than comprehensive and much-vindicated conceptual formations, such as that of “style”, whose scientific claim comes at the cost of such experience. This is doubly true in the era of positivism and of the culture-industry, whose objectivity is calculated by administrating subjects. In contrast to this, reason has fled completely into eyeless [fensterlos] idiosyncrasy, which the caprice of the power-brokers castigates as caprice, because they want the powerlessness of subjects, out of fear of the objectivity, which alone is sublated in these subjects.

44

For post-Socratics. – Nothing is less worthy of intellectuals, who have undertaken to achieve what was earlier called philosophy, than the wish to be proved correct in the discussion, and one would like to say, in the citation of evidence. The wish to be proved correct, down to its most subtle logical form of reflection, is the expression of that spirit [Geistes] of self-preservation, whose dissolution makes up the particular concern of philosophy. I knew someone who met with all the celebrities from epistemology, the natural sciences and social sciences, one after another, thoroughly discussed his system with each one and, after noone dared to raise an argument against its formalism, considered his work conclusively established. Something of such naivete is ubiquitous in works where philosophy even distantly resembles the gesture of conviction. Underlying this is the prerequisite of the *universitas literarum* [Latin: universal literacy], an a priori common agreement of minds [Geister: minds, spirits], which are able to communicate with each other, and thereby indeed on complete conformism. When philosophers, well-known for being averse to silence, enter into a conversation, then they should speak as if they were being proved wrong, but in a manner which convicts the opponent of untruth. The point is not to generate cognitions which are absolutely correct, bulletproof and watertight – these run unavoidably into tautology – but rather those which direct the question of their correctness towards themselves. – This is not to argue for irrationalism, the positing of capricious theses, justified through the revelatory beliefs of intuition, but the abolition of the distinction between thesis and argument. To think dialectically means, in this respect, that the argument should achieve the criticality [Drastik] of the thesis and the thesis should contain the plenitude of its ground within itself. All bridging concepts, all connections and logical helping operations, which are not in the matter itself, all secondary consequences not suffused with the experience of the object, should fall away. In a philosophical text, all propositions should stand equally near to the midpoint. Though Hegel would never have said as much, his entire procedure testifies to this intention. Since it does not recognize that which is first, then strictly speaking neither should it recognize that which is second or derived, and it has displaced the concept of mediation from formal intervening determinations into the matter itself, thereby seeking to overcome its difference from a thinking which is external to such or mediates it. The limits to the success of such an intention in the Hegelian philosophy, are simultaneously the limits of its truth, namely the remnants of *prima philosophia* [Latin: first philosophy], the supposition that the subject is something which in spite of everything is “first”. One of the tasks of dialectical logic is to expunge the last traces of the deductive system, together with the last legalistic [advokatorischen] gestures of thought.

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“Yet how ill does everything growing seem...” [Quote from poem by Trakl] – Dialectical thinking defies reification also in the sense, that it refuses to confirm the individual as singled-out and in separateness: it ascertains precisely this isolation as the product of the general. Thus it works as a

corrective against manic fixity as well as the unresisting and empty drift of the paranoid spirit [Geistes], which pays for the absolute judgement with the sacrifice of the experience of the matter [Sache]. But for that reason dialectics is nonetheless not what it became in the English Hegelian school and then all the more so in Dewey's strenuous pragmatism, the "sense of proportions" [in English in original], the putting of things in their correct perspective, simple but intractable common sense. If Hegel seemed to come close to such a view in his conversations with Goethe, defending his philosophy against Goethean Platonism by saying that the former was "fundamentally nothing more than the regular, methodically constructed spirit of contradiction, which dwells within all human beings", a "gift which proves its worth in the distinction of the true from the false", then the canny formulation contains, trickster-style, in the praise of "what dwells within every human being", the simultaneous denunciation of the "common sense" [in English in original] which is made into its innermost determination, because it cannot be derived from "common sense" [in English in original], but contradicts such. "Common sense" [in English in original], the appraisal of correct relationships, the cosmopolitan, practiced eye, schooled in the market, shares with the dialectic the freedom from dogma, limitation and prejudice. Its sobriety forms an indispensable moment of critical thinking. But also its sworn enemy, due to the renunciation of delusionary waywardness. The generality of the opinion, immediately assumed as one in society, as it is, necessarily has consensus as its concrete content. It is no accident that in the 19th century it was precisely outworn dogmatism, afflicted by the Enlightenment with a bad conscience, appealed to common sense, so that an arch-positivist like Mill was compelled to polemicize against such. The "sense of proportions" [in English in original] wholly relates to the injunction to think in the standard relationships and orders of magnitude of life, which remain fixed. One need only have once heard the dyed-in-the-wool representative of a ruling clique say, "That's of no importance", one need only observe at what times the bourgeoisie speaks of exaggeration, hysteria, and foolishness, to know that it is precisely where the appeal to reason emerges most promptly, that the issue unavoidably concerns an apology for unreason. Hegel emphasized the healthy spirit of contradiction with the hardheadedness of the peasant, who has learned over the centuries to withstand the hunts and tithes of the mighty feudal lords. It is the special concern of philosophy to knock the healthy viewpoints held by later power-brokers regarding the immutability of the course of the world for a loop, and to decode in their "proportions" [in English in original] the true and reduced mirror-image of immeasurably enlarged disproportions. Dialectical reason [Vernunft: reason] is, against the ruling one, unreason [Unvernunft]: only by carrying over and sublating the latter, does it become rational [vernünftig: reasonable, rational]. How biased and Talmudic indeed was the insistence, in the middle of the functioning exchange society, on the distinction between the total work-hours expended by workers and those necessary for the reproduction of their lives. How Nietzsche put the cart before the horses, on which he charged, how Karl Kraus, Kafka, even Proust, each in their own manner, falsified the picture of the world in a biased manner, in order to shake off falsity and bias. Dialectics may not stop before the concepts of the healthy and the sick, nor indeed before the latter's family relations, the rational and the irrational. Once it recognizes the ruling generality and its proportions as sick – and marked in the most literal sense with paranoia, with "pathic projection" – then it finds the cells of healing solely in what the standards of that social order portray as sick, absurd, paranoid – indeed, "insane", and it is true as today as in the medieval era, that only fools speak the truth to power. In this respect it is the duty of the dialectician to help this truth of the fool to attain the consciousness of its own reason [Vernunft], without which it would indeed perish in the abyss of that sickness, pitilessly dictated by the common sense of others.

On the ethics [Moral] of thinking. – Naive and unnaive, these are concepts which are so closely intertwined, that nothing good will come of playing one against the other. The defense of the naive, undertaken by irrationalists and intellectual-haters of all kinds, is ignoble. The reflection which takes the side of naivete, turns against itself: cleverness and obscurantism have ever been the same. By upholding immediacy via mediation, instead of comprehending the former as something mediated in itself, thinking inverts into the apologetics of its own opposite, into the immediate lie. It serves all sorts of bad ends, from the obdurateness of the private things-are-just-so to the justification of social injustice as Nature. If one wished however to raise the opposite to a principle and – as I myself once did – call philosophy the binding obligation to the unnaive, then one does hardly any better. It is not merely that unnaivete is a dubious medium of cognition [Erkenntnis] in the sense of adeptness, hard-bittedness, quick-wittedness, always prepared, through affinity to the practical social orders of life, and the all-round mental reservation against theory, to rebound into naivete, the fixed gaze on purposes. Even where unnaivete is grasped in the theoretically responsible sense of what broadens, of what does not remain in the isolated phenomenon, of the thought of the whole, a shadow falls. It is just that broadening and inability to tarry, that implicit recognition of the priority of the generality over the particular, which comprises not only the deception of idealism, which hypostasizes concepts, but also its inhumanity, which degrades the particular, as soon as it seizes such, to a mere way-station and finally makes its peace with suffering and death, in a reconciliation which takes place only in the reflection – in the final analysis, the bourgeois coldness, which is all too happy to sign on to what is inevitable. Knowledge may broaden only where it persists by the individual, so that its isolation is disassembled by this insistence. This presupposes to be sure a relationship to the generality, though not one of subsumption, but almost its opposite. Dialectical mediation is not the recourse to what is more abstract, but the process of resolution of the concrete in itself. Nietzsche, who himself thought in all too wide horizons, knew something of this: “Those who wish to mediate between two incisive thinkers,” reads a passage in *The Gay Science*, “are marked as mediocre: they do not have eyes for what is unique; seeing things as the same and making things the same are the hallmarks of weak vision.” The ethics [Moral] of thinking do not consist of proceeding in a stubborn or sovereign manner, nor blindly or emptily, nor atomistically or consequentially. The double-sidedness of the method, which among reasonable people gave to Hegelian phenomenology with name of abyssal difficulty by reasonable people, namely the demand, to allow the phenomenon to speak as such – the “pure onlooking” – and yet at every moment to maintain the reflection, its relation to the consciousness as a subject, expresses this ethos most acutely and in full depth of the contradiction. Yet how much more difficult this is to achieve, if one can no longer assume the identity of subject and object, the ultimate assumption which enabled Hegel to conceal the antagonistic demands of on-looking and construal. Nothing less is demanded of those who think today, than to be at every moment in the matter [Sachen] and outside of the matter [Sachen] – the gesture of Münchhausen, who pulled himself out of the swamp by his own pigtails, becomes the schemata of every cognition, which wishes to be more than either a fixed determination or a proposition. And then the philosophers still come along and reproach us, for not having a fixed standpoint.

De gustibus est disputandum [Latin: There is no accounting for taste.] – Even those who are convinced of the incomparability of works of art, find themselves continually entangled in debates where works of art, and precisely those of the highest and for that reason incomparable

rank, are compared with and evaluated against each other. The objection invariably raised during such considerations, that it is all just a matter of collectors' instincts, of measuring by ells, usually means only that the good citizens, to whom art can never be irrational enough, wish to keep the inner constitution and claim of truth distant from the works. The compulsion of the consideration is however located in the work of art itself. So much is true, that they do not allow themselves to be compared. Rather, they want to annihilate each other. It is not for nothing that the ancients [i.e. Greeks] reserved the pantheon of that which is compatible to the gods or to ideas, but required works of art to enter the agon [Greek: contest, conflict, struggle], each one the mortal enemy of the other. The depiction of a "pantheon of classicism", which Kierkegaard still clung to, is a fiction of neutralized upbringing. For if the idea of the beautiful is portrayed as merely divided up into many works, each individual one nevertheless reckons on an inalienable claim to the whole, claiming the beautiful for itself out of its uniqueness and can never admit its segmentation, without annulling itself. The beautiful, as something unitary, true and appearanceless [scheinlos], emancipated from such individuation, is not represented by the synthesis of all works, by the unity of arts and of art, but solely corporeally and actually: in the downfall of art itself. Every work of art aims at such a downfall, by seeking the death of all the others. That all art reckons on its own end, is another way of stating the same state of affairs. It is out of such a compulsion towards self-annihilation in works of art, from their innermost concern, that drives towards the appearanceless [scheinlos] picture of what is beautiful, which stirs up seemingly useless aesthetic disputes over and over again. While they stubbornly and obstinately wish to find what is aesthetically correct [Recht] and precisely thereby fall victim to an unquenchable dialectic, they are more correct than they can know; by delimiting each art-work, whose energy they take into themselves and raise to a concept, they work towards the destruction of art, which is its salvation. The aesthetic tolerance, which validates works of art in their immediate narrowness, without breaking this last, yields only the wrong downfall, that of the juxtaposition, which denies the claim of the unitary truth.

48

For Anatole France. – A questionable moment begins to surface in virtues such as open-mindedness, the capacity to vouchsafe and enjoy the beautiful, even in what is most mundane and unapparent. Once, in the epoch of overflowing subjective plenitude, aesthetic indifference in relation to the choice of the object, as well the energy to extract meaning from everything one experienced, expressed the relation to the objective world itself, a relation which confronted the subject antagonistically – down into all of its fragments, as it were – and yet closely and significantly. In a phase when the subject abdicates before the alienated hegemony of things, its readiness to vouchsafe what is everywhere positive or beautiful, displays a resignation of critical capacity as much as of the interpretive imagination inseparable from such. Whoever finds everything beautiful, is now in danger of finding nothing beautiful. The generality of the beautiful is communicated to the subject in no other way than the obsession with the particular. No gaze achieves beauty, without being accompanied by indifference, and well-nigh contempt for everything outside of the viewed object. And it is solely through bedazzlement [Verblendung: dazzle, infatuation], the unjust closure of the gaze vis-a-vis the claim raised by everything which exists, that justice is done to what exists. By being accepted in its one-sidedness, for what it is, its one-sidedness is understood as its essence and reconciled. The gaze which loses itself in something which is beautiful, is one of the Sabbath [day of repose in Judaism]. It rescues in the object something of the peacefulness of its day of creation. However if this one-sidedness is sublated by a consciousness of the universal imposed from outside, if the particular is harried, substituted and weighed up, then the just view of the whole makes the universal injustice, which

lies in exchangeability and substitution, its own. Such justice turns into the executor of mythos upon creation. To be sure, no thought is immune to such interweaving, none may be blinkered. But everything depends on the manner of the transition. The mischief comes from thought as might [Gewalt: power, violence], the shortcut of the path which finds the generality solely through what is impenetrable, whose theoretical content [Gehalt] is preserved in impenetrability itself, not in the derived congruence of various objects. One could almost say that the truth itself depends on the tempo, patience and duration of the tarrying on the particular: what goes beyond this, without having entirely lost itself, what proceeds to judgement, without making itself guilty of the injustice of the intuition [Anschauung], loses itself in the end in the void. Liberality, which grants rights to human beings indiscriminately, amounts to annihilation, just like the will of the majority which inflicts harm on the minority, and thus makes a mockery of the democracy, according to whose principles they act. Indiscriminate benevolence towards all constantly threatens that coldness and remoteness against each, which are once again communicated to the whole. Injustice is the medium of true justice. Unrestricted benevolence turns into the confirmation of everything which is bad, by belittling its difference from the trace of what is good and leveling it to that generality, which springs hopelessly from the bourgeois-Mephistophelean wisdom, that everything which exists, deserves to perish. [Citation from Goethe's *Faust*] The salvation of beauty even in what is lackluster or indifferent appears that much more nobler as the obstinate insistence on critique and specification, as they are in truth more pliable to the social orders of life.

Mobilized against this is the sanctity of what is alive, which is reflected precisely in what is most ugly and distorted. But its reflection is nothing immediate, but solely something refracted: what is supposed to be beautiful just because it is alive, is for that reason already what is ugly. The concept of life in its abstraction, to which recourse is made here, is by no means to be separated from what is repressive, relentless, truly deadly and destructive. The cult of life in itself always amounts to that of these forces. Whatever the expression of life may mean, from brimming fertility and the frenetic drives of children, all the way to the competence of those who cobble together something correctly and the high spirits of the wife, who is idolized because appetite shows in her so unreservedly – all of this, taken absolutely, has something of the taking away of the light from others, of what is possible, in blind self-perpetuation. Rampant health as such is always already sickness. Its antidote is sickness which is conscious of itself, the delimitation of life itself. Beauty is such healing sickness. It arrests life and thereby its decay. However if one denied sickness for the sake of life, then the hypostatized life passes over, by virtue of its blind separation from the other moment, into what is destructive and malevolent, insolent and self-aggrandizing. Whoever hates what is destructive, must hate life along with it: only what is dead is an allegory [Gleichnis: allegory, parable, analogy] of what is living and undistorted. Anatole France realized something of this, in his enlightened way. “No”, says the otherwise mild-mannered Mr. Bergeret, “I would rather believe, that organic life is the special illness of our unlovely planet. It would be unbearable to think that there is nothing but eating and being eaten throughout the endless universe.” The nihilistic antipathy in his words is not merely the psychological but also the material precondition of humanity as utopia.

49

Ethics [Moral] and temporal order. – While literature has dealt with all manner of erotic conflicts, the simplest external motive for conflict has remained untouched, due to its obviousness. That is the phenomenon of being already taken: that a person beloved by us is inaccessible not because of inner antagonisms and inhibitions, too much coldness or overly repressed warmth, but because a relationship already exists, which excludes a new one. The

abstract temporal order plays in truth the role which one would like to ascribe to the hierarchy of the feelings. The state of being taken, leaving aside freedom of choice and the decision, also has something wholly accidental about it, which appears to thoroughly contradict the claim of freedom. Even and exactly in a society healed from the anarchy of commodity production, there would scarcely be rules regarding how and in what order one got to know people. Were it any different, then such an arrangement would equate to the most unbearable assault on freedom. For that reason, the priority of what is accidental has powerful reasons on its side: if a new person is preferred over another, then the latter is slighted, because the past of the common life is annulled, experience itself is, as it were, crossed out. The irreversibility of time sets an objective moral criterion. But this latter is entwined with mythos, like abstract time itself. The exclusivity posited in it develops according to its own concept into the exclusive rule of hermetically sealed groups, finally to that of large-scale industry. Nothing can be more touching than the worry of lovers, that a new person could attract love and tenderness – their finest possessions, just because they cannot be possessed – precisely by means of that newness, which is itself produced by the privilege of the older. But from this touchingness, whose disintegration would mean the simultaneous disintegration of all warmth and snugness [Geborgensein], leads an irresistible path from the aversion of the little child to its younger siblings and the contempt of the fraternity brother to the pledge, to the immigration laws which exclude all non-Europeans in social democratic Australia, all the way to the Fascist extermination of racial minorities, wherein in fact warmth and snugness explode into nothingness. It is not only, as Nietzsche knew, that all good things were once evil: even the most tender of these, left to its own momentum, has the tendency to culminate in unthinkable barbarity.

It would be idle to try to point out a path leading out of such entanglement. Yet the baleful moment can be named, which brings this entire dialectic into play. It lies in the exclusive character of what is first. The original relationship, in its mere immediacy, already presupposes that abstract temporal order. The concept of time is historically formed on the basis of the social order of property. But the desire for ownership reflects time as fear of losing, of irretrievability. What is, is experienced in relation to its possible non-being. It is thereby turned into a possession and precisely in such petrification to something functional, which can be exchanged for another, equivalent possession. Once become entirely a possession, the beloved human being is actually no longer even looked at. Abstraction in love is the complement of exclusivity, which manifests itself deceptively, as its opposite, as the clinging to the appearance of someone-just-so. The object of this conventionalism slips out of the latter's hands, precisely because it is turned into an object, and forfeits the human beings, which it degrades to "my people". If human beings were no longer possessions of any kind, then they could also no longer be exchanged. The true affection would be one, which speaks specifically to the other, holding fast to beloved traits and not to the idol of personality, the mirror-reflection of possession. What is specific is not exclusive: it lacks the impulse towards totality. But in another sense it is nevertheless exclusive: it prevents the substitution of the experience which is indissolubly bound to it, not so by forbidding such, but because its pure concept prevents this substitution from happening in the first place. The protection of what is entirely determinate is that it cannot be repeated, and that is why it tolerates the other. The property relationship in human beings, the exclusive right of priority, recalls to mind the old saying: Lord, they're only human beings, which one, doesn't really matter. The affection which knows nothing of such wisdom, need not fear infidelity, because it would be immune to faithlessness.

thought. It means to hold authors accountable, to explicitly portray all the steps which led them to their conclusion, and thus enable every reader to follow the process along and, where possible – for example, in academia – to duplicate it. Not only does this operate according to the liberal fiction of the popular, general communicability of every thought and inhibit its factually appropriate expression, but is also false as a principle of representation [Darstellung]. For the worth of a thought is measured by its distance from the continuity of what is familiar. It is objectively devalued by the diminution of this distance; the more it approaches the previously established norms, the more its antithetical function disappears, and its claim is founded only in the latter, in the apparent relationship to its opposite, not in its isolated existence. Texts which anxiously undertake to document every last one of their steps, decay unavoidably into what is banal and into a boredom which relates not just to the tension during the reading, but also to its own substance. Simmel's texts, for example, suffer everywhere from the incompatibility of their distinctive objects with the painfully lucid treatment. They establish what is distinctive as the true complement of that mediocrity which Simmel wrongly believed to be Goethe's secret. But far beyond this, the demand for intellectual honesty is itself dishonest. Even if one followed for once the dubious instruction, that the representation [Darstellung] ought to model itself precisely on the thought-process, then this process would no more be one of discursive progress from step to step, as the reverse, that insights fall to the seeker of knowledge from heaven. Cognizing involves on the contrary a network of prejudices, intuitions, innervations, self-corrections, assumptions and exaggerations, in short in dense, grounded experience, which is by no means transparent in all places. Of this the Cartesian rule, that one should only turn to objects, "to whose clear and undoubted knowledge our mind [Geist] seems to suffice", including all order and disposition which relates to such, gives as false an account as the opposing doctrine of the apperception [Wesenschau], which is nevertheless inextricably entwined with the former. If this latter denies what is logically right, which in spite of everything validates itself in every thought, then the former takes what is logically right in its immediacy, in relation to every individual intellectual act and not as mediated through the stream of the entire life-consciousness of the cognizer. Therein however lies simultaneously a confession of deepest inadequacy. For if the honest thought unavoidably amounts to mere repetition – whether of what is already known, or of categorical forms – the one which renounces the full transparency of its logical genesis for the sake of the relationship to its object, always incurs a certain guilt. It breaks the promise which is posited with the form of the judgement itself. This inadequacy resembles that of the life-line, which runs on bent, diverted, disillusioning according to its premises, and yet solely in this course, because it is continually less than what it should be, may it portray under the given conditions of existence an unregimented one. If life fulfilled its determination straightaway, then it would forfeit the latter. Whoever died in old age and in the consciousness of a guiltless, as it were, success, would secretly be the model pupil, who completes every grade with an invisible backpack, without gaps. Every thought which is not idle, however, remains marked by the impossibility of the full legitimation, as we know in dreams, that there are mathematics lessons which we miss for the sake of a blissful morning in bed, which can never be made up. Thought waits for the day that it is awakened by the memory of what was omitted, and is transformed into teaching.

Part II

1945

Where everything is bad
it must be good
to know the worst.
F.H. Bradley

51

Behind the mirror. First word of caution for authors: check every text, every fragment, and every line to see if the central motif presents itself clearly enough. Whoever wants to express something, is so carried away that they are driven along, without reflecting on such. One is too close to the intention, “in thought”, and forgets to say, what one wants to say.

No improvement is too small or piddling to be carried out. Out of a hundred changes, a single one may appear trifling and pedantic; together they can raise the text to a new level.

One should never stint on deletions. Length doesn't matter and the fear that there isn't enough there is childish. One shouldn't consider anything worth preserving, just because it's written down. If several sentences seem to vary the same thought, this usually indicates several variations of something the author has not yet mastered. In that case one should select the best formulation and work on it further. The toolkit [Technik] of an author should include the capacity to renounce productive thoughts, so long as the construction demands it. The wealth and energy of these latter ultimately come to benefit suppressed thoughts. Rather like the banquet-table, where one shouldn't eat every last crumb or drink to the dregs. Otherwise one might be accused of stinginess.

Whoever wants to avoid cliches, should not restrict themselves to words, lest one falls victim to vulgar coquetry. The great French prose of the 19th century was especially sensitive to this. Individual words are seldom banal: in music, too, the single tone never wears out. The worst cliches of them all are on the contrary word-grams [Wortverbindungen] of the sort which Karl Kraus skewered: totally and completely, for better or for worse, planned and implemented. For in them gurgles, as it were, the sluggish flow of stale language, precisely where the author should construct, through precision of expression, those resistances which are required wherever language emerges. This applies not just to word-grams but also to the construction of entire forms. If a dialectician always marked the dialectical recoil [Umschlag] of a thought which advances beyond itself by putting a “however” [aber: however, but] in front of the caesura, then the literary schemata would punish the unschematic intent of what is being discussed with untruth.

The jungle is no sacred grove. It is obligatory to resolve difficulties which derive solely from the comfort and ease of self-understanding. The distinction between the desire to write with a density appropriate to the depth of the object, and the temptation for the abstruse and pretentious sloppiness, is not automatic: a mistrustful insistence is always healthy. Precisely those who wish to make no concession to the stupidity of common sense must guard themselves against

stylistically draping together thoughts which are themselves to be convicted of banality. Locke's platitudes do not justify Hamann's cryptology.

If one has even the slightest qualms about a completed work, regardless of its length, then one should take such with inordinate seriousness, out of all proportion to the level of relevance which it might register. The affective investment [Besetzung] in a text and vanity tend to minimize such misgivings. What is passed over with the tiniest doubt, may well indicate the objective worthlessness of the whole.

The Echternacher spring procession [German folk parade, where marchers move three steps forward and two back] is not the course of the World-Spirit [Weltgeist]; restriction and revocation are not the means of narration [Darstellungsmittel] for dialectics. On the contrary this latter moves by extremes and, instead of qualifying such, drives the thought through uttermost consequence to its dialectical recoil [Umschlag]. The prudence with which one forbids oneself to venture too far with a sentence, is mostly only an agent of social control and thus of dumbing down.

Skepticism against the oft-cited objection, that a text, a formulation would be "too beautiful." The reverence for the matter [Sache: thing, philosophic matter], or even for suffering, can easily rationalize the resentment against those who find, in the reified shape of language, the traces of something unbearable, which befalls human beings: debasement. The dream of an existence [Dasein: existence, being] without shame, to which the passion for language clings, even though the latter is forbidden to depict the former as content, is to be maliciously strangled. The author should make no distinction between beautiful and factual [sachlichem: factual, objective, realistic] expression. One should neither entrust this distinction to concerned critics, nor tolerate it in oneself. If one succeeds in completely saying what one means, then it is beautiful. The beauty of expression for its own sake is by no means "too beautiful", but ornamental, artsy, ugly. Yet whoever leaves off from the purity of the expression, under the pretext of unswervingly stating the facts, thereby betrays the matter [Sache] too.

Properly worked texts are like spiderwebs: hermetic, concentric, transparent, well-joined and fastened. They draw everything into themselves, whatever crawls and flies. Metaphors, which fleetingly dart through them, become their nourishing prey. Materials come flying to them. The binding stringency [Stichhaltigkeit] of a conception is to be judged by whether its citations evoke other citations. Wherever the thought opens up a cell of reality, it must push into the next chamber, without an act of violence by the subject. It vouchsafes its relationship to the object, as soon as other objects crystallize around it. In the light that it sheds on its determinate object, others begin to gleam.

Authors settle into their texts like home-dwellers. Just as one creates disorder by lugging papers, books, pencils and documents from one room to another, so too does one comport oneself with thoughts. They become pieces of furniture, on which one sits down, feeling at ease or annoyed. One strokes them tenderly, scuffs them up, jumbles them up, moves them around, trashes them. To those who no longer have a homeland, writing becomes home. And therein one unavoidably generates, just like the family, all manner of household litter and junk. But one no longer has a shed, and it is not at all easy to separate oneself from cast-offs. So one pushes them to and fro, and in the end runs the risk of filling up the page with them. The necessity to harden oneself against pity for oneself includes the technical necessity, to counter the diminution of intellectual

tension with the most extreme watchfulness, and to eliminate anything which forms on the work like a crust or runs on mechanically, which perhaps at an earlier stage produced, like gossip, the warm atmosphere which enabled it to grow, but which now remains fusty and stale. In the end, authors are not even allowed to be home in their writing.

52

Where the stork brings children from. – Every human being has an archetype out of a fairy-tale, one need only look long enough. Over there a beauty asks the mirror, if she is the fairest of them all, like the Queen in Snow White. She who bristles and is nitpicky to death, was modeled after the goat described in the verse, “I’m so stuffed / can’t eat any more, meeh, meeh”. A man who is sorrowful and yet unbowed resembles the crinkled little old lady gathering wood, who meets the Good Lord without recognizing Him, and is blessed with bounty, because she helped Him. Another went out into the world as a fine young fellow to make his fortune, dispatched a number of giants, but had to die nonetheless in New York. One walks through the wilderness of the city like Little Red Riding Hood and brings the grandmother a slice of cake and a bottle of wine, yet another undresses during love-making as shamelessly childlike as the girl with the coins like silver stars. The clever one becomes aware of his strong animal soul, does not wish to perish along with his friends, forms a group of Bremen city musicians, leads them into the robbers’ den, outwits the crooks there, but wants to go back home. The frog prince, an incorrigible snob, stares at the princess with eyes of longing and cannot stop hoping that she will rescue him.

53

Tomfoolery. – The linguistic habitus of Schiller is reminiscent of youths who come from the bottom and, embarrassed, begin to shout in high society, in order to make themselves heard: power [in English in original] and insolence. The German tirade and sententiousness is modeled on the French version, but practiced at the bar table. In their infinite and implacable demands, the petit bourgeois hams it up, identifying with the power they do not have, outbidding it through arrogance all the way to absolute Spirit [Geist] and absolute horror. Between the universal-human grandiosity and sublimity – which all idealists have in common, and which continually wishes to inhumanly trample on what is small as mere existence – and the crude love of ostentation of bourgeois men of violence, exists the most intimate understanding. Spiritual giants are wont to laugh in a booming voice, to explode, to utterly demolish. When they say creation, then they mean the cramped will, with which they puff themselves up and hush questions: from the primacy of practical reason, it was always only a step to the hatred of theory. Such a dynamic dwells within all idealistic thought-movements: even Hegels immeasurable effort, to heal it by itself, became its victim. To wish to derive the world in words out of a principle, is the mode of conduct of those who would like to usurp power, instead of resisting such. Fittingly, Schiller dealt mostly with usurpers. In the classicistic explanation of sovereignty over nature, what is vulgar and lesser is mirrored via assiduous negation. Close behind the ideal stands life. The rose-scents of Elysium, far too voluble to be vouchsafed the experience of a single rose, smells like the tobacco in the functionaries’ office, and the lyrical backdrop of the moon was modeled on the oil-light, in whose guttering light students slog for their exams. Weakness posing as strength has betrayed the thought of the presumably rising bourgeoisie to ideology, even in the days it fulminated against tyranny. In the innermost recess of humanism, as its selfsame soul, surreptitiously rages the brute who as a Fascist turns the world into a prison.

54

The Robbers. – The Kantian Schiller is both more non-sensuous as well as more sensuous than

Goethe: both more abstract as well as more entangled in sexuality. This latter, as immediate desire, turns everything into an action-object and thereby the same. “Amalia for the band” – that is why Louise remains as flat as lemonade. Casanova’s women, not for nothing identified with letters instead of names, are scarcely to be distinguished from each other and also not from the figurines, which form complicated pyramids in Sade’s mechanical organ. Something of such sexual brutality, the incapacity to make distinctions, lives however in the great speculative systems of idealism, all imperatives to the contrary, and chains the German Spirit [Geist] and German barbarism to each other. What peasant greed, only held in check with difficulty by the warnings of the priests, advocates as autonomy in metaphysics, is the right to reduce everything in its path to its essence as brazenly as peasant conscripts vis-a-vis the women of the conquered city. The pure factual treatment [Tathandlung] is the violation projected into the starry skies above. The long, contemplative glance, however, in which human beings and things really unfold, is always that in which the compulsion towards the object is broken, reflected. Non-violent reflection [Betrachtung], from which all happiness of the truth comes, has this condition, that those who reflect do not incorporate the object into themselves: nearness to distance. Only because Tasso, who the psychoanalysts would call a destructive character, is afraid in front of the princess and falls as a civilized victim to the impossibility of the immediate, do Adelheid, Klärchen and Gretchen speak the transparent, unforced language, which makes them into allegories of Ur-history. The appearance [Schein] of life in Goethe’s women was paid for with withdrawal, evasion, and more is at stake here than mere resignation before the victory of the social order. The absolute opposite to this, the symbol of the unity of the sensuous and the abstract, is Don Juan. When Kierkegaard says, that sensuality is to be grasped in him as a principle, then he touches on the secret of sensuality itself. Its frozen glance contains, so long as its self-constitution [Selbstbesinnung] does not arise, precisely that anonymity, that unhappy generality, which catastrophically reproduces itself in its negative, the controlling sovereignty of thought.

55

If you’ll permit me. – When the poet in Schnitzler’s play *Merry-go-Round* tenderly approaches the coquette, portrayed as the friendly opposite of a Puritan, she says, “Step off, go play the piano already.” She cannot be unaware of the purpose of the arrangement, nor does she actually resist. Her impulse goes deeper than conventional or psychological prohibitions. It evinces archaic frigidity, the fear of the female animal of reproduction, which inflicts nothing but pain. Pleasure is a late achievement, scarcely older than consciousness. If one observes how animals compulsively copulate, as if under a spell, then one sees through the proverb “Bliss was given even to the worm” as a piece of idealistic lying, at least where females are concerned, who encounter love in unfreedom, and who are recognized only as objects of violence. Something of this has remained in women, especially those of the petty bourgeoisie, well into the late industrial era. The memory of the old injury still lives on, while the physical pain and the immediate fear have been removed by civilization. Society continually throws the devotedness of the female back to the situation of sacrifice, from which it emancipated women. No man, so long as he is not completely insensitive, who is lobbying a poor woman to come along with him, can mistake the undertone of justice in her resistance, the sole prerogative which patriarchal society accords to women, who, once persuaded, end up paying the bill after the brief triumph of the “no”. She knows that she, as the provider since time immemorial, is simultaneously the one who is betrayed. If for that reason she is out only for herself, then she will be betrayed that much more. This is apparent in the advice to the novice, which Wedekind puts into the words of the madame of a brothel: “There is only one way to be happy in this world, and that is to do everything to

make others as happy as possible.” One’s own pleasure has as a prerequisite the boundless throwing of oneself away, which women, due to their archaic fear, are no more capable of than men in their puffed-up self-importance. Not merely the objective possibility – also the subjective capacity for happiness lies only in freedom.

56

Genealogical research. – The deepest affinity exists between Ibsen and the *Struwwelpeter* [of Heinrich Hoffman]. It is the same kind as the frozen similarity of the flashbulb snapshots of family members in 19th century albums. Isn’t Fidgety Philip truly what *Ghosts* say it is, a family drama? Doesn’t “and Mother gazed in silence rare / by the table, nose in air” describe the manner of bank director Borkmann’s wife? How else to explain Augustus’ consumptive illness than as the sins of his father and the inherited memory of guilt? Furious Frederick is prescribed bitter but healing medicine by that enemy of the people, Doctor Stockmann, who in return donates his liver-sausage to the dog. Dancing little Harriet with the matches is a touched-up photograph of the small Hilda Wangel from the time that her step-mother, the woman of the sea, left her alone in the house, and Flying Robert high over the church steeple is her selfsame building contractor. And what else does Johnny Head-in-air want than the sun? Who else could have lured him into the water than Little Eyolf’s Rat-Wife, cut out of the same cloth as the red-legged Scissor Man? The strict poet however behaves like tall Nicholas [also called Agrippa in some translations of Hoffman, a schoolmaster who dunks three misbehaving students into an ink-pot], who dunks the children’s pictures of modernity into his great barrel of ink, blackening them with their prehistory, pulling them to and fro like quivering marionettes, and in such a manner holding a day of judgement over himself.

57

Excavation. – As soon as Ibsen’s name is dropped, there is a cry that he and his objects are outmoded and obsolete. These are the same types who were enraged sixty years ago about what was modernistically alienating and unethically extravagant [Verstiegene] about Nora [in *Doll’s House*] and *Ghosts*. Ibsen, the splenetic bourgeois [Bürger: bourgeois, citizen], vented his spleen at society, borrowing his implacability and ideals from the latter’s own principle. He painted the portrait of those deputized as the solid majority, who shouted down the enemy of the people, as a pathetic but enduring monument, and to this day they are still not flattered. That is why they move on to the business of the day. Where reasonable people are united over the behavior of the unreasonable, one can always presume something displaced and not yet worked through, painful scars. Thus it is with the woman question. In fact this is superficially no longer “acute”, due to the dissolution of the “masculine”-liberal competitive economy, the participation of women in salaried occupations where they are as independently dependent as men, the disenchantment of the family and the loosening of sexual taboos. At the same time, however, the continuation of traditional society has warped the emancipation of women. Few things are more symptomatic of the decay of the workers’ movement than its failure to notice this. The admission of women to all possible supervised activities hides the perpetuation of their dehumanization. They remain in large firms what they were in the family, objects. One must think not only about their impoverished daily grind at work and their life at home, which counterintuitively preserves craft-era working conditions in the midst of industrial ones, but about women themselves. Willingly, without any contrary impulse, they reflect domination and identify with it. Instead of solving the woman question, masculine society has extended its own principle to the point that its victims are not even capable of raising the question anymore. No sooner are they granted a certain measure of wealth, than they enthusiastically affirm their fate, leave thinking to the men, defame

every reflection as an affront to the feminine ideal propagated by the culture-industry and above all leave themselves in the unfreedom, which they hold to be the fulfillment of their gender. The defects by which they have to pay for this, above all neurotic stupidity, contribute to the perpetuation of the condition. Already in Ibsen's time, most women with bourgeois pretensions were ready to tear into the hysterical sisters, who for their part took upon themselves the hopeless attempt to break out of the prison of society, which turned all four walls against them so unfeelingly. The grand-daughters however would tolerantly smile at the hysterical ones, without feeling themselves affected, and refer them to the proper authorities for friendly treatment. The female hysteric, who wished for the miraculous, is succeeded by the raging, industrious blockhead, who cannot wait for the triumph of calamity. – Perhaps something similar is at work in everything which is outmoded. It is to be explained not by mere temporal distance, but as the judgement of history. Its expression in things is the shame welling up in those born later, when confronted with an earlier possibility which the latter failed to bring to life. What was achieved, may be forgotten and preserved in the present. Only what failed is always outmoded, the broken promise of something new. It is not for nothing that Ibsen's women are called "modern". The hatred of modernity and that of what is outmoded are immediately one and the same.

58

The truth about Hedda Gabler. – The aestheticism of the 19th century cannot be understood in the context of the history of philosophy, but solely in relation to primary reality, to social conflicts. The bad conscience rests on the grounds of amorality. Critique confronted bourgeois society economically as well as ethically with its own norms. Against this, there remained no recourse for the ruling class, to the extent they did not wish to fall back on apologetic lies and powerlessness like the court poets and novelists with state pensions, than to reject the principle by which society itself is measured, and thus its own ethics [Moral]. However, the new position which radical bourgeois thought assumed, under the pressure of its opponents, was not exhausted by the mere replacement of ideological appearance [Schein] by a truth which was proclaimed with the rage of self-destruction, defiantly rebellious and ready to capitulate. The uprising of the beautiful against bourgeois good [Gut] was an uprising against benevolence [Güte]. Benevolence is itself the deformation of the good. By severing the ethical principle from the social one and displacing it into a private sensibility [Gesinnung], the former restricted the latter in a double sense. Benevolence renounced the realization of a condition worthy of human beings, which was built into the ethical principle. Each one of its actions is inscribed with consoling resignation: it aims at alleviation, not healing, and in the end the consciousness of incurability forms a pact with such. Benevolence thereby becomes restricted even in itself. Its guilt consists of trustfulness. It mirrors the immediate relations between human beings and leaps over the distance by which alone individuals can protect themselves against becoming touched by the generality. It is precisely in the most intimate contact that they experience the non-sublated difference most painfully. Only alienness [Fremdheit: foreignness] is the antidote to alienation [Entfremdung]. The ephemeral picture of harmony, in which benevolence delights, only exacerbates the suffering of irreconcilability, the more it idiotically denies the latter. The affront against taste and consideration, from which no good act is exempt, completes the leveling, which the powerless utopia of the beautiful opposes. From the beginnings of mature industrial society, the allegiance to evil was not only the precursor of barbarism, but also a mask of the good. Its dignity passed over to evil, by drawing all hatred and all resentment of the social order to itself, an order which drilled the good into its members, so that it could be evil without punishment. When Hedda Gabler mortally embarrassed Aunt Julle, who meant only the very best, when she intentionally declared that the dreadful hat which the aunt acquired to honor the general's daughter belonged

to the maid, then the dissatisfied one did not merely sadistically vent her hate against the cloying bonds of marriage on a defenseless person. Rather she sins against what is the best, in what she has to do, because she recognizes in the best the shame of the good. She represents, against the old woman who adores the dim-witted nephew, unconsciously and absurdly, the absolute. Hedda is the victim and not Julle. The beautiful, whose fixed idea dominates Hedda, opposes ethics [Moral] even before scorning such. For it digs in its heels against every generality and posits the differential determination of mere existence absolutely, as the contingency which allows for one thing but not another. The opaque particularity maintains itself as the norm in the beautiful, as something solely general, because the normal generality has become all too transparent. Thus it casts down its challenge to the latter, the equality of everything which is unfree. But it becomes thereby guilty itself, by once more severing, along with the generality, also the possibility of going beyond that mere existence, whose opacity merely mirrors the untruth of the bad generality. Thus the beautiful does injustice to justice and is nevertheless justified in doing so. In the beautiful, the frail future offers its sacrifice to the Moloch of the contemporary: because there can be nothing good in the latter's realm, the former makes itself bad, in order to convict the judge from the position of the vanquished. The objection of the beautiful against the good is the secularized, bourgeois form of the delusion of the hero in classical tragedy. In the immanence of society, the consciousness of its negative essence is locked away, and only the concrete negation stands in for the truth. Anti-ethics, by rejecting what is unethical in ethics, as repression, simultaneously makes the latter's innermost concern its own: that every form of violence ought to vanish, along with every restriction. That is why in fact the motives of uncompromising bourgeois self-critique converge with the materialist kind, which brings the former to consciousness of itself.

59

Since I saw him. – The female character and the ideal of femininity on which it is modeled are products of masculine society. The picture of undistorted nature originates first in distortion, as its opposite. There, where it claims to be humane, masculine society sovereignly breeds in women their own corrective and thereby shows itself through this restriction as the implacable master. The female character is the imprint of the positive one of domination. But for that reason just as bad as the latter. What generally passes for nature in the bourgeois context of delusion is merely the scar tissue of mutilation. If the psychoanalytic theory holds, that women perceive their physical constitution [Beschaffenheit] as the consequence of castration, then in their neurosis they intuit the truth. Those who feel themselves to be wounds when they bleed, know more about themselves than those who style themselves as flowers, because that's what their husband likes. The lie is not merely that nature is affirmed, where it is merely tolerated and built in, but that what passes for nature in civilization is according to its substance the most removed from everything natural, the pure turning of oneself into an object. The kind of femininity which calls upon the instincts, is invariably the one to which every woman must compel herself with all manner of violence – with masculine violence: the little women are little men. One need only have experienced once, in the pangs of jealousy, how such female women access their femininity, deploying it where necessary, making their eyes flash, fueling their mood swings, in order to know what the sheltered unconscious, unscathed by the intellect, really amounts to. It is precisely its pristineness and purity which is the achievement of the ego, of censorship, of the intellect, and for that reason it adjusts itself without any conflict into the reality-principle of the rational social order. Without a single exception, female natures conform. That Nietzsche's insistence stopped at this point, by adopting an unexamined and unversed picture of feminine nature from the Christian civilization which he otherwise so thoroughly mistrusted, ultimately allowed bourgeois

society to subjugate the effort of his thought. He fell prey to the fraud of saying “woman”, [Weib: woman, wench] when he spoke of women [Frau: woman, wife, Mrs.]. Thus the perfidious advice to not forget the whip: the woman [Weib] is already the effect of the whip. It would be the emancipation of nature to abolish its self-positing. The glorification of the female character implies the degradation of all who bear it.

60

A word for ethics. [Moral: ethics, morality] – The amorality, with which Nietzsche dressed down the old untruths, has fallen prey to the verdict of history. With the dissolution of religion and its tangible philosophical secularizations, the restricting prohibitions have lost their certified essence, their substantiality. At one time however material production was still so underdeveloped, that there were grounds for announcing that there wasn't enough for everyone. Whoever did not criticize political economy as such, was forced to cling to the limiting principle subsequently expressed as unrationalized appropriation at the cost of the weak. The objective prerequisites for this have changed. In view of the immediate possibility of abundance, this limitation must seem superfluous not just to social non-conformists, but even to the limited minds of bourgeois citizens. The implicit sense of the ethics of the rulers, that whoever wants to live has to grab what they can, has meanwhile turned into even more of a wretched lie than when it was the pulpit wisdom of the 19th century. If in Germany the upstanding citizens [Spiessbürger] have proven themselves to be blond beasts, then this is not on account of national peculiarities, but due to the fact that in the face of open plenitude, the blond beast itself, social robbery, has taken on the aspect of something backwoods, of the deluded philistine, and even of the “short-end-of-the-stick” attitude, against which the ruling ethics was invented. If Cesare Borgia came back to life today, he would resemble David Friedrich Strauss and he would be named Adolf Hitler. The preaching of amorality has become the task of the same Darwinists who Nietzsche loathed, and who convulsively proclaimed the barbaric struggle for existence as a maxim, precisely because it is no longer needed. The virtue of gentility has long since ceased to mean the taking what is better from others, but means instead becoming satiated with taking and really practicing the virtue of giving, something which occurs in Nietzsche solely intellectually. The ascetic ideals comprise a greater degree of resistance against the madness of the profit economy today than lavish living did sixty years ago against liberal repression. Amoralists may finally permit themselves to be as benevolent, kind, unegoistic and open-minded as Nietzsche already was at that time. As a guarantee of their unyielding resistance, they will still remain as lonely as in the days when he turned the mask of evil against the normal world, in order to teach the norm to fear its own wrongness.

61

Court of appeal. – Nietzsche expressed in *The Antichrist* the strongest argument not merely against theology, but also against metaphysics: that it confuses hope with truth; that the impossibility of thinking, living happily or living at all without something absolute, does not testify to the legitimacy of that thought. He rebuts the Christian “proof by efficacy”, that belief is truth, because it brings bliss. For “isn't blessedness – technically expressed, pleasure – always a proof of efficacy? So little, that it almost proves the contrary, yielding in any case the highest suspicion against the ‘truth’, if feelings of pleasure have anything to say to the question of ‘what is true’. The proof of ‘pleasure’ is proof of ‘pleasure’ – nothing more; how in the world can it be established, that it is precisely true judgements which are more pleasurable than false ones and, according to a preestablished harmony, necessarily draw pleasant feelings after them?” (*The Antichrist*, Aphorism 50). But Nietzsche himself taught amor fati [Latin: love of fate], “you

should love your destiny". This latter, according to the epilogue of the *Twilight of the Gods*, is his innermost nature. And it is worth asking the question as to whether there is any more reason to love what one encounters, to extol that which exists, because it is, than for considering as true what one hopes for. Is it not the same faulty conclusion, which leads from the existence of "stubborn facts" [in English in original] to their installation as the highest value, which he reproaches in the transition from hope to truth? If he dispatches "blessedness through a fixed idea" to the insane asylum, then one could seek out the origin of amor fati [Latin: love of fate] in the prison. Those who no longer see or have anything else to love, fall victim to the love of stone walls and barred windows. Both instances are ruled by the same ignominy of adaptation, which, in order to be able to endure the horror of the world, ascribes the wish to reality and meaning to nonsense of compulsion. No less than in credo quia absurdum [Latin: belief unto absurdity], renunciation crawls in amor fati [Latin: love of fate], the glorification of what is most absurd of them all, from domination to the cross. In the end, hope, which eludes reality by negating it, is the sole shape in which the truth appears. Without hope the idea of truth would scarcely be thinkable, and it is the cardinal untruth, to pass off the existence which is recognized as bad as the truth, if only because it was once recognized. Here, rather than the opposite, is where the crime of theology lies, which Nietzsche prosecuted without ever reaching the final court. In one of the most powerful moments of his critique he accused Christianity of mythology: "The sacrificial victim, and indeed in its most repulsive, barbaric form, the sacrifice of the innocent for the sins of the guilty! What ghastly paganism!" (*The Antichrist*, Aphorism 41). Yet the love of destiny is nothing other than the absolute sanctioning of the infinity of such sacrifice. Mythos separates Nietzsche's critique of myth from the truth.

62

Shorter dispatches [Ausführungen: executions, accomplishments, orders]. – If one reads anew one of the meditative books of Anatole France, for instance the *Garden of Epicure*, then one cannot avoid, in the midst of all thankfulness for the proffered enlightenment, a feeling of embarrassment, which is to be adequately explained neither by that obsolescence, which renegade French irrationalists enthusiastically endorse, nor by personal vanity. By serving as a pretext for envy, because a vain moment necessarily appears in all Spirit [Geist] as soon as it portrays itself, the grounds for the embarrassment becomes clear. It is due to what is contemplative, the giving of time to oneself, the homily, however many times interrupted, the indulgently raised forefinger. The critical content of the thought is denied by the gesture of bandying oneself about, familiar to professors sinecured by the state, and the irony, with which the stage actor of Voltaire confesses on his title page to his membership in the Académie Française [French Academy], recoils back onto the comedian. In his essay, something violent is concealed in all the freighted humanity: one can afford to speak so, because no one interrupts the master. Something of the usurpation which dwells within all lecturing and indeed all reading aloud, has permeated the lucid construction of the periods, which reserve so much leisure for the most uncomfortable things. An unmistakable sign of latent contempt for human beings in the last advocate of human dignity is the dauntlessness with which he expresses platitudes, as if no one dared to notice them: "L'artiste doit aimer la vie et nous montrer qu'elle est belle. Sans lui, nous en douterions." [French: Artists should love life and show us that it is beautiful. Without them, we should doubt it.] What steps forwards in the archaically stylized meditations of France, already secretly marks every meditation, which claims the prerogative of withdrawing from the immediacy of purpose. Equanimity as such turns into the same lie, which the haste of immediacy falls victim to anyway. While thought, according to its content, strives against the irresistibly rising tide of horror, the nerves, the sense-organ of historical consciousness, are capable of

detecting the trace of understanding with the world, even if it is only that it is permissible to be a thought, which one already concedes in the moment that one steps far enough back from it, in order to turn it into a philosophical object. The sovereignty, without which no thinking could be, hails the privilege which permits one to do so. The aversion against this has well-nigh become the most difficult obstacle to theory: if one follows up on it, then one would have to fall silent, and if one does not follow up on it, then one becomes obtuse and cretinous through trust in one's own culture. Even the horrid division of speaking into occupational conversations and strictly conventional ones yields an inkling of the impossibility of saying something thought without arrogance, without violating the time of the other. It is the most urgent task of a mode of narration, which ought to hold true at a minimum, that it does not look away from such experiences, but brings them to expression through tempo, compactness, density, and yet also by being non-binding [Unverbindlichkeit].

63

Death of immortality. – Flaubert, who went on record saying he loathed the fame to which he dedicated his life, had it as good in the consciousness of such a contradiction as the sedate bourgeois who wrote *Madame Bovary*. In regards to corrupt public opinion, the press, to which he reacted like Kraus, he thought he could rely on posterity, a bourgeoisie emancipated from the baleful spell of stupidity, which would duly honor its authentic critic. But he underestimated stupidity: the society which he represented cannot name itself, and with its development into a totality, intelligence has developed absolutely along with stupidity. This eats away at the power-centers of intellectuals. He may not even hope for posterity without falling prey to conformism, be it merely the agreement with great minds [Geistern]. However as soon as he renounces such hope, an element of something delusional and pig-headed enters his work, bordering on a recoil into cynical capitulation. Fame, which had something accidental and stagey about it, and yet also a glimmer of justice and free choice, has been liquidated as the result of the objective processes of the market society. It has entirely become a function of paid propaganda-bureaus and is measured in terms of the investment being wagered by the name-bearer or interest-group which stands behind it. The paid flacks, who still appeared to Daumier as an excrescence, have meanwhile shed their disreputability and become official appointees of the cultural system. Authors who want a career speak as openly about their agents as their predecessors did about publishers, who also knew a thing or two about advertising. One takes control of the process of becoming famous and thereby to a certain degree also their after-life – for what has a chance of being remembered in a thoroughly organized society, which is not already familiar – and purchases the expectation of immortality, only no longer from the church, but henceforth from the lackeys of trusts. But there is no blessing therein. Just as capricious memory and utter oblivion always went together, so too does the planned disposition of fame and memorialization lead irresistibly into nothingness, whose foretaste can already be discerned in the hectic essence of all celebrity. The famous are not happy. They turn themselves into brand-name articles, alien and incomprehensible to themselves; as living pictures of themselves, they are like the dead. In the pretentious concern for their aura they waste the substantive energy, which alone is capable of perpetuation. The inhuman indifference and contempt which is immediately meted out to the fallen giants of the culture-industry, reveals the truth about their fame, without giving those who partake in scorning that fame any better hope for posterity. Thus intellectuals discover the frailty of their secret motives, and the only help against such is to express this insight.

64

Ethics [Moral] and style. – Authors find that the more precisely, painstakingly, realistically and

appropriately they express themselves, the more the literary result will be regarded as difficult to understand, while as soon as they formulate phrases in a lax and irresponsible manner, they are rewarded with a certain understanding. It does not help to ascetically avoid all elements of expert discourse, all references to no longer existing spheres of education. Rather, strictness and purity of linguistic arrangement, even in the most extreme simplicity, creates a vacuum. Shoddiness, moving along with the familiar currents of language, counts as a sign of belonging and contact: one knows what one wants, because one knows what the other wants. To focus on the thing in the expression rather than the communication, is considered suspicious: what is specific, not already hidden away in automatism, appears inconsiderate, a symptom of eccentricity, almost of confusion. Contemporary logic, which puts so much store on its clarity, has naively absorbed such perversion in the category of colloquial speech. The vague expression permits those who employ it to imagine more or less whatever they wish and what they mean anyway. The strictly enforced unambiguousness [Eindeutigkeit: directness, decidedness] of the construction, the effort of the concept, from which human beings are consciously weaned, presumes the suspension of the prevailing judgement before all content, and thereby a radical separation of oneself, something which they react violently to. Only that which they do not need to know counts as understandable; only what is in truth alienated, the word molded by commerce, strikes them as trustworthy. There are few things which contribute more to the demoralization of intellectuals. Whoever wishes to escape this, must see through every piece of advice which tells one to focus on communication as a betrayal of what is being communicated.

65

Famished. [Kohldampf: slang for being famished or ravenous] – To play off the dialects of workers against written speech is reactionary. Leisure, even pride and arrogance, endowed the speech of the upper crust with something of independence and self-discipline. It is thereby brought into opposition to its own social realm. It turns against the masters, who misuse it to command, by wishing to command them, and refuses to serve their interest. In the speech of the subjugated, however, there is only the mark of domination, robbing them even of the justice which the unutilized, autonomous word means to all those who are free enough to say it without resentment. Proletarian speech is dictated by hunger. The poor chew words, in order to feel full. From their objective Spirit [Geist] they expect the powerful nourishment, which society has denied them; they fill up their mouths because they have nothing to bite on. Thus they take revenge on language. They despoil the body of a language, which does not let them love it, and repeat with powerless strength the shame which was done to them. Even what is best in the dialects of northern Berlin or the [London] Cockneys, the street smarts and mother-wit, ails from the circumstance that in order to withstand desperate situations without despairing, one must laugh at oneself as well as the enemy and thus justify the course of the world. If written speech codifies the alienation of the classes, then this latter is not to be repealed by regression to the spoken kind, but only in the consequentiality [Konsequenz: consequence, ramification] of strictest linguistic objectivity. Only the speech which sublates writing into itself, would emancipate human speech from the lie that it is already human.

66

Melange. – The usual argument of tolerance, that all human beings, all races are equal, is a boomerang. It opens itself up to easy rebuttal by the senses, and even the most compelling anthropological evidence for the fact that Jews are not a race at all, will in the case of a pogrom hardly change anything at all, since the totalitarians know very well who they want to kill and who not. If one wished to proclaim the equality of all those who bear human features as an ideal,

instead of establishing it as a fact, this would be of little help. The abstract utopia would be all too easily reconcilable with the most devious tendencies of society. That all human beings would resemble each other, is exactly what suits this latter. It regards factual or imagined differences as marks of shame, which reveal, that one has not brought things far enough; that something somewhere has been left free of the machine, is not totally determined by the totality. The technics of the concentration camps was designed to turn prisoners into guards, the murdered into murderers. Racial difference was absolutely sublated, so that one could abolish it absolutely, if only in the sense that nothing different survived anymore. An emancipated society however would be no unitary state, but the realization of the generality in the reconciliation of differences. A politics which took this seriously should therefore not propagandize even the idea of the abstract equality of human beings. They should rather point to the bad equality of today, the identity of film interests with weapons interests, and think of the better condition as the one in which one could be different without fear. If one attested to blacks [Neger], that they are exactly like whites, while they are nevertheless not so, then one would secretly wrong them all over again. This humiliates them in a benevolent manner by a standard which, under the pressure of the system, they cannot attain, and moreover whose attainment would be a dubious achievement. The spokespersons of unitary tolerance are always prepared to turn intolerantly against any group which does not fit in: the obstinate enthusiasm for blacks meshes seamlessly with the outrage over obnoxious Jews. The “melting pot” [in English in original] was an institution of free-wheeling industrial capitalism. The thought of landing in it conjures up martyrdom, not democracy.

67

Unmeasure for unmeasure. – What the Germans have committed beyond comprehension, even the psychological kind, given that the horror seems to have been perpetrated more as blindly planned and alienated measures of terror than as spontaneous gratification. According to the reports of eyewitnesses, the torture and murder were carried out without enthusiasm, and perhaps for that reason went so far beyond all bounds. Nevertheless the consciousness which would like to withstand the unspeakable sees itself thrown back again and again to the attempt to understand, so that it does not subjectively fall prey to the madness which objectively rules. The thought irresistibly obtrudes that the German horror was something like a revenge taken in advance. The credit system in which everything, even world conquest, can be advanced, determines also the actions which prepared its end and the end of the entire market society, all the way to the suicide of the dictatorship. In the concentration camps and gas chambers the downfall of Germany is, as it were, being discounted. No one who observed the first months of Nazi rule in 1933 could overlook the moment of deathly sorrow, of the half-knowing entrusting of oneself to something calamitous, which accompanied the whipped-up euphoria, the torchlight parades and fanfares. How hopeless was the sound of the German favorite song of those months, “People [Volk] to Arms”, in the street of Unter den Linden. The salvation of the fatherland arranged from one day to the next bore the expression of catastrophe from the first moment, and this catastrophe was practiced in the concentration camps, while its premonition was drowned out by the triumph in the streets. Such premonition need not be explained by the collective unconscious, which to be sure clearly enough played a role. The German position in the imperialist competition was, according to the measure of available raw materials and industrial potential, desperate in war and peace. Everyone and yet no one was too dumb to recognize this. To deliver oneself to the final battle of the competition, meant springing into the abyss, and the others were pushed into it, in the belief that it could still be warded off. The chance of the Nazi enterprise compensating for the disadvantage of the total volume of production through record

terror and temporal priority was tiny. The others had sooner believed in this than the Germans, who were not happy even with the fall of Paris. While they won everything, they already raged like those who have nothing left to lose. At the beginning of German imperialism stands Wagner's *Twilight of the Gods*, the rapturous prophecy of their own doom, whose composition was undertaken simultaneously with the victorious war of 1870 [the Franco-Prussian War, which sealed the unification of Germany]. In the same spirit, two years before WW II the German public saw a film of the downfall of their zeppelin in Lakehurst. Calm, poised, the ship went on its way, only to suddenly plummet straight down. If there remains no way out, then the destructive drive becomes completely indifferent as to what it never firmly established: as to whether it is directed against others or against its own subject.

68

Human beings look at you. – The outrage over atrocities decreases, the more that the ones affected are unlike normal readers, the more brunette, “dirty”, dago-like. This says just as much about the atrocity as about the observers. Perhaps the social schematism of perception in anti-Semites is so altered, that they cannot even see Jews as human beings. The ceaselessly recurrent expression that savages, blacks, Japanese resemble animals, or something like apes, already contains the key to the pogrom. The possibility of this latter is contained in the moment that a mortally wounded animal looks at a human being in the eye. The defiance with which they push away this gaze – “it’s after all only an animal” – is repeated irresistibly in atrocities to human beings, in which the perpetrators must constantly reconfirm this “only an animal”, because they never entirely believed it even with animals. The concept of human beings in repressive society is the parody of the notion that human beings were created in the image of God. The mechanism of “pathic projection” functions in such a manner that the power-brokers perceive only their own mirror image as human beings, instead of reflecting back what is human as precisely what is different. Murder is thus the attempt to displace, again and again, the madness of such false perception into reason, through greater madness: what is not seen as a human being and yet is a human being, is turned into a thing, so that it can no longer rebut the manic gaze through any sort of impulse.

69

Little people. – Those who deny objective historical forces find it all too easy to argue that the course of the war could have been different. Actually the Germans should have won: that they failed was the fault of the Führer's [Leader's] stupidity. But the decisive “stupidities” of Hitler, his refusal in the middle of the conflict to wage war on England, his attack on Russia and America, have their precise social meaning, which developed irresistibly from each seemingly reasonable step to the next until the catastrophe. Even if it were, strictly speaking, stupidity, this remains historically determinable: stupidity is above all no natural quality, but something socially produced and socially amplified. The ruling German cliques rushed towards war, because they were excluded from the leading imperialist positions of power. In this exclusion however lay also the reason for that provincialism, rusticity and self-deception, which made the politics of Hitler and Ribbentrop uncompetitive and their war a gamble. That they were so badly informed about the balance between the general economic and specifically British interests of the Tories and the strength of the Red Army as their own masses behind the cordon of the Third Reich, is not to be separated from the historical constitution of National Socialism, indeed from its power. The window of opportunity for a cunning first strike consisted solely of the fact that they themselves knew no better, and that was precisely the reason for its failure. Germany's industrial backwardness forced the politicians, who wanted to catch up at a single bound and for

that very reason were qualified as have-nots, back on their own narrow experience, that of the political façade. They saw nothing in front of them except cheering crowds and frightened negotiators; this obscured their insight into the objective power of the greater mass of capital facing them. It is the immanent revenge on Hitler that he, the executioner of liberal capitalist society, was according to its own index of consciousness too “liberal” to recognize that under the shell of liberalism abroad an irresistible dominion of industrial potential had formed. He, who saw through the untruth of liberalism like no other bourgeois, nevertheless did not see through the power behind him, precisely that social tendency, the drumbeat to which even Hitler marched. His consciousness regressed back to the standpoint of the inferior and short-sighted competitor, from which he started, in order to render a concern profitable in the shortest time possible. The hour of the Germans necessarily fell prey to such stupidity. For only those who were as inexperienced in the world economy as they were narrow-minded in world cultural and social trends could mobilize these for war, and their stubbornness for the sake of sheer activity devoid of any reflection. Hitler’s stupidity was a ruse of reason.

70

Opinion of the dilettante. – The Third Reich did not succeed in creating a single work of art, a single conceptual structure, which could have satisfied even the threadbare liberalistic demand of “niveau” [French: artistic level]. The demolition of humanity and the conservation of spiritual goods were as little compatible as air raid shelters and stork’s nests, and the culture renewed by battle looked from the very first day like the cities on the very last day: a heap of rubble. At least the population countered it with passive resistance. By no means however were presumably liberated cultural energies soaked up in the technical, political and military realms. The whole thing is truly barbarism and continues to triumph over its own Spirit [Geist]. One can observe this in strategy. The Fascist era did not cause it to blossom, but abolished it. The great military conceptions were inseparable from cunning, imagination: almost from private cleverness and initiative. They belonged to a discipline which was relatively independent from the production-process. What counted were specialized innovations, like using the diagonal battle formation or the accuracy of the artillery, to decide the issue. Something of bourgeois, free-standing, entrepreneurial virtue was in all that. Hannibal came from a line of merchants, not heroes, and Napoleon from the democratic revolution. The moment of bourgeois competition in the waging of war has been derailed in Fascism. It raised the foundational idea of strategy to an absolute, the utilization of the temporary disproportion between the elite of a nation organized for murder, and the total potential of the other. Yet having invented total war as a consequence of this idea, and abolishing the difference between the army and industry, they liquidated strategy. It is as outmoded as the sound of military bands and pictures of battleships. Hitler sought world conquest through concentrated terror. However the means he used were already unstrategic, the massing of overpowering material in specific places, the crude frontal breakthrough, the mechanical encirclement of opponents left behind the gaps in the front. This principle, totally and completely quantitative, positivistic, with no surprises, and thus everywhere “public” and fused with advertising, no longer sufficed. The Allies, infinitely wealthier in economic resources, needed only to trump German tactics to defeat Hitler. The stupor and listlessness of the war, the general defeatism, which extended the duration of the calamity, were conditioned by the decay of strategy. When all actions are mathematically calculated, they simultaneously take on the aspect of something stupid. As if in mockery of the thought that anyone at random ought to be able to run the state, the war was conducted, with the help of radar and artificial harbors, rather like how a schoolboy sticking flags in a map might have imagined it. Spengler hoped that the golden age of the engineers would succeed the downfall of the West. In the perspective of the latter,

however, the downfall of technics [Technik] itself is becoming visible.

71

Pseudomenos [Greek: liar]. – The magnetic power which ideologies exert over human beings, while they have become entirely threadbare, is to be explained beyond psychology, in the objectively determined decay of logical evidence as such. It has come to the point that lies sound like truth, and truth like lies. Every statement, every news report, every thought is preformed by the centers of the culture-industry. What does not bear the trusted mark of such preformation lacks credibility in advance, all the more so that the institutions of public opinion garnish what they send out with a thousand factual proofs and all the power of conviction which the total apparatus can bring to bear. The truth which would like to do something against this, bears not merely the character of something improbable, but is moreover too poor to break through in direct competition with the highly concentrated apparatus of dissemination. The German extreme sheds light on the entire mechanism. When the Nazis began to torture, they did not merely terrorize people both inside and outside the country, but were at the same time the more secure against exposure, the more savage the atrocities became. Its sheer unbelievability made it easy to disbelieve what, for the sake of peace, no one wanted to believe, while simultaneously capitulating before it. Those who trembled in fear told themselves that things were much exaggerated: well into the war, the details of the concentration camps were unwelcome in the English press. Every horror in the enlightened world turns necessarily into a horror story [Greuelmärchen]. For the untruth of the truth has a kernel, to which the unconscious eagerly [begierig anspricht] turns. It does not only wish for horror. Rather Fascism is in fact less “ideological”, to the extent it immediately proclaimed the principle of domination, which was elsewhere hidden. Whatever humane principles the democracies marshaled to oppose it, were effortlessly rebutted by pointing out that these do not concern all of humanity, but merely its false image, which Fascism is man enough to divest itself of. So desperate however have human beings become in their culture, that they are ready to cast off the frail signs of a better state of affairs, if only the world does their worse side the favor of confessing how evil it is. The political forces of opposition however are compelled to make use of the lie, if they do not wish to be completely extinguished as completely destructive. The deeper their difference from the existent, which nevertheless grants them shelter from a still worse future, the easier it is for the Fascists to nail them down as untruths. Only the absolute lie still has the freedom to say anything of the truth. The confusion of truth with lies, which makes it nearly impossible to maintain the difference between the two, and which makes holding on to the simplest cognition a labor of Sisyphus, announces the victory of the principle in logical organization, even though its military basis has been crushed. Lies have long legs: they are ahead of their time. The reconfiguration of all questions of truth into those of power, which truth itself cannot evade, if it does not wish to be annihilated by power, does not merely suppress the truth, as in earlier despotisms, but has reached into the innermost core of the disjunction of true and false, whose abolition the hired mercenaries of logic are anyway feverishly working towards. Thus Hitler, who no one can say if he died or escaped, lives on.

72

Second harvest. – Talent is above all perhaps nothing other than serendipitously [glücklich] sublimated rage, the capacity to transpose the incalculable energies once raised for the destruction of intractable objects into the concentration of patient meditation, and refusing to let the secret of objects slip away, very much as one refused to be swayed until the squeaking voice was torn from the mishandled toy. Who has failed to observe on the face of someone sunk in

thought, dissociated from practical objects, the same aggression which is otherwise activated in practice? Don't those engaged in production feel brutish, "working up a storm" in the midst of their frenzied ardor? Indeed isn't such rage required in order to emancipate oneself from the feeling of being prejudiced and from the rage of being prejudiced? Isn't what is reconciling precisely something wrested from what is destructive?

Today most people kick against the pricks [i.e. have running battles with the authorities].

How so many things are inscribed with gestures, and thereby with modes of conduct. Clogs – "floppies", slippers [in English] – are made so that one can slip them on one's feet without using the hands. They are monuments to the hatred of bending over.

The carefree gestures of adolescents testify to the fact that in repressive society freedom and insolence are the same thing, the attitude of "it doesn't cost me a dime", so long as they do not have to sell their labor. To show that they don't rely on anyone else and for that reason don't have to show any respect, they stick their hands into their pockets. The elbows however, which they turn outwards, are already prepared to strike anyone who crosses their path.

Germans are human beings who can't tell a lie without believing it themselves.

The phrase, "That's completely out of the question", which may have arisen in Berlin in the 1920s, is potentially already the [Nazi] seizure of power. For it pretends that the private will, founded at times on actual administrative rights, but mostly on sheer impudence, would immediately represent the objective necessity, which admits of no appeal. Fundamentally it is the refusal of the bankrupt negotiating partner to pay the other a penny, with the proud consciousness that there's nothing to be gotten from them, anyway. The legal trick of the shady lawyer harangues itself into heroic fortitude: the linguistic formula of usurpation. Such a bluff defines in equal measure the success and the fall of Nazism.

That the prayer for our daily bread has, in view of the existence of bread factories, become a mere metaphor and simultaneously lucid despair, says more against the possibility of Christianity than all the enlightened critiques of the life of Jesus.

Anti-Semitism is the rumor about the Jews.

Foreign loan-words are the Jews of language.

During an evening of bottomless sadness, I caught myself using a ridiculously wrong conjunctive of a not quite correct High German verb, which belonged to the dialect of my home town. I had not even perceived, let alone used, this endearingly wrong term since the first school-years. Melancholy, irresistibly pulling me into the abyss of childhood, awakened the old, powerlessly demanding sound out of the deep. Language threw back to me, like an echo, the humiliation which unhappiness had inflicted on me, by forgetting what I am.

The second part of [Goethe's] *Faust*, decried as abstruse and allegorical, overflows with common citations, to a degree matched only by [Schiller's] *William Tell*. The transparency and simplicity of a text has no direct relationship to the question of whether it becomes part of the cultural tradition. It may precisely be what is hidden away, continually stimulating renewed

interpretation, which certifies that a passage or a work is destined for posterity.

Every work of art is an unexecuted [abgedungene] crime.

The tragedies which keep themselves the furthest away from mere existence through “style”, are simultaneously those which most accurately preserve the memory of the demonology of savages, through collective processions, masks and sacrifices.

The poverty of the sunrise of Richard Strauss’ *Alpine Symphony* is caused not merely by banal sequences, but by its very splendor. For no sunrise, not even the one in the high mountains, is pompous, triumphal, stately, but each occurs faintly and diffidently, like the hope that everything may yet turn out well, and precisely in the inconspicuousness of the mightiest of all lights lies that which is so poignantly overwhelming.

The voice of every woman on the telephone signals whether the speaker is pretty or not. The tone reflects all the glances of admiration and desire she ever received back as confidence, independence, self-attentiveness. It expresses the Latinate double meaning of grace, gratitude and mercy. The ear perceives what is meant for the eye, because both live from the experience of the one beauty. It is instantly familiar from the very first: the familiar citation of what has never been seen.

If one wakes up in the middle of a dream, even the most troubling, one is disappointed and feels as if one had been cheated of what is best. Yet there are as few happy, fulfilled dreams as, in Schubert’s words, happy music. Even the most beautiful ones retain the blemish of their difference from reality, the consciousness of the mere appearance [Schein] of what they grant. That is why even the most beautiful dreams are somehow damaged. This experience is unsurpassable in the description of the nature theater of Oklahoma in Kafka’s *America*.

It is no different with happiness than with truth: one does not have it, but is in it. Indeed, happiness is nothing other than being encompassed, an after-image of the warm security of the mother. That is why no one can know that they are happy. In order to see happiness, they would have to step out of it: they would be like a newborn. Whoever says, they are happy, lies, by evoking it and thus sinning against happiness. Only those who say: I was happy, are true to it. The only relationship of consciousness to happiness is that of gratitude: this constitutes its incomparable dignity.

To children returning from vacation, the home is new, fresh, festive. But nothing has changed in it, since they left. Only because the duties were forgotten, of which every piece of furniture, every window, every lamp is otherwise a reminder, does the Sabbath peace once more repose, and for minutes one is at home in the multiplication table of rooms, chambers and corridors, as it will appear for the rest of one’s life only in lies. Not otherwise will the world appear, nearly unchanged, in the steady light of its day of celebration, when it no longer stands under the law of labor, and the duties of those returning home are as light as vacation play.

Since one can no longer pick flowers to adorn one’s beloved, as a sacrifice which is reconciled, by freely taking on itself the injustice to all in the ardor for the one, there is something malign about picking flowers. It suffices only to eternalize what is transient, by making it thinglike. Nothing however is more pernicious: the scentless bouquet, the official memorial kills what

remains, precisely by conserving it. The fleeting moment is capable of living in the murmur of forgetting, on which one day the ray of light falls, which makes it flash up; to want to possess the moment is already to have lost it. The profuse bouquet, which the child lugs home at the behest of the mother, could stand behind the mirror like the artificial ones sixty years ago, and in the end it is turned into the greedily snapped photos of the trip, in which the landscape is littered by those who saw nothing of it, grabbing as a souvenir, whatever fell unremembered into nothingness. Yet whoever sends flowers, enraptured, will involuntarily reach for those which appear mortal.

We can thank our life to the difference between the economic framework, late industrialism, and the political facade. To theoretical critique, the different is slight: everywhere the superficial character [Scheincharakter] of, say, public opinion, the primacy of the economy in actual decisions, can be displayed. For countless individuals however this thin and ephemeral husk is the basis of their entire existence. Precisely those who set store in their thinking and actions on change, as what is solely essential, owe their existence to what is inessential, to appearance [Schein], indeed to what according to the measure of the great historical laws of development came about as mere accident. Yet doesn't this affect the entire construction of essence and appearance? Measured by the concept, what is individual has in fact become as void as Hegel's philosophy anticipated: yet sub specie individuationis [Latin: in relation to the one eternal substance], absolute contingency – as something permitted, abnormally living on, as it were – is itself what is essential. The world is a system of horror, but that is why those who think of it entirely as a system do it too much honor, for its unifying principle is division, and it reconciles, by asserting the wholesale irreconcilability of the general and particular. Its essence [Wesen] is mischief [Unwesen]; its appearance [Schein] however, the lie, by virtue of which it continues to exist, is the placeholder of truth.

73

Deviation. – The official optimism of its adherents is a sign of the decay of the workers' movement. It seems to grow with the iron consolidation of the capitalist world. The inaugurators never considered success as guaranteed and for that reason said uncomfortable things to the workers' organizations their entire lives. Today, now that the position of the opponent and its reach over the consciousness of the masses has become infinitely stronger, the attempt to abruptly change this consciousness by renouncing agreement with it is considered reactionary. Those who link the critique of capitalism to that of the proletariat – which itself more and more merely reflects capitalist tendencies of development – are suspect. Across class boundaries, the negative element of thought is denounced. The wisdom of Kaiser William, "I won't tolerate doomsayers", has permeated the ranks of those he wished to crush. Whoever pointed out, for example, the complete lack of any spontaneous resistance by German workers, is told it's all in flux right now, so it's not possible to judge; whoever wasn't over there, amongst the poor German victims of the air raids – victims who had no qualms about air raids, as long as they were directed at others – should shut up, and anyway agrarian reforms are impending in Romania and Yugoslavia. The more however that the rational expectation disappears that the doom of society has been really averted, the more reverently they pray to the old names: mass, solidarity, party, class struggle. While no thought from the critique of political economy is upheld by the adherents of the Left platform; while its newspapers daily and naively trumpet theses which trump all revisionism, but mean absolutely nothing and could be replaced on demand tomorrow by exactly the opposite ones, the ears of those who follow the party line display musical acuity, as soon as there is the slightest hint of disrespect for slogans divested of theory. International

patriotism meshes seamlessly with hurrah-optimism. Those who are loyal are supposed pledge allegiance to a people, regardless of which one. In the dogmatic concept of a people, however, the acknowledgment of the context of destiny between human beings as the authority for action, the idea of a society emancipated from the compulsion of nature is implicitly repudiated.

Even hurrah-optimism is the perversion of a motif which has seen better days: of not being able to wait. By trusting in the condition of technics, change was thought of as immediately impending, as the next possibility. Conceptions rooted in long-range time scales, precautions, comprehensive popular-pedagogical measures, were suspected of sacrificing the goal they professed. At that time the autonomous will expressed itself in an optimism which defied death. What has remained of this is only the shell, the faith in the power and scope of organization, without the readiness to play one's own part, indeed permeated with destructive conviction that spontaneity may indeed no longer be possible, but the Red Army will conquer in the end. The insistent spot-check, that everyone should affirm that everything will turn out just fine, casts those who remain unyielding under suspicion of being defeatists and turncoats. In fairy-tales, the toad who came from the depths was always a harbinger of great happiness. Today, when the sacrifice of utopia looks as similar as its realization as the Antichrist looks like the Paraclete [the Redeemer], toad has become an epithet among those who themselves remain in the depths. Left optimism repeats the pernicious bourgeois superstition, one shouldn't speak of the devil but should focus on the positive. "You are not satisfied with this world? Then you can go search for another one" – this is the colloquial speech of socialist realism.

74

Mammoth. – Some years ago, the report circulated in American newspapers about the discovery of a well-preserved dinosaur in the state of Utah. It was emphasized that the specimen in question had outlived its species and was a million years younger than any hitherto known. Such reports, like the repulsively humorous craze for the Loch Ness monster and the King Kong film, are collective projections of the monstrous total state. One prepares for its horrors by getting used to giant images. In the absurd willingness to accept these, a humanity mired in powerlessness makes the desperate attempt to grasp the experience of what makes a mockery of every experience. But this does not exhaust the notion that prehistoric animals are still alive or at least went extinct just a few million years ago. The hope excited by the presence of what is most ancient, is that animal creation might survive the injustice done to them by human beings, if not humanity itself, and bring forth a better species, which finally succeeds. Zoological gardens originated from the same hope. They are laid out on the model of Noah's ark, for ever since they have existed, the bourgeois class has been waiting for the Biblical flood. The use of zoos for entertainment and instruction seems to be a thin pretext. They are allegories of the possibility that a specimen or a pair can defy the doom which befalls the species as a species. That is why the all too richly outfitted zoological gardens of major European cities seem like signs of decline: anything more than two elephants, two giraffes, and a hippopotamus is a bad sign. Nor is there any mercy in Hagenbeck's layout with trenches and without bars, which betray the ark, by masquerading as the salvation called Ararat. The more invisible the boundaries become, the more completely the freedom of the creatures is repudiated, whose gaze could be ignited by the longing for the wide distance. They relate to proper zoos what botanical gardens are to palm leaf gardens. The more that civilization preserves and transplants unspoiled nature, the more implacably the latter is controlled. One can afford to encompass ever greater units of nature and to leave the interior of such tracts seemingly intact, while previously the selection and domestication of particular pieces still testified to the necessity of conquering nature. The tiger which paces to and fro in its cage, mirrors back negatively through its confused state something

of humanity, but not however those who frolic behind impassable trenches. The antiquated beauty of [Alfred] Brehm's *Animal Life* rests on this point, that it describes all animals as if they were behind the bars of a zoo, even and precisely when citing the reports of imaginative researchers on life in the wilderness. The fact however that animals in cages really do suffer more than in open layouts, that Hagenbeck in fact represents the progress of humanity, attests to the unavoidability of imprisonment. It is a consequence of history. Zoological gardens in their authentic form are products of 19th century colonial imperialism. They blossomed following the opening up of the wild regions of Africa and Central Asia, which paid symbolic tribute in the form of animals. The value of the tribute was measured in terms of its exoticism, of its rarity. The development of technics cleared this away and abolished exoticism. The lion bred on the farm is as domesticated as the horse, which has long since become subject to birth-control. But the millenium has not dawned. Only the irrationality of culture itself, the nooks and crannies of the city, in which the walls, towers and bastions of zoos are crammed, are capable of preserving nature. The rationalization of culture, which opens a window to nature, thereby completely absorbs it and abolishes along with difference also the principle of culture, the possibility of reconciliation.

75

Cold hostel. – Ominously, in the song cycle whose midpoint went “I’m at the end of all my dreams”, Schubert’s disillusioned Romanticism designated solely the cemetery for the name of the inn. The fata morgana [Latin: mirage] of the land of idleness and ease is afflicted by rigor mortis. The guests and innkeeper are under a spell. The former are in a hurry. They would prefer to keep their hats on. Sitting on uncomfortable seats, they are behooved, by checks shoved at them and the moral pressure of those waiting in line behind them, to leave the place, which still bears the mocking name of a café, as quickly as possible. The innkeeper however, including all the assistants, is not who he or she is, but a salaried employee. Probably the decline of the hotel craft [Hotelwesens] dates back to the dissolution of the antique unity of hostel and bordello, whose memory lives on nostalgically in every glance at the smartly-dressed waitress and the tell-tale gestures of the maids. Since however the last ambiguity – even the one which still clings to the word “intercourse” – has been driven out of guest service, the most honorable sphere of circulation, things have become quite grim. Step by step, and always on irrefutable grounds, the means annihilate the ends. The division of labor, the system of automatic performances, ensures that noone is really interested in the comfort of the customer. Noone knows how to read a customer’s face, for what they might be in the mood for, because the waiter doesn’t know the dishes anymore, and even if one suggested something oneself, one would be reproved for overstepping one’s competence. Noone hurries to serve the patiently waiting guest, if the one who is responsible for this is busy: the concern for the institution which culminates in the prison, takes precedence – as in the clinic – over the subject which is administered as an object. That the “restaurant” is separated by a hostile abyss from the hotel, from the empty husk of the room, is self-evident, just as much as the time-limits on eating and in the unbearable “room service” [in English in original], from which one flees into the drugstore, to the public shop, behind whose uninviting counter a juggler with fried eggs, crispy bacon and ice-cubes proves to be the last friend of the guest. In the hotel however the porter brushes away every unforeseen question with a surly nod to another counter, usually closed. The objection that all of this is nothing but a caterwauling *laudatio temporis acti* [Latin: praise for times past] doesn’t hold water. Who would not prefer the Prague Blue Star or the Austrian Court in Salzburg, even if they had to cross the hall to enter the bathroom and if they were no longer awakened by unfailing central heating in the early morning? The nearer one moves to the sphere of immediate, bodily existence, the more

dubious progress becomes, the Pyrrhic victory of fetishized production. Sometimes such progress becomes afraid of itself, and it seeks to join back together the labor-functions which have been calculatingly separated, if only symbolically. Therein arise figures such as the “hostess” [in English in original], a synthetic female innkeeper. Just as she in reality takes care of nothing, has no real wherewithal to bring together the divided and frozen institutions, but is limited to the nugatory gesture of welcome and in any case overseeing the employees, so does she look – peevishly pretty, an upright, thin, strenuously youthful and faded woman. Her true purpose is to ensure that the entering guest does not even seek out the table by themselves, at which customers are processed. Her amenity is the reverse-picture of the dignity of the bouncer.

76

Gala dinner. – How progress and regression are intertwined today, can be gleaned from the concept of technical possibilities. The mechanical processes of reproduction have developed independently of what is reproduced and have become autonomous. They count as progressive, and anything which does not take part in them, as reactionary and narrow-minded. Such beliefs are promoted all the more, because the moment the super-gadgets remain unused, they threaten to turn into unprofitable investments. Since their development essentially concerns what under liberalism was called “packaging”, and at the same time crushing the thing itself under its own weight, which anyway remains external to the apparatus, the adaptation of needs to this packaging has as its consequence the death of the objective claim. The fascinated eagerness to consume the newest procedure, does not only create indifference towards what is transmitted, but comes to benefit stationary junk and calculated idiocy. It confirms the old kitsch in ever new paraphrases as haute nouveauté [French: high novelty]. The defiant and narrow-minded wish to respond to technical progress by buying nothing which isn’t a hit, to refuse to remain behind the production-process, irregardless of the meaning of what is produced. Everywhere, following the crowd, swarming around, and standing in lines substitutes for the somewhat rational need. The hatred of a radical, all too modern composition is scarcely less than that of a film which is already three months old, to which the newest one is preferred at any price, even though this last is not the slightest bit different. Just as the customers of mass society wish to be in on the scene, they can leave nothing out. If 19th century connoisseurs sat down only for one act of an opera, with the barbaric aside that they wouldn’t cut their dinner short for any spectacle, then meanwhile the barbarism, which has cut off the possibility of escape to dinner, cannot stuff itself enough with its own culture. Every program must be sat through to the end, every “best seller” [in English in original] must be read, every film must be seen during its first release in the movie theater. The abundance of what is consumed without choice becomes calamitous. It makes it impossible to find one’s way, and just as one looks for a guide [Führer: literally “leader” or “guide”, but a pun on Hitler’s official title] in a monstrous department store, so too does the population, penned in by attractions, wait for a leader of their own.

77

Auction. – Unfettered technics eliminates luxury, not by declaring privilege as a human right, but by severing the possibility of fulfillment in the midst of raising general living standards. The express train which races through the continent in three nights and two days is a miracle, but the trip in it has nothing of the faded glory of the train bleu [French: blue train]. What comprised the voluptuousness of travel, which began by waving farewell through the open window, the friendly concern of those who accepted tips, the ceremonial meals, the unalloyed feeling of being favored, which does not take anything away from anyone else, has disappeared along with the elegant people who were wont to promenade before the departure on old-fashioned platforms,

and who will henceforth be sought for in vain in the halls of the most prestigious hotels. That the steps of the train are drawn in, signifies to travelers on even the most expensive express that they must obey the terse instructions of the company like prisoners. They are given indeed the exactly calculated value for their money, but nothing which isn't already included in the statistically average claim. Knowing such conditions, whoever would have the idea of setting out with his beloved, as formerly was done from Paris to Nice? But one cannot shake off the suspicion that even the deviant luxury, which noisily proclaims itself as such, has an element of something capricious, of something artificially gotten up. As per Veblen's theory, it is more about permitting those who can pay, to prove to themselves and others their status, than about meeting their in any case increasingly undifferentiated needs. While the Cadillac is surely superior to the Chevrolet, since it costs more, this superiority, otherwise than in the old Rolls Royce, is derived from a total plan, which cleverly equips the first with better cylinders, brakes, and accessories the second with worse ones, without changing anything in the basic schema of the mass product: one need only make small changes in production to transform a Chevrolet into a Cadillac. Thus luxury is being hollowed out. For in the middle of general fungibility, happiness clings without exception to what is not fungible. No exertion of humanity, no formal reasoning can alter the fact that the clothing which shimmers like a fairy-tale is worn by the one and only, not by twenty-thousand others. Under capitalism, the utopia of the qualitative – what by virtue of its difference and uniqueness does not enter into the ruling exchange relationship – flees into the fetish character. But this promise of happiness in luxury presupposes once more privilege, economic inequality, precisely a society based on fungibility. That is why the qualitative itself turns into a special case of quantification, the not-fungible into the fungible, luxury into comfort and in the end into senseless gadgets. In such a circle the principle of luxury goes to pieces even without the leveling tendency of mass society, over which the reactionaries sentimentally fuss and fume. The inner composition of luxury is not indifferent to what useless things, through their total embedding in the realm of usefulness, experience. Its remainders, even objects of the greatest quality, already look like junk. The delicacies with which the super-rich fill up their homes, call out helplessly for a museum, yet this latter would, as per Valery's insight, kill the meaning of statues and paintings; only their mother, architecture, points to their proper place. Held fast however in the houses of those to which nothing binds them, they are a slap in the face of the mode of existence which private property has developed into. If the antiquities with which millionaires before the WW I surrounded themselves still mattered, because they raised the idea of the bourgeois dwelling to a dream – the fearful dream – without exploding it, then the chinoiseries [French: ticky-tacky luxuries] which they meanwhile have turned to, sullenly tolerate the private owner, who is only at ease in the light and air which are locked away by luxury. Functionalist luxury is a nonsense, on which false Russian princes who work as interior decorators for Hollywood may earn their keep. The lines of advanced taste converge in asceticism. The child reading *A Thousand and One Nights*, intoxicated by rubies and emeralds, asked the question, what indeed is so wonderful about the possession of such stones, given that they are described not as a means of exchange, but as a hoard. The entire dialectic of enlightenment is at work in this question. It is as reasonable as unreasonable: reasonable, in becoming aware of idolization, unreasonable, in turning against its own end, which is present only there, where it is not held accountable to any authority, or indeed to any intention: no happiness without fetishism. By and by, however, the skeptical child's question has spread to every luxury, and even naked sensual pleasure is not immune to it. To the aesthetic eye, which represents what is not useful against utility, what is aesthetic – when violently cut off from purpose – turns into what is anti-aesthetic, because it expresses violence: luxury turns into brutality. In the end it becomes swallowed up by drudgery or conserved as a caricature. Whatever

of the beautiful flourishes under horror, is a mockery and ugly to itself. Nevertheless its ephemeral shape stands for the avoidability of horror. Something of this paradox lies in the basis of all art; today it is expressed in the fact that art still exists at all. The firmly held idea of the beautiful demands, that happiness be cast off and at the same time maintained.

78

Over the mountains. – Snow White expresses, more perfectly than any other fairy-tale, the idea of melancholy. Its pure picture is the queen, who gazes into the snow through the window and wishes for her daughter in terms of the lifeless, animated beauty of the snow-flakes, the black sorrow of the window-frame, the stab of bleeding; and then dying in childbirth. The happy ending takes away nothing from this. As the wished-for granting is really death, the salvation remains appearance [Schein]. For the deeper perception does not believe that she, who lies like someone sleeping in a glass coffin, was awakened. Isn't the poison bite of apple, dislodged from her throat by the bumpiness of the journey, rather than a means of murder, the remainder of the unrealized, exiled life, from which only now she recovers, since no deceiving emissaries lure her any more? And how frail sounds the happy end: "Then Snow White found him good and went with him." How it is repealed by the wicked triumph over wickedness. Thus when we hope for salvation, a voice says to us, that hope is in vain, and yet it is above all this hope, powerless, alone, which permits us to draw another breath. All contemplation can do no more, than patiently delineate the ambiguity of melancholy in ever new figures and approaches. The truth is not to be separated from the delusion that one day, out of the figures of appearance [Schein], there would nonetheless be salvation.

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Intellectus sacrificium intellectus. [Latin: Intellectuals sacrifice to intellectuals]. To presume that thinking would profit from the decline of the emotions through increasing objectivity, or that it would remain indifferent to such, is itself an expression of the process of dumbing down. The social division of labor recoils on human beings, however much the former may facilitate the accomplishments required of the latter. The faculties, which develop through reciprocal effect, shrivel once when they are torn from each other. Nietzsche's aphorism, "The degree and kind of sexuality of human beings reaches into the furthest peak of their Spirit [Geistes]" strikes at more than just a psychological state of affairs. Because even the most distant objectifications of thought are nourished by the drives, to destroy the latter is to destroy the former's own condition. Isn't memory inseparable from the love, which wants to preserve, what nevertheless passes away? Doesn't every impulse of the imagination arise from the wish, which transcends the existent in all fidelity, by displacing its elements? Indeed isn't the simplest perception modeled on the fear of what is perceived, or the desire for such? It is true that the objective meaning of cognitions has, with the objectification of the world, separated itself ever further from the basis of the drives; it is true that cognition fails, where its objectified achievement remains under the baleful spell of the wishes. However if the drives are not at the same time sublated in the thought, which escapes such a baleful spell, then there can be no cognition anymore, and the thought which kills the wish, its father, will be overtaken by the revenge of stupidity. Memory is tabooed as uncalculable, unreliable, irrational. The intellectual asthma which results from this, which culminates in the breakdown of the historical dimension of consciousness, immediately debases the synthetic apperception which, according to Kant, is not to be separated from the "reproduction in the imagination," from commemoration. Imagination, today attributed to the realm of the unconscious and defamed in cognition as a childish, injudicious rudiment, creates alone that indispensable relation between objects, out of which all judgement originates: if it is

driven out, then the judgement, the actual act of cognition, is exorcised as well. The castration of perception, however, by a controlling authority, which refuses it any desiring anticipation, thereby compels it into the schema of the powerless repetition of what is already familiar. That nothing more is actually allowed to be seen, amounts to the sacrifice of the intellect. Just as, under the unrestrained primacy of the production process, the wherefore of reason disappears, until it degenerates into the fetishism of itself and of externalized power, so too does it reduce itself down to an instrument and comes to resemble its functionaries, whose thought-apparatus only serves the purpose, of hindering thought. Once the final emotional trace is effaced, what solely remains of thinking is absolute tautology. The utterly pure reason of those who have completely divested themselves of the capacity “to imagine an object even without its presence,” converges with pure unconsciousness, with idiocy in the most literal sense, for measured by the overweening realistic ideal of a category-free actuality, every cognition is false, and true only if the question of true or false is inapplicable. That this is a question of wide-ranging tendencies, is evident at every step of the scientific enterprise, which is on the point of subjugating the rest of the world, like so many defenseless ruins.

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Diagnosis. – That the world has meanwhile turned into the system which the Nazis unjustly berated as the lax Weimar Republic, is evident in the preestablished harmony between institutions and those who they serve. A humanity is secretly emerging, which hungers for the compulsion and restriction, which the nonsensical continuation of domination imposes. These human beings however have, favored by the objective social arrangement, seized hold of the functions which by rights ought to generate dissonance against the preestablished harmony. Among all the cashiered slogans, one stands out: “pressure produces counter-pressure” – yet if the former becomes powerful enough, then the latter disappears, and society appears to want to contribute considerably to entropy, by a deadly equilibrium of tensions. The scientific enterprise has its exact equivalent in the kind of minds [Geistesart], which it harnesses: they need hardly do any violence to themselves, proving eager and willing administrators of their own selves. Even when they prove to be quite humane and reasonable beings outside of the enterprise, they freeze into pathic stupidity the moment they think professionally. Far from perceiving such prohibitions on thought as something hostile, the candidates – and all scientists are candidates – feel relieved. Because thinking burdens them with a subjective responsibility, which their objective position in the production-process prevents them from fulfilling, they renounce it, shake a bit and run over to the other side. The displeasure of thinking soon turns into the incapacity to think at all: people who effortlessly invent the most refined statistical objections, when it is a question of sabotaging a cognition, are not capable of making the simplest predictions of content ex cathedra [Latin: from the chair, e.g. Papal decision]. They lash out at the speculation and in it kill common sense. The more intelligent of them have an inkling of what ails their mental faculties, because the symptoms are not universal, but appear in the organs, whose service they sell. Many still wait in fear and shame, at being caught with their defect. All however find it raised publicly to a moral service and see themselves being recognized for a scientific asceticism, which is nothing of the sort, but the secret contour of their weakness. Their resentment is socially rationalized under the formula: thinking is unscientific. Their intellectual energy is thereby amplified in many dimensions to the utmost by the mechanism of control. The collective stupidity of research technicians is not simply the absence or regression of intellectual capacities, but an overgrowth of the capacity of thought itself, which eats away at the latter with its own energy. The masochistic malice [Bosheit] of young intellectuals derives from the malevolence [Bösartigkeit] of their illness.

Large and small. – One of the most disastrous transfers from the realm of economic planning into that of theory, which is actually no longer distinguished from the architectonic of the whole, is the belief that intellectual labor can be administered according to the criteria of whether what one is working on is necessary or reasonable. A ranking hierarchy of urgency is established. But to rob thought of the moment of involuntariness, is precisely to cashier its necessity. It reduces itself to detachable, interchangeable dispositions. Just as in the war economy, where priorities are decided in the distribution of raw materials, in the production of this or that type of weapon, so too is a hierarchy of importance creeping into the construction of theory, with a preference given for especially up to date or especially relevant themes, and disregard or indulgent toleration for what is secondary, which may pass merely as padding of the basic facts, as finesse. The notion of what is relevant is produced according to an organizational point of view, that of contemporaneity measured by the objectively most powerful tendency of the day. The schematization into important and subsidiary subscribes to the form of the value-order of ruling praxis, even when it contradicts such as content. In the origins of progressive philosophy, in Bacon and Descartes, the cult of the important is already at work. In the end, however, this latter reveals something unfree, something regressive. Importance is represented by the dog on a walk, which spends minutes sniffing at some random spot, unyielding, earnest, reluctant, and then satisfies its bodily needs, scrapes the ground with its feet and runs along, as if nothing had happened. In prehistoric times life and death may have depended on this; after millenia of domestication it has turned into a nutty ritual. Who is not reminded of this, when watching a serious committee determining the urgency of problems, before the staff of coworkers is given a carefully designated and time-tabled list of tasks. Everything of importance has something of such anachronistic obstinacy, and as a criterium of thought, it is tantamount to the latter's ensorceled fixation, to the renunciation of self-constitution. The great themes however are nothing other than the primordial odors, which cause the animal to hold still, and where possible to produce them once more. This does not mean that the hierarchy of importance is to be ignored. Just as its philistinary mirrors that of the system, so too is it saturated with all the latter's violence and stringency. However thought should not repeat it, but dissolve it through its completion. The division of the world into primary and subsidiary matters, which has always served only to neutralize the key phenomena of the most extreme social injustice as mere exceptions, should be followed to the point that it is convicted of its own untruth. It, which turns everything into objects, must itself become the object of thought, instead of steering the latter. The great themes will also appear, though scarcely in the traditional "thematic" sense, but rather refractedly and eccentrically. The barbarism of immediate magnitude [Grösse] remains philosophy's legacy of its earlier alliance with administrators and mathematicians: what does not bear the stamp of the overinflated world-historical bustle, is consigned to the procedures of the positive sciences. Philosophy behaves therein like bad painting, which imagines that the dignity of a work and the fame which it garners, depend on the dignity of the painted object; a picture of the Battle of Leipzig would be worth more than a chair in oblique perspective. The difference between the conceptual medium and the artistic one changes nothing in this bad naivete. If the process of abstraction strikes all conceptual formation with the delusion of magnitude [Grösse], then what is also preserved in this, through the distance of the action-object, through reflection and transparency, is the antidote: the self-critique of reason is its ownmost ethics [eigenste Moral]. Its opposite in the most recent phase of a thought which disposes over itself is nothing other than the abolition of the subject. The gesture of theoretical labor, which arranges themes according to their importance, neglects those doing the laboring. The development of an

increasingly smaller number of technical capacities is supposed to suffice, to adequately equip them to deal with every assigned task. The thinking subjectivity is however exactly what does not let itself be fitted into a heteronomous set of tasks arranged from above: it is adequate to the latter only insofar as it does not belong to such, and its existence is thereby the prerequisite of every objectively binding truth. The sovereign matter-of-factness, which sacrifices the subject to the investigation of truth, rejects at once truth and objectivity itself.

82

Three steps from the body. [colloquial expression meaning, to keep one's distance] – Positivism disparages once more the distance of thought to a reality, which reality itself no longer tolerates. By not wanting the hushed-up thought to be anything more than something provisional, a mere abbreviation of what is factually grasped under it, its independence vis-a-vis reality disappears, as well as the energy to penetrate the latter. The thought which actually breaks into empirical life, can only happen at a distance from life. While thought relates to facts and moves by critiquing them, it moves no less through firmly held difference. It thereby expresses exactly what is, because it is never entirely just what it expresses. Essential to it is an element of exaggeration, of shooting beyond things, of dissociation from the weight of what is factual, by virtue of which it completes the determination of being, at once strictly and freely, instead of merely reproducing it. Every thought resembles therein play, with which Hegel no less than Nietzsche compared with the work of the Spirit [Geistes]. What is unbarbaric in philosophy rests on the tacit consciousness of that element of irresponsibility, of blessedness, which stems from the fleetingness of thought, which continually escapes, what it judges. Such excessiveness is suspect to the positivistic Spirit and handed over to folly. The difference from facts turns into mere incorrectness, the moment of play into a luxury, in a world where the intellectual functions must account for every minute of their time with a stopwatch. However as soon as thought denies its unsurmountable distance and wishes to prove its literal correctness with a thousand subtle arguments, it trips itself up. If it falls out of the medium of the virtual, of anticipation, which cannot be fulfilled by any single actuality, in short, if it seeks to become a simple statement rather than a meaning, then everything which it states becomes in fact false. Its apologetics, inspired by insecurity and a bad conscience, can be rebutted at every step by recourse to that non-identity, which it does not wish to acknowledge, and which nevertheless alone makes it thought. If it wanted to make excuses for distance as if it was a privilege, it would do no better, but would proclaim two sorts of truths, that of facts and that of concepts. That would dispel the truth and denounce thinking. Distance is no security-zone but a field of tension. It manifests itself not so much in slackening the truth-claim of concepts, as in the tenderness and fragility of thinking. What is called for in regards to positivism is neither cantankerousness nor putting on airs, but rather the cognitive-critical proof of the impossibility of a coincidence between the concept and what fulfills it. The hunt for the account-balancing [Ineinander-Aufgehen] of what cannot be reduced to the same denominator is not the perennially striving toil, which beckons to salvation, but naive and inexperienced. What positivism reproaches thinking for, thought has known and forgotten a thousand times over, and only in such knowing and forgetting does it become thinking. That distance of thought from reality is itself nothing other than the precipitate of history in concepts. Operating with the latter without distance would be, amidst all its resignation, or perhaps precisely because of such, the affair of children. For thought must aim beyond its object, precisely because it does not entirely arrive at such, and by assuming that it does arrive, positivism is uncritical, imagining that it carries there out of mere conscientiousness. The transcending thought takes its own inadequacy into account more thoroughly than one steered by the scientific control-apparatus. It extrapolates, however hopelessly, in order to master what is unavoidably too little, by virtue of the overtaxed

exertion of what is too much. The illegitimate absolutism which philosophy is reproached for, the allegedly conclusive stamp, originates precisely in the abyss of relativity. The exaggerations of speculative metaphysics are scars of reflecting understanding, and solely what is not yet proven unveils proof as tautology. By contrast the immediate caveat of relativity, what confines itself, what remains in the same delimited conceptual realm, deprives itself through such caution of precisely the limit, which to think is, in Hegel's magnificent insight, the same as to cross. The relativists would accordingly be the true – the bad – absolutists and moreover the bourgeoisie, who would like to insure their knowledge [Erkenntnis: cognition] like property, only to lose it all the more thoroughly. Solely the claim of the unconditional, the spring over the shadow, does justice to what is relative. By taking untruth on itself, it leads to the border of truth in the concrete consciousness of the conditionality of human knowledge [Erkenntnis: cognition].

83

Vice-President. – Advice to intellectuals: don't let yourselves be represented. The fungibility of all accomplishments and human beings and the belief derived from this, that everyone should be able to do everything, prove in the midst of the existent to be a fetter. The egalitarian ideal of interchangeability [Vertretbarkeit: fungibility] is a fraud, if it is not supported by the principle of revocability and accountability to the "rank and file" [in English in original]. The ones who are most powerful are those who do the least themselves, while shifting as much of the burden as they can onto others, to who they lend their name while pocketing the advantage. It seems like collectivism and amounts only to making oneself seem too good, of being exempt from labor by virtue of access to its alienated form. To be sure, interchangeability has an objective basis in material production. The quantification of labor processes diminishes over time the difference between the general director and the service-employee in the gasoline station. It is a miserable ideology, to claim that under present conditions the administration of a trust requires any more intelligence, experience, and even training than reading a manometer. While this ideology is tenaciously upheld in material production, the Spirit [Geist] is subjugated to its opposite. This is the doctrine, since gone to the dogs, of the universitas literarum [Latin: world of knowledge], of the equality of all in the republic of sciences, wherein every person does not merely check up on everyone else, but is supposed to be qualified to do what anyone else does, equally well. Interchangeability subjugates thought to the same procedure just as exchange does to things. What is incommensurable is eliminated. Since however thought must first of all critique the comprehensive commensurability which stems from the exchange-relationship, this commensurability, as the intellectual [geistiges] relations of production, turns against the productive forces. In the material realm interchangeability is what is already possible, and non-interchangeability is the pretext, which hinders it; in theory, which ought to see through such a quid pro quo [Latin: something for something else], interchangeability allows the the apparatus to proceed even where its objective opposite might be located. Non-interchangeability alone could halt the integration of the Spirit [Geistes] into the ranks of employees. The gratuitously self-evident demand, that every intellectual achievement should be mastered by every qualified member of the organization, turns the most narrow-minded scientific technician into the standard of the Spirit [Geistes]: what precisely gives the latter the capacity to critique their own technification? Thus does the economy cause that process of equalization, which it elsewhere protests with the gesture "stop thief". The question of individuality must be posed anew in the epoch of its liquidation. While the individuated [Individuum], like all individualistic production processes, remains behind the state of technics and is historically outmoded, what devolves to it, as the condemned against the victor, is in turn the truth. For it alone preserves, in however a distorted manner, the trace of what gives all technification its authorization, the consciousness of

which this technification nevertheless at once cuts itself off from. By proving that unrestrained progress is not immediately identical with that of humanity, its opposite is capable of granting progress asylum. A pencil and eraser are of more use to thought than a staff of assistants. Those who wish neither to hand themselves over wholesale to the individualism of intellectual production, nor to commit themselves headlong to the collectivism of an egalitarian interchangeability which is contemptuous of human beings, must rely on free and solidaristic cooperative labor under common responsibility. Anything else would sell out the Spirit [Geist] to forms of business and thereby ultimately to the latter's interests.

84

Timetable. – Few things differentiate the mode of life appropriate to intellectuals so deeply from that of the bourgeoisie than the fact that the former do not recognize the alternative between labor and pleasure. The labor which need not, in order to cope with reality, initially do all the evil to its subject, which it later does to others, is pleasure even in the desperate exertion. The freedom, which it means, is the same which bourgeois society reserves solely for recuperation and through such regimentation at once takes back. Conversely, those who know of freedom find everything about what this society tolerates as pleasure unbearable, and outside of their work, which to be sure includes what the bourgeoisie displace to the holidays as “culture”, refuse to engage in substitute pleasures. “Work while you work, play while you play” [in English in original] – this counts as one of the founding principles of repressive self-discipline. The parents who wanted their children to bring home good grades as a matter of prestige, could least bear it when the latter read too long at night or, in the parents' judgement, intellectually overexerted themselves. Yet out of their foolishness spoke the genius of their class. The doctrine drilled in since Aristoteles, of moderation as the virtue befitting reason, is among other things an attempt, to establish the socially necessary division of human beings into functions independent of each other so firmly that none of these functions would get the idea of crossing over to others and calling to mind actual human beings. One could no more imagine Nietzsche in an office, the secretary answering the telephone in the foyer, sitting at a desk until five, than playing golf after a full day's work. Under the pressure of society, only the cunning intertwining of happiness and labor would leave the door open for actual experience. It is constantly less tolerated. Even the so-called intellectual occupations are being utterly divested of pleasure, by their increasing resemblance to business. Atomization advances not only between human beings, but also in the single individual [Individuum: individuated], in its life-spheres. No fulfillment may be attached to labor, which would otherwise lose its functional obscurity in the totality of purpose, no spark of sensibility [Besinnung] may fall in free time, because it might spring into the work-world and set it aflame. While labor and pleasure are becoming more and more similar in their structure, they are at the same time separated ever more strictly by invisible lines of demarcation. Pleasure and Spirit [Geist] are being driven out of both in equal measure. In one as the other, brute seriousness and pseudo-activity prevails.

85

Muster. – Whoever is engaged in praxis, as it is called, is pursuing interests, is realizing plans, automatically turns the human beings they come into contact with into friends and enemies. By looking at them as if deciding how they fit into their intentions, one reduces them in advance, as it were, to objects: those ones are useful, the others are not. Every divergent opinion appears to the reference-system of predetermined purposes, without which no praxis could manage, as burdensome resistance, sabotage, intrigue; every agreement, even if it came from the most despicable interest, turns into support, something of use, a testimony of alliance. Thus

impoverishment appears in relation to other human beings: the capacity to perceive the other as such and not as a function of one's own will, above all however that of fruitful opposition, the possibility of going beyond oneself through the imbrication [Einbegreifen] of what contradicts, withers away. It is replaced by a judgmental knowledge of human beings, for which even the best are ultimately the lesser evil, and the worst, are not the greatest. This manner of reaction however, the schema of all administration and "personnel policy", already tends, before any political formation of will and commitment of exclusive political tickets, towards fascism. Whoever has once made it their business to judge acceptability, views the person being judged, to a certain extent out of technological necessity, as an insider or outsider, one of one's own people or a foreigner, accomplice or victim. The stiffly scrutinizing, ensorcelled and ensorceling gaze, which is typical of all leaders of horror, has its model in the appraising one of the manager, who tells the applicant to take a seat and illuminating the latter's face, so that it pitilessly disintegrates into the light of usefulness and the dark of what is objectionable or unqualified. The end is the medical investigation, according to the alternatives: assignment in the labor-force or liquidation. The New Testament sentence, "Whoever is not for me, is against me" was from time immemorial spoken from the heart of anti-Semitism. It is a fundamental feature of domination, that everyone who does not identify with such, is relegated for the sake of mere difference to the enemy camp: it is not for nothing that Catholicism is merely the Greek word for the Latin totality, which the Nazis have realized. It means the equalization of what is different, whether "deviation" or another race, with the enemy. Nazism has therein achieved the historical consciousness of itself: Carl Schmitt defined the essence of the political precisely by the categories of enemy and friend. Progress to such consciousness makes the regression to the child's mode of behavior – children either like things, or are afraid – to its own. The a priori reduction to the friend-enemy relationship is one of the Ur-phenomena of recent anthropology. Freedom would not be choosing between black and white, but stepping out of such a proscriptive choice.

86

Little Hans. – Intellectuals, and especially those inclined to philosophy, are cut off from material praxis: disgust for it drove them to deal with so-called intellectual things. But material praxis is not only the prerequisite of their own existence, but also rests on the basis of the world, with whose critique their labor coincides. If they know nothing of the basis, then they end up in the void. They stand before the choice, of being informed or of turning their backs on what they detest. If they inform themselves, then they do violence to themselves, thinking against their impulses and, on top of everything else, are in danger of becoming as sordid as what they are dealing with, for the economy is no joke, and whoever wishes even to understand it, must "think economically". If they however do not involve themselves, they hypostatize their Spirit [Geist], which was above all formed on economic reality, on the abstract exchange-relation, as something absolute, while this latter could become Spirit [Geist] solely in the sensibility of its own conditionality. The intellectual is thereby seduced into vainly and disconnectedly substituting the reflex for the thing. The fatuous-deceptive importance, which the public cultural enterprise assigns to intellectual products, adds stones to the wall, which locks cognition away from economic brutality. The isolation of the Spirit [Geist] from business helps the intellectual business to become a comfortable ideology. The dilemma reaches deep into the most subtle reactions of the intellectual mode of conduct. Only those who remain pure to a certain extent, have enough hate, nerves, freedom and mobility to withstand the world, but precisely by virtue of the illusion of purity – for they live in the "third person" – they allow it to triumph not merely the world outside, but in the innermost cells of their thought. Whoever however knows the

business all too well, thereby unlearns [verlernen: to forget, unlearn] to recognize it; the capacity of distinction vanishes from them, and they are threatened by the relapse into barbarism, just as others are threatened by the fetishism of culture. That intellectuals are at the same time beneficiaries of the bad society and yet those, on whose socially unnecessary labor it largely depends, as to whether a society emancipated from utility succeeds – this is by no means a contradiction which is once and for all acceptable and thus irrelevant. It gnaws unceasingly at its objective quality. Whatever intellectuals do, is wrong. They experience drastically, as a life and death issue, the ignominious alternative, which late capitalism secretly poses to all of its members: to become just another adult or to remain a child.

87

Fight club. [Ringverein: wrestling-club] – There is a type of intellectual, who is all the more thoroughly to be distrusted, the more they curry favor through honesty of toil, “intellectual seriousness”, and even modest sobriety. These are the fighters, who are in a permanent struggle with themselves, who cast their decisions in terms of the military mobilization of the entire person. But things aren’t so terrible as that. Their radical stance, of putting everything on the line, has nevertheless a reliable armature at its disposal, whose dextrous deployment in the battle with the angel punishes the former as a lie: one need only page through the books of publishers like Eugene Diederich or in those of a certain kind of cringingly emancipated theologians. The barrel-chested vocabulary casts doubt on the “fairness” [in English in original] of the fight match arranged and fought out by inwardness. The expressions all refer to war, life-threatening danger, actual annihilation, but they describe mere procedures of reflection, which indeed may have been linked to a fatal outcome for Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, who the fighters like to quote, but certainly not however their unelected followers, who claim to be at risk. While they credit the sublimation of the struggle for existence – that of spiritualization and that of courage – to their redoubled honor, the moment of danger is simultaneously neutralized by internalization, debasing it to an ingredient of a smugly rooted, hale and hearty world-view. The external world is regarded from an indifferent-superior vantage point, because due to the seriousness of the decision, it doesn’t even enter into the equation; it is left as it is, and in the end even acknowledged. The savage expressions are artsy-craftsy decoration like the cowry-shells of the female gymnasts, whose company the fighters are so partial to. The sword-dance is decided in advance. It doesn’t matter if the categorical imperative has the victory or the right of the individual – if the candidate succeeds in freeing themselves from personal belief in God or recovers it again, if they withstand the abyss of being or the harrowing experience of the senses, they fall on their feet. For the power which directs the conflicts, the ethos of responsibility and integrity, is always cast in an authoritarian mold, a mask of the state. As long as they choose the appropriate goods, then everything is just fine. If they come to rebellious conclusions, then they cater to and trump the demand for powerful, independent men. In every case they certify like good sons the office, which could hold them to account, and in whose name nevertheless the entire internalized trial was actually conducted: the gaze, under which they seem to be brawling like two ill-mannered school-boys, is from the start the one which punishes. No fight match without referees: the entire brawl is staged by a society, which has migrated into the individuated [Individuum], simultaneously supervising the battle and participating in it. It triumphs all the more fatally, the more oppositional the results are: priests and senior school-masters, whose conscience compels them to confess to world-views which get them in trouble with the authorities, always sympathize with persecution and counter-revolution. Just as self-confirming conflicts have an illusory element in them, so too is the bogusly staged dynamic of self-torment really repression on the fly. They developed the entire spiritual enterprise only because they are

not permitted to discharge their illusion and rage outside, and are prepared to transform the battle with the inner enemy once more into the deed, which according to them was there in the beginning. Their prototype is Luther, the inventor of inwardness, who threw his bottle of ink at the body of the devil, who does not exist, already meaning the peasants and Jews. Only the crippled Spirit [Geist] needs self-hatred in order to demonstrate its spiritual essence, which is untruth, with physical violence.

88

Simple Simon. – That the individual is being liquidated lock, stock and barrel, is still too optimistic a thought. The salvation of the individual being [Einzelwesen] would lie in the abolition of the monad through solidarity, in its binding negation, for only in its relation to the generality would the former become something specific. The contemporary condition is far distant from this. The calamity occurs not as the radical extirpation of what has been, but rather by ignominiously pulling down what is historically condemned and dragging it along powerlessly as dead, neutralized. In the middle of standardized and administered human units the individuated [Individuum] continues to exist. It is even protected and wins monopoly-value. But it is in truth still merely the function of its own uniqueness, an exhibition piece like the fetuses in jars, at which children once stared and grinned. Since it no longer leads an independent economic existence, its character ends up in contradiction with its objective social role. Precisely because of this contradiction, it is sheltered in nature-parks, enjoyed in idle contemplation. The individualities imported into America, which through importation are already no longer such, are called “colorful personality” [in English in original]. Their eager uninhibited moods, their wacky ideas, their “originality”, even if this was only a special ugliness, even their mangled accent devalues what is human as the costume of a clown. Since they are rendered as subalterns in the universal mechanism of competition, and can only adapt themselves to the market and survive via their paralyzed otherness, they fall passionately into the privilege of their self and exaggerate themselves, to the point of completely uprooting what they stood for. They cleverly flaunt on their naivete, which, as they quickly discover, endear them to the powers that be. They sell themselves as heart-warmers in the commercial cold, flatter through aggressive jokes, which are masochistically enjoyed by their protectors, and confirm through their comic lack of dignity, the solemn dignity of the host-nation. The graeculi [Latin: Greek expatriate teachers of Latin] may have behaved similarly in the Roman Empire. Those who put their individuality on sale, pass the sentence of judgement which society has pronounced on them – as their own voluntary judges – as their own. Thus they also objectively justify the injustice, which they experience. They underbid the general regression as private contractors of the regressive, and even their loud resistance is mostly only a more devious means of adaptation to weakness.

89

Blackmail. – Whoever won't take any advice, can't be helped, said the bourgeoisie, with advice which cost nothing, wishing to buy themselves out of helping while at the same time winning power over the needy person who came to them. But contained therein was at least the appeal to reason, which was thought of in the same way by the supplicant and the one who declined to help, and which at a distance recalled justice: whoever followed clever advice, might occasionally find a way out. That's all over. Those who cannot help, should therefore not give advice: in a social order, in which all mouse-holes are stopped up, mere advice turns immediately into condemnation. It is inevitably tantamount to telling the supplicant to do exactly whatever is left of their ego most violently rejects. Wiser for a thousand previous situations, they know all too well what sort of advice they will receive, and come only when ingenuity has failed and

something must happen. They are not improved by this. Whoever once sought advice and finds no help anymore, above all those who are weaker, appear in advance to be extortionists, whose mode of conduct is spreading irresistibly along with the great trusts. One can observe this most clearly in a certain type of person who is committed to help, who looks out for the interests of needy and powerless friends, and yet who takes on the aspect of something darkly ominous in their zeal. Even their finest virtue, selflessness, is ambiguous. While they are right to intervene for those who should not fall into ruin, behind the insistent “you must help” stands the tacit appeal to the hegemony of collectives and groups, which no one can afford any longer to slight. By not dissociating themselves from those who are unmerciful, the merciful become emissaries of mercilessness.

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Institute for deaf-mutes. – While the schools drill human beings in speech as in first aid for the victims of traffic accidents and in the construction of gliders, the schooled ones become ever more silent. They can give speeches, every sentence qualifies them for the microphone, before which they can be placed as representatives of the average, but the capacity to speak with each other is being suffocated. It presupposes an experience worthy of being communicated, freedom of expression, and independence as much as social relations. In the all-encompassing system conversation turns into ventriloquism. Everyone is their own Charlie McCarthy: thus the latter’s popularity. Words are turning altogether into the formulas, which were previously reserved for greetings and farewells. For example, a young lady successfully raised according to the latest desiderata should be able to say, at every moment, what is appropriate in a “situation”, according to tried and true guidelines. However such determinism of speech through adaptation is its end: the relation between the thing and the expression is severed, and just as the concepts of the positivists are supposed to be nothing more than placeholders, those of positivistic humanity are literally turned into coins. What is happening in the voices of the speakers, is what, according to the insight of psychology, happened to that of the conscience, from whose resonance all speech lives: it is replaced down to the most refined cadence by a socially prepared mechanism. As soon as this last stops functioning, creating pauses, unforeseen by unwritten statutes of law, panic ensues. This has led to the rise of intricate games and other free-time activities, which are supposed to dispense with the burden of conscience of speech. The shadow of fear however falls ominously on the speech which remains. Impartiality and objectivity in the discussion of objects are disappearing even in the most intimate circles, just as in politics, where the discussion was long since dispelled by the word of power. Speaking is taking on a malign gesture. It is becoming sportified. One tries to score as many points as possible: there is no conversation which the opportunity for competition does not worm itself into, like a poison. The emotions generated by the subjects being discussed, in conversations worthy of human beings, attach themselves pigheadedly to the narrow issue of who is right, outside of any relationship to the relevance of the statement. As a pure means of power, however, the disenchanted word exerts a magical power over those who use it. It can be observed time and time again how something once uttered, no matter how absurd, accidental or incorrect, precisely because it was once said, tyrannizes the speaker like a possession they cannot break away from. Words, numbers, and meetings, once concocted and expressed, become independent and bring all manner of calamity to those in their vicinity. They form a zone of paranoid infection, and it requires the maximum reason to break their baleful spell. The magicalization of the great and inconsequential political slogans is repeated privately, in the seemingly most neutral of objects: the rigor mortis of society is overtaking even the cells of intimacy, which thought themselves protected from it. Nothing is being done to humanity from the outside only: dumbness is the objective Spirit [Geist].

Vandals. – The haste, nervousness and discontinuity observable since the rise of the great cities, is spreading epidemically, as plague and cholera did before. Powers are arising therein, which the scurrying passersby of the 19th century could not have dreamed of. Everyone must always be planning something. Free-time is required to be exhausted. It is planned, employed for undertakings, filled up with the visit of every possible institution or through the fastest possible locomotion. The shadow of this falls on intellectual labor. It takes place with a bad conscience, as if it were moonlighting from some sort of urgent, albeit purely imaginary occupation. In order to justify its own activity to itself, it adopts the gestures of what is hectic, under high pressure, of the enterprise racing against the clock, of every sensibility – including itself – which stands in its way. Often it seems as if intellectuals reserved for their own production only the hours left over from obligations, excursions, appointments and unavoidable pleasures. The accumulation of prestige by those who can present themselves as so important, that they must be everywhere, is repulsive, and yet to some extent rational. They stylize their life with intentionally hammed-up dissatisfaction as a single acte de présence [French: act of presence]. The joy with which they reject an invitation by referring to a prior engagement, announces a triumph in the competition. Similarly, the forms of the production-process are repeated more generally in private life or in the forms excluded from realms of labor. One's entire life is supposed to look like an occupation, and to hide, through this similarity, anything not yet immediately dedicated to commerce. Yet the fear thereby expressed, only reflects a much deeper one. The unconscious innervations which harmonize the individual existence to the historical rhythm, beyond thought-processes, have an inkling of the dawning collectivization of the world. Since however the integral society does not sublimate individuals positively in itself, but rather squeezes them into an amorphous and pliable mass, every individual dreads this as the process of being absorbed, something experienced as inevitable. "Doing things and going places" [in English in original] is the sensorium's attempt to create a kind of protective stimulus against a threatening collectivization, to get used to the latter, by schooling oneself in the hours apparently left in freedom to be a member of the masses. The strategy therein is to outdo the danger. One lives to a certain extent even worse, that is with still less of an ego, than one can expect to live. At the same time one learns, through the playful excess of giving up the self, that for someone who in all seriousness lives without an ego, things can be easier instead of harder. It all goes very fast, because there is no alarm for earthquakes. Those who do not play along, and that's as much to say, those who do not swim bodily in the stream of human beings, become afraid of missing the bus and drawing the revenge of the collective down on themselves, rather like entering a totalitarian party all too late. Pseudoactivity is a re-insurance [Rückversicherung: reinsurance, a secondary insurance covering a set of original insurance policies], the expression of preparation for self-sacrifice, in which alone one has an inkling of a guarantee of self-preservation. Security beckons in the adaptation to the most extreme insecurity. It is conceived of as a flight charter, which brings one as quickly as possible someplace else. In the fanatical love of autos, the feeling of physical homelessness resonates. It is the foundation of what the bourgeoisie inaccurately called the flight from oneself, from the inner void. Whoever wants to come along, may not be different. The psychological void is itself only the result of false social absorption. The boredom from which human beings flee, merely mirrors the process of running away, in which they have long been caught. For that reason alone the monstrous apparatus of pleasure stays alive and swells larger and larger, without a single person getting pleasure from such. It canalizes the compulsion to be at the scene, which would otherwise grab the collective by the throat, indiscriminately, anarchically, as promiscuity or wild aggression – a collective which, at the same time, nevertheless consists of no one else than those

who are underway. They are most closely related to the addict. Their impulse reacts exactly to the dislocation of humanity, which leads from the murky blurring of the difference between city and country, the abolition of the house, via the movement of millions of unemployed, all the way to the deportations and mass uprooting of peoples in the destroyed European continent. The nullity and lack of content of all collective rituals since the youth-movement represents retrospectively the groping anticipation of overpowering historical hammer-blows. The myriads who suddenly fall prey to their own abstract quantity and mobility, to hitting the road in swarms, like a drug, are recruits of the movement of peoples, in whose feral realms bourgeois history is getting ready to end.

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Picture-book without pictures. – The objective tendency of the enlightenment, to abolish the power of all images over human beings, does not correspond to any subjective progress of enlightened thought towards imagelessness. After the idols were cast down, and metaphysical ideas irresistibly demolished concepts previous understood as rational and authentically thought, the thinking unleashed by the enlightenment and immunized against thinking is passing over into a second representativeness [Bildlichkeit], an imageless and biased one. Amidst a net of relationships in which human beings have become entirely abstract to each other and to things, the capacity of abstraction disappears. The alienation of schemata and classifications from the data subsumed under them, indeed the pure quantity of processed materials, which has become incommensurable to the circumference of individual human experience, constantly necessitates the archaic retranslation into sensuous signs. The little stick figures and houses, scattered in statistical texts like hieroglyphics, may appear in every specific case to be accidental, a mere means of assistance. But it is not for nothing that they look so similar to countless advertisements, newspaper stereotypes, and toys. In them the representation is victorious over what is represented. Its outsized, simplistic and thus false comprehensibility reinforces the incomprehensibility of the intellectual processes, from which their falseness – the blind, non-conceptual subsumption – cannot be separated. Ubiquitous pictures are nothing of the sort, because they simultaneously present the entire generality, the average, the standard model as something unique, something particular, while ridiculing such. Even the abolition of the particular is derisively turned into something particular. The demand for this has already sedimented itself as a need, and is reproduced everywhere by the mass culture, after the model of the “funnies” [in English in original]. What was once called Spirit [Geist], is dispelled by the illustration. It is not merely that human beings no longer have the capacity to imagine what has not been drilled into them and shown in abbreviated form. Even the joke, in which at one time the freedom of the Spirit [Geist] crashed into the facts and caused the latter to explode, has passed over into illustration. The pictorial jokes which fill the magazines, are for the most part pointless, empty of meaning. They consist of nothing other than a challenge to the eye of a competition with the situation. Schooled by innumerable prior cases, one is supposed to see “what’s happening” faster than the significant moments of the situation are developing. What such pictures act out, in anticipation of their completion by the well-versed observer, is the throwing of all meaning overboard like ballast in the snapshot of the situation, in the unresisting subjugation to the empty hegemony of things. The state-of-the-art joke is the suicide of intention. Whoever commits it, is rewarded by acceptance in the collectivity of laughter, which has horrifying things on its side. Even if one wanted to try to understand such jokes by thinking, one would remain helplessly behind the tempo of unleashed things, which race ahead even in the simplest caricature, like the concluding chase at the end of animated films. Sagacity turns immediately into stupidity in the face of regressive progress. No other understanding is left to

thought than the horror of what is incomprehensible. Just as the sober-minded gaze, which meets the billboard smile of a toothpaste beauty, perceives the misery of torture in her manufactured grin, so too does the death-sentence of the subject, implicit in the universal victory of subjective reason, bristle from every joke and truly every visual representation.

93

Intention and copy [Abbild]. – The pseudorealism of the culture-industry, its style, is not to be explained by the sleazy shenanigans of film magnates and their lackeys, but was necessitated, under the ruling conditions of production, by the stylistic principle of naturalism itself. If one wished to blindly consecrate the film to the representation of daily life, for example on the model of Zola, something which would in fact be possible with the means of mobile photography and a sound-track, then the resulting entity [Gebilde] would be diffuse, externally unarticulated, foreign to a public accustomed to visual spectacles. Radical naturalism, which the technique of film strongly suggests, would dissolve every context of surface meaning and end up as the extreme opposite of familiar realism. The film would pass over into the associative stream of images and receive its form solely as in their pure, immanent construction. Yet if instead of this, one attempted to choose words and gestures which could be related to an idea endowing them with meaning – either on commercial grounds, or for the sake of objective intention – the perhaps unavoidable attempt would end up in an equally unavoidable contradiction with the prerequisites of naturalism. The lesser density of reproducibility [Abbildlichkeit] in naturalistic literature still left room for intention: in the seamless mesh of the duplication of reality through the technical apparatus of film, every intention, even if it were itself the truth, turns into a lie. When compared with the literal fidelity of the copy [Abbild], the word which is supposed to beat the character of the speaker or the meaning of the whole into the audience's head sounds "unnatural". It justifies the world as being as meaningful as itself, even before the first planned fraud, the first actual distortion is committed. Noone talks that way, noone moves that way, while the film urges over and over again, that's how everyone does it. One is trapped: conformism is caused a priori by meaning [Bedeutung: noun form of the verb "bedeuten", to mean] in itself, regardless of what the concrete significance [Bedeutung: noun form of "meaning"] may be, while it is nonetheless only through meaning [Bedeutung] that conformism, the respectable repetition of what is factual, could be shaken. True intentions would be possible only through the renunciation of intention. That this latter and realism are incompatible, that the synthesis turned into a lie, is rooted in the concept of meaningfulness [Deutigkeit: meaning, significance]. It is ambiguous [zweideutig]. It relates without distinction to the organization of the thing as such and to its transmission to the audience. This ambiguity however is no accident. Meaningfulness [Deutigkeit] indicates the point of indifference between objective reason and communication. It is right, insofar as the objective form, the realized expression, speaks, turning itself outwards out of itself, and wrong, insofar as it damages the form through calculations aimed at the audience. Every single artistic and also theoretical work must show itself equal to the urgent necessity of such ambiguity [Doppelsinn]. The explicit [deutliche] form, however esoteric, yields to consumerism; the inexplicit kind is dilettantish according to its immanent criteria. Quality is decided by the depth, at which the entity [Gebilde] takes up the alternatives within itself and so masters them.

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Hue and cry [Staatsaktion: great fuss]. – The increasing impossibility of the representation of what is historical speaks to the extinction of art. That there is no adequate drama on fascism, is due not to a lack of talent, rather talent is withering away due to the insolubility of the most

urgent task facing writers. They have to choose between two principles, which are equally inappropriate to the subject-matter: psychology and infantilism. The former, which has meanwhile become aesthetically obsolete, has been handled by significant artists as a trick and with a bad conscience, ever since modern drama learned to see its object in politics. Schiller's prologue to *Fiesco* states: "If it is true, that only sentiment awakens sentiment, then the political hero is not, I think, an appropriate subject for the theater, to the extent that he must set aside the human being, in order to be the political hero. It was not my intent to breathe that living glow into my tale, which rules through the vocal product of enthusiasm, but to spin the cold, unfruitful hue and cry [Staatsaktion] out of the human heart, and precisely thereby to reattach it to the human heart – to involve the man through the head, which knows the affairs of the state – to borrow situations for humanity from inventive intrigues – that was my intent. In addition, my relationship with the bourgeois world made me more familiar with the heart, than with the cabinet of state, and perhaps this precise political weakness has become a poetic strength." Hardly. The link between alienated history and the human heart was already a pretext in Schiller, to justify the inhumanity of history as humanly comprehensible, and was given the theatrical lie, whenever the technique equated the "man" to the "head, which knows the affairs of the state" – for example, in the buffoonish-accidental murder of Leonore by the betrayer of his own conspiracy. The tendency to aesthetic reprivatization pulls the rug from underneath the feet of art, while it attempts to conserve humanism. The cabals of the all too well constructed plays of Schiller are powerless intermediary constructions between the passions of human beings and a social and political reality which is already incommensurable with such, and for that reason no longer graspable in human motivations. The most recent sign of this is the craze for second-rate biographies, which bring famous people closer as non-famously human. The same pressure for false humanization emerges in the calculated reintroduction of "plots" [in English in original], of the action as a harmonious, logically consistent context of meaning. Under the prerequisites of photographic realism, this would be untenable in film. To capriciously restore it, is to fall behind the experiences of the great novels, on which film parasitically lives; they obtained their meaning precisely as the dissolution of the context of meaning.

If one wished to clear the table of all this and seek to represent the political sphere in its abstraction and extra-humanity, excluding the deceptive mediations of what is internalized, then things would go no better. For it is precisely the essential abstraction of what truly happened, which simply refutes the aesthetic picture. In order to make it capable of any kind of expression, the writer is compelled to translate it into a kind of children's speech, into archetypes and thus to "bring it nearer" a second time around – no longer to feeling, but to that authority of comprehending reflection which still lies before the constitution of language, which even epic theater cannot evade. The appeal to these authorities already formally sanctions the dissolution of the subject in collective society. The object however is scarcely less falsified by such a labor of translation than the deduction of a religious war to the erotic needs of a queen. Human beings today have become as infantile as the simplistic drama, which abjures the former's representation. In lieu of this, the political economy which the latter charges itself with representing, though in principle unchanged, is nevertheless so differentiated and advanced in each of its moments, that it evades schematic parables. To paint the decision-making inside large-scale industry as the wheeling and dealing of crooked vegetable-grocers suffices for a monetary shock, but not however for dialectical theater. The illustration of late capitalism through pictures from the agrarian or criminal storehouse does not allow the mischief of today's society to emerge from its wrapping in complicated phenomena. Rather, the lack of concern for the phenomena, which themselves would need to be developed out of the essence, distorts the essence. It interprets the conquest of power by the mightiest harmlessly, as machination of rackets outside

of society, not as the coming-to-itself of society in its own right. The unrepresentability of fascism however stems from the fact that there is as little freedom of the subject anymore in such, as there is in the reflection on it. Consummated unfreedom can be recognized, not represented. Where freedom appears as a motive in political stories today, as for example in the praise of heroic resistance, it has the shameful quality of a powerless reassurance. The outcome always ends up being determined by world politics, and freedom itself emerges as ideological, as a speech about freedom, with stereotypical declamations, not in humanly commensurable actions. After the dissolution of the subject, art is least of all to be saved by being stuffed by a taxidermist, and the object which today would alone be worthy of it, namely what is purely inhuman, escapes it through both a lack of measure and inhumanity.

95

Damper and drum. – Taste is the truest seismograph of historical experience. Like scarcely any other faculty, it is capable of indicating even its own behavior. It reacts against itself and recognizes itself as tasteless. Artists, who repel, who shock, spokespersons of unmitigated cruelty, are steered in their idiosyncrasy by taste: the genre of the finer things in life, the domain of neo-Romantic nervous types, the cultivation of sensibility, is – even to their protagonists – as coarse and clueless nowadays as the Rilke verse, “For poverty is a great luminosity from within...” The delicate shudder, the pathos of being different are only normalized masks in the cult of oppression. It is precisely the aesthetically advanced nerves which find what is self-righteously aesthetic to be unbearable. The individual [Individuum] is so through and through historical, that it is capable of rebelling against the fine threads of its late-bourgeois organization with the fine threads of late-bourgeois organization. In the antipathy towards all artistic subjectivism, towards expression and soulfulness, the flesh creeps at the lack of historical tact, no differently from how subjectivism once drew back from bourgeois convention. Even the rejection of mimesis, the innermost concern of functionalism, is mimetic. The judgement on the subjective expression does not fall from outside, in political-social reflection, but in immediate impulses, every one of which turns its countenance from the image in the mirror, compelled in view of the culture-industry to shame. Right at the top is the defamation of erotic pathos, which the displacement of lyric accents testifies to not less than the sexuality in the works of Kafka, which stands under a collective baleful spell. In art since expressionism, the whore has become a key figure, while she is dying out in reality, because it is solely in what is shameless that sexuality can be depicted without aesthetic shame. Such displacements of the deepest modes of reaction have reached the point, that art in its individualistic form has decayed, without making its collective form possible. It is not a question of the fidelity and independence of individual artists, to unflinchingly hold fast to the sphere of the expressive and to oppose the brutal compulsion of collectivization, it is rather that they must feel this compulsion even in the most secret cells of their isolation, even against their will, if they do not wish to helplessly and untruthfully remain, through an anachronistic humanity, behind what is inhuman. Even intransigent literary expressionism, the lyrics of Stramm, the dramas of Kokoschka, have a naive, liberal-trustful aspect as the flip side of their genuine radicalism. The advance beyond them however is no less dubious. Works of art which consciously wish to remove the harmlessness of absolute subjectivity, thereby raise the claim of a positive community, which is not present in themselves, but which is arbitrarily cited. That turns them into mere mouthpieces of doom and to the prey of the final naivete, which sublates them – of still being art at all. The aporia of the responsible work comes to benefit irresponsible ones. If there comes a time that the nerves are entirely abolished, then there will be no cure against the renaissance of the springtime of song, and nothing will stand in the way of the popular front stretching from barbaric futurism to the

ideology of the film.

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Janus palace. – If one were so inclined as to put the system of the culture-industry in a grand, world-historical perspective, then it would be defined as the planned exploitation of the age-old divide between human beings and their culture. The double character of progress, which constantly developed the potential of freedom simultaneously with the reality of oppression, has created a situation where the various peoples are ever more completely suborned into the control of nature and social organization, yet are at the same time incapable of understanding how culture goes beyond such integration, due to the compulsion which culture inflicts on them. What is human in culture – what is nearest of all, which represents their own affair against the world – has become alien to human beings. They make common cause with the world against themselves, and what is most alienated of all – the ubiquity of goods, their own reconfiguration into appendages of machinery – turns into the deceptive image of nearness. The great works of art and philosophical constructions have remained uncomprehended not because of their all too great distance from the core of human experience, but for the opposite, and it is easy enough to trace the incomprehension back to an all too great understanding: the shame of participation in universal injustice, which would become overpowering, as soon as one permitted oneself to understand it. Thus they cling to what mocks them, by confirming the mutilated form of their essence through the smoothness of its own appearance. During all periods of urban civilization, the lackeys of the existent have made a parasitic living off such unavoidable delusion: the later Attic comedy, the Hellenistic arts and crafts are already kitsch, although they did not yet have the technics of mechanical reproducibility and that industrial apparatus at their disposal, whose Ur-picture seems to be conjured up by the ruins of Pompei. If one reads hundred-year-old entertainment novels like those of Cooper, then one finds therein in rudimentary form the entire Hollywood schema. The stagnation of the culture industry is probably not the result of its monopolization, but was innate to so-called entertainment from the very beginning. Kitsch is that mesh of invariants, which the philosophical lie ascribes to its solemn designs. Nothing therein may fundamentally change, because the entire nonsense drills it into humanity, that nothing is allowed to change. So long however the course of civilization proceeded planlessly and anonymously, the objective Spirit [Geist] has not been conscious of that barbaric element, as something which necessarily dwells within it. Under the illusion of immediately aiding freedom, where it mediated domination, it has at least disdained to immediately contribute to its reproduction. It defamed the kitsch which accompanied it like a shadow, with an enthusiasm which to be sure expresses the bad conscience of high culture – a high culture which suspects that under domination it is nothing of the sort, and which is reminded by kitsch of its own mischief. Today, since the consciousness of the rulers is beginning to converge with the total tendency of society, the tension between culture and kitsch is falling apart. Culture no longer drags its despised opponent behind it powerlessly, but takes it under direction. By administering the whole of humanity, it administers too the break between humanity and culture. Even the crudity, pig-headedness and narrowness, which are objectively inflicted on the dominated, are accessed with subjective sovereignty as humor. Nothing indicates the simultaneously integral and antagonistic condition more exactly than such embedding of barbarism. Therein however the will of the administrators can call upon the will of the world. Their mass society did not first produce junk for customers, but the customers themselves. These latter hungered for films, radio and magazines; whatever in them remained unsatisfied by the social order, which takes from them without giving back what it promises, have pined only for the master of the dungeon to remember them and finally offer with the left hand a stone for the hunger, from which the right

hand withholds the bread. Unresistingly, for a quarter century, elderly bourgeois who ought to know better have been running over to the culture-industry, which has so precisely calculated their starving hearts. They have no reason to be outraged over the young people who were corrupted to the marrow by Fascism. Those who are subjectless, those who are culturally deprived of their heritage are the true inheritors of culture.

97

Monad. – The individual [Individuum] owes its crystallization to the forms of political economy, especially the urban marketplace [Marktwesen]. Even as an opponent of the pressure of socialization, it remains the latter's own product and similar to it. What endows it with resistance, with every trait of independence, originates in the monadological individual interest and its precipitate as character. The individual [Individuum] mirrors precisely in its individuation the preordained social law of exploitation, be it ever so mediated. This testifies however also to the fact that its decay in the contemporary phase must not be derived individualistically, but out of a social tendency, as something which succeeds by virtue of individuation and not as its mere enemy. Therein diverges the reactionary critique of culture from the other kinds. Often enough, the reactionary kind achieves a certain insight into the decay of individuality and the crisis of society, but puts the ontological responsibility for that on the individuated [Individuum] in itself, as something detached and inward: the objection of superficiality, lack of believability, lack of substance are the last words they have to say, and turning back is their only consolation. Individualists like Huxley and Jaspers condemn the individual [Individuum] for its mechanical emptiness and neurotic weakness, but the upshot of their condemnation is to sacrifice it rather than to critique the social principium individuationis [Latin: principle of individuation]. Their polemic is, as a half truth, already the entire untruth. Society is regarded therein as the immediate coexistence of human beings, out of whose attitude follows the whole, as it were, instead of as a system, which does not merely embrace and deform them, but reaches even into that humanity, which once ordained them as individuals. Through the universally-human interpretation of conditions, as they are, the crude materiality which binds human existence to inhumanity is certified, even in the complaint against such. In its better days, the bourgeoisie, where it reflected historically, was quite conscious of such interwovenness, and only since its doctrine degenerated to the stubborn apologetics against socialism, have they forgotten about them. Not the least of the achievements of Jakob Burckhardt's Greek cultural history is that to have linked the erosion of Hellenistic individuality not merely to the objective decay of the polis, but precisely to the cult of the individual [Individuum]: "Following the deaths of Demosthenes and Phokion, the city [Athens] was astonishingly poor in political personalities, and not merely in political ones, for Epicurus, born in 342 to an Attic cleruch family in Samos, was the last world-historical Athenian of them all." (Jakob Burckhardt, Vol. 4.3. Ed., Stuttgart 1909, pg 515). The condition, in which the individual [Individuum] disappeared, is simultaneously one of unfettered individualism, in which "everything is possible": "Above all, individuals are celebrated instead of gods." (Ibid., pg 516). That the freeing of the individual [Individuum] by the hollowed out polis did not strengthen its resistance, but eliminated it and indeed individuality itself, as transpired in the dictator-states, is the model of one of the central contradictions which drove from the 19th century towards fascism. Beethoven's music, whose setting consists of socially communicated forms, and which, ascetically opposed to the private expression of feeling, resonates with the determinately guided echo of struggle, drawing precisely out of such asceticism all the richness and might [Gewalt] of the individual. Those of Richard Strauss, entirely at the service of individual claim and directed towards the glorification of the self-sufficient individual

[Individuum], debases such to the mere reception-organ of the market, to the emulator of ideas and styles selected willy-nilly. Inside repressive society, the emancipation of the individual [Individuum] does not merely benefit such, but also reduces it to an entry. Freedom from society robs it of the energy for freedom. For as real as its relations to others may be, it is, considered as something absolute, a mere abstraction. It does not have any sort of content which is not socially constituted, nor any impulse which goes beyond society, which would not be aimed at getting the social condition to go beyond itself. Even the Christian doctrine of death and immortality, in which the notion of absolute individuality is grounded, would be entirely void, if it did not include humanity. The individual who hoped for immortality absolutely and for themselves alone, would in such limitation only enlarge the principle of self-preservation into the absurdity, on which the wisdom “one must lose, in order to win” is the corrective. Socially the absolutization of the individual [Individuum] marks the transition from the universal mediation of social relationships, which as exchange also constantly demands the simultaneous limitation of the interests realized in such, to immediate domination, where the strongest rules. Through this dissolution of everything mediating in the individual [Individuum] itself, by virtue of which it was still a piece of a social subject, it is impoverished, brutalized and regresses to the condition of a mere social object. The individual [Individuum] sublates itself, as in the Hegelian sense, in something abstractly realized: the myriads who know nothing any more except their naked, rambling interest, are the same ones who capitulate as soon as organization and terror rope them in. If today the trace of what is human seems to cling solely to the individual [Individuum] as something which is perishing, then it is a warning to put an end to that fatality, which individuates human beings solely in order to be able to completely break them in their separation. The saving principle is sublated solely in its opposite.

98

Legacy. – Dialectical thinking is the attempt to break through the compulsory character of logic with its own means. But insofar as it must employ these means, it is at every moment in danger of falling prey to the compulsory character itself: the ruse of reason would still like to prevail against dialectics. The existent [Bestehende] cannot surpass itself in any other way than by virtue of the general, which the existent itself has borrowed. The general triumphs over the existent by means of its own concept, and that is why the power of the merely existing [Seienden] threatens to reproduce itself in such triumph, out of the same violence, which it broke. Through the solitary dominion of the negation, the movement of thought, like that of history, is led unequivocally and exclusively according to the schemata of the immanent contradiction, with implacable positivity. Everything is subsumed by the historically appropriate major economic phases of the entire society and their development: the entire thinking process has something of what the Parisian artists called the *genre chef d'oeuvre* [French: genre of the masterpiece]. That the calamity is caused precisely by the stringency of such development, that this latter is linked to domination, is at any rate not explicit in critical theory [i.e. Marx], which, like the traditional one [i.e. Hegel], expected salvation from linear progression. In fact stringency and totality, the bourgeois thought-ideals of necessity and generality, circumscribe the formulation of history, yet for that very reason reflect the constitution of society in the fixed, stately, grand concepts, against which dialectical critique and praxis are aimed. If Benjamin observed that history had been hitherto written from the standpoint of the victor and needed to be written from that of the vanquished, then it should be added that while knowledge [Erkenntnis] must indeed represent the baleful linearity of the succession of victory and defeat, it must at the same time turn to whatever does not vanish in such a dynamic, and remains by the wayside – to a certain degree, the cast-off materials and blind spots, which escaped dialectics. It is the essence of what is vanquished to

appear inessential, dispensable, whimsical in its powerlessness. What transcends the ruling society is not merely the potentiality developed by the latter, but equally that which does not fit into the historical laws of movement. Theory is oriented to what is askew, what is impenetrable, what is not yet encompassed, which as such admittedly already bears something anachronistic in itself, but does not exhaust itself in what is obsolete, because it contains a dash of the historical dynamic. This is most easily seen in art. Children's books such as *Alice in Wonderland* or the *Struwwelpeter*, which rebuke any attempt to classify them as progressive or reactionary as absurd, contain incomparably more subtle ciphers, even of history, than the grand dramas of Hebbel, with their official thematics of tragic guilt, the change of the times, the course of the world and the individuated [Individuum]; and the disdainful and silly piano pieces of Satie evoke flashes of experience which the stringency of the Schönberg school, despite being backed by the entire pathos of musical development, cannot dream of. Precisely the magnificence of logical conclusions may unwittingly assume the character of what is provincial. Benjamin's writings are the attempt, in an ever new approach, to make that which is not already determined by grandiose intentions philosophically fruitful. His legacy consists of the task of refusing to consign such an attempt to the alienated puzzle-pictures of thought, but to recuperate what is devoid of intention via the concept: the necessity, to think simultaneously dialectically and undialectically.

99 *Gold test*. – Among the concepts to which bourgeois morality has shrunk, following the dissolution of its religious norms and the formalization of its autonomous ones, genuineness [Echtheit] ranks at the top. If nothing else can be stringently demanded from human beings, then at least, they should be entirely and wholly what they are. In the identity of each individual with itself, the postulate of incorruptible truth as well as the glorification of what is factual are transferred from the enlightened cognition to ethics [Ethik]. It is precisely the critically independent thinkers of the late bourgeoisie, fed up with traditional judgements and idealistic phrases, who agree with this. Ibsen's admittedly refractory verdict on the lifelong lie, Kierkegaard's doctrine of existence have made the ideal of genuineness [Echtheit] into a touchstone of metaphysics. In Nietzsche's analysis, the word "genuine" already stands as something unquestionable, something exempt from the labor of the concept. To the converted and unconverted philosophers of Fascism, values such as authenticity, heroic endurance of the "thrownness" of individual existence, the border situation, ultimately become a means of usurping religious-authoritarian pathos without any sort of religious content. This drives towards the denunciation of everything which is not sound enough, which is not made out of corn and gristle, therefore the Jews: Richard Wagner had already played off genuine German art against foreign [welsche: medieval German term for foreign] bric-a-brac and thereby misused the critique of the culture market as an apology for barbarism. Such misuse is however not extrinsic to the concept of genuineness [Echtheit]. During the sale of its faded livery, seams and damaged patches are coming out, which were already invisibly present in the great days of opposition. The untruth lurks in the substrate of genuineness [Echtheit] itself, the individual [Individuum]. If the law of the course of the world is concealed in the principium individuationis [Latin: principle of individuation], as the antipodes of Hegel and Schopenhauer both recognized, then the intuition of the final and absolute substantiality of the ego becomes the victim of an appearance [Schein], which protects the existing social order, while its essence is already decaying. To equate genuineness [Echtheit] with truth is not tenable. It is precisely the unflinching self-constitution – that mode of conduct, which Nietzsche called psychology – and thus the insistence on the truth about oneself, which proves again and again, already in the first experiences of childhood, that the impulses on which one reflects are not entirely "genuine". They constantly contained something of imitation, play, wanting to be different. In pressing towards what is unconditionally

fixed, towards the being [Sein] of the existent [Seiendes], the will, which immerses itself in its own selfsame individuality instead of its social cognition, leads to precisely the bad infinity which since Kierkegaard the concept of genuineness [Echtheit] was supposed to exorcize. Noone expressed this more forthrightly than Schopenhauer. The querulous forebear of existential philosophy and malicious inheritor of great speculation truly knew the hollows and ravines of individual absolutism inside out. His insight is attached to the speculative thesis, that the individual [Individuum] would be only the appearance, not the thing in itself. "Every individual [Individuum]," goes a footnote in the fourth book of *The World as Will and Idea*, "is on the one hand the subject of cognition, that is, the complementary condition of possibility of the entire objective world, and on the other hand, the specific appearance [Erscheinung] of the will, of the same one which objectifies itself in each thing. But this duplicity of our essence does not rest on a unity existing for itself: otherwise we would be able to be aware of ourselves in ourselves, independently from the objects of cognition and of will [Wollen]: this however we simply cannot do, or rather as soon as we try to enter ourselves and, by directing our cognition inwards, wish to fully constitute ourselves, we lose ourselves in a bottomless void, finding ourselves like the crystal ball, out of whose depths a voice speaks, whose cause however is not found there, and by wishing to grasp ourselves, we catch, with a shudder, nothing but a wandering ghost. (Schopenhauer, Collected Works, Grand Duke Wilhelm-Ernst Edition, Book 1: *The World as Will and Idea*. I. Introduction by Eduard Grisebach. Leipzig. 1920, pg 371). He thereby called the mythical deception of the pure self by its name, as nugatory. It is an abstraction. What steps forward as an original entity, as a monad, results first from a social separation from the social process. Precisely as something absolute, the individual [Individuum] is a mere reflection-form of property-relations. In it the fictive claim is raised that what is biologically one would precede, according to its own lights, the social whole, from which only violence isolates it, and its contingency is upheld as a measure of truth. It is not merely that the ego is enmeshed in society, but that the former owes the latter its existence in the most literal sense. All of its content comes from the latter, or in any case out of the relation to the object. It becomes all the richer, the more freely it develops the latter in itself and reflects it, while conversely its delimitation and hardening, which reclaims it as an origin, thereby cause it to be limited, impoverished and reduced. It is not for nothing that attempts to grasp the plenitude of the individual in its withdrawal into itself, such as Kierkegaard's, are tantamount to the sacrifice of the individual and to the selfsame abstraction, which Kierkegaard maligned in the idealistic systems. Genuineness [Echtheit] is nothing other than the defiant and obstinate persistence on the monadological form, which social oppression stamps on human beings. What does not wish to wither away, should rather take the stigma of the non-genuine on itself. It feeds on the mimetic legacy. What is human is attached to imitation: a human being turns into a human being first by imitating other human beings. In such behavior, the Ur-form of love, the priests of genuineness scent traces of that utopia, which could shake the apparatus of domination. That Nietzsche, whose reflection drove all the way into the concept of truth, dogmatically drew back from genuineness [Echtheit], makes him into what he ultimately wanted to be, a Lutheran, and his outbursts against play-acting are cut from the same cloth as the anti-Semitism which so outraged him in the arch-actor Wagner. He should not have reproached Wagner with play-acting – for all art, and music especially, is related to acting, and in every period of Nietzsche there rings the thousand-year echo of the rhetorical voices from the Roman senate – but the denial of play-acting by the actor. Indeed it is not only what is non-genuine, which plays at retaining being [seinshaltig], which is to be convicted a lie, but rather what is genuine itself turns into a lie the moment it becomes something genuine, that is to say in the reflection on itself, in its positing as something genuine, such that it already steps beyond the identity which in the same breath it claims. The self cannot be spoken

of as the ontological ground, but solely in any case theologically, in the name of what is cast in God's image [Gottesebenbildlichkeit]. Whoever holds fast to the self and shakes off theological concepts, contributes to the justification of the devilish positive, of cold-cut interest. It borrows from this last the aura of significance and turns the power of command of self-preserving reason into a high-flown superstructure, while the real self has already become in the world, what Schopenhauer recognized it as in introspection, a ghost. Its character of appearance [Scheincharakter] can be understood from the historical implications of the concept of genuineness [Echtheit] as such. In it hides the idea of the supremacy of the origin over what is derived. This is however already connected with social legitimism. All ruling elites claim to be the eldest of all, autochthonous. The entire philosophy of inwardness, with the claim of having contempt for the world, is the final sublimation of the barbaric brutality, that whoever was there first, has the greatest rights, and the priority of the self is as untrue as the priority of all who feel at home right where they are. Nothing changes, if genuineness [Echtheit] falls back on the opposition of physei [Latin: what is physical] and thesei [Latin: what is artificial], that what exists without the addition of human activity, would be better than what is artificial. The tighter the net of what human beings have made is drawn over the world, the more spasmodically do those who are doing the tightening, highlight their own primitivity and rootedness in nature. The discovery of genuineness [Echtheit] as the last bulwark of individualistic ethics [Ethik] is a reflex of industrial mass production. Only when countless standardized goods pretend, for the sake of profit, to be something unique, does the idea crystallize – as its antithesis, and yet according to the same criteria – that what is not to be reproduced is what is authentically genuine. Previously, the question of genuineness [Echtheit] was no more applied to intellectual entities [Gebilde] than the question of originality, which was unknown even in the era of Bach. The deception of genuineness [Echtheit] goes back to bourgeois delusion regarding the exchange-process. What appears genuine, is what commodities and other means of exchange can be reduced to – above all, gold. The genuineness [Echtheit] abstracted like a proportion of a fine metal turns, like gold, into a fetish. Both are treated as it they were the substrate, which is nevertheless in truth a social relationship, while gold and genuineness [Echtheit] express only the fungibility, the comparability of things: they are precisely not in themselves, but for others. The non-genuineness of the genuine rests on the fact that it must pretend, in the society ruled by exchange, to be what it stands for, without ever being truly able to be such. The apostles of genuineness [Echtheit] of power, who dress down circulation, perform the dance of the money-veil at this latter's wake.

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Sur l'eau [French: at sea]. To the question of the goal of an emancipated society, one receives answers such as the fulfillment of human possibilities or the richness of life. As illegitimate as the inevitable question may be, so inevitable is the repulsive, out-trumping response, which recalls to mind the social democratic personality-ideal of the heavily bearded naturalists of the 1890s, who wanted to live it up. Tenderness would be solely what is most crude: that no one should starve any longer. Anything else would apply, to a condition which ought to be determined by human needs, a human behavior which is formed on the model of production as its own purpose. The utopian image of the unrestricted, energetic, creative human being has been infiltrated by the commodity fetishism, which in bourgeois society brings with it inhibition, powerlessness, the sterility of monotony. The concept of dynamics, which complements bourgeois "ahistoricity", is raised to something absolute, while it nevertheless, as the anthropological reflex of the laws of production, must be critically confronted in the emancipated society with need. The idea of unfettered doing, of uninterrupted creating, of chubby-cheeked

insatiability, of freedom as intense activity, feeds on the bourgeois concept of nature, which from time immemorial has served to proclaim social violence as irrevocable, as a piece of healthy eternity. It was due to this and not any presumed equalization that the positive designs of socialism, against which Marx bristled, remained in barbarism. What is to be feared is not the slackening of humanity in a life of luxury, but rather the dessicated expansion of what, in the guise of the all-natural, is social – the collectivity as the blind rage of making. The naively mandated unambiguity of the tendency of development towards the raising of production is itself a piece of that bourgeois nature [Bürgerlichkeit], which permits development only in one direction, because, integrated into the totality, ruled by quantification, it is hostile to the qualitative difference. If one thinks of the emancipated society as one emancipated precisely from such a totality, then alignments become visible, which have little in common with the raising of production and its human mirror-images. If uninhibited people are by no means the most pleasant, and are not even the freest, then the society which freed itself of its fetters, could arrive at the thought that even the productive forces are not the final substrate of human beings, but are rather the historically specific form of these last under commodity production. Perhaps the true society would become bored with development, and would out of freedom leave possibilities unused, instead of storming alien stars under a confused compulsion. What would begin to dawn on a humanity, which no longer knew urgent necessity [Not: necessity, privation], is just how delusory and futile all the arrangements hitherto created to escape privation [Not] have been – arrangements which used wealth to reproduce privation [Not] on an expanded scale. Enjoyment itself would be touched by this, just as its contemporary schema cannot be separated from industriousness, planning, imposing one's will, subjugation. Rien faire comme une bête [French: Doing nothing, like an animal], lying on the water and look peacefully into the heavens, “being, nothing else, without any further determination and fulfillment” might step in place of process, doing, fulfilling, and so truly deliver the promise of dialectical logic, of culminating in its origin. None of the abstract concepts comes closer to the fulfilled utopia than that of eternal peace. Onlookers of progress such as Maupassant and Sternheim have helped to express this intention, shyly, in the only manner the fragility of the latter permits.

Part Three

1946/47

Avalanche, veux-tu m'emporter dans ta chute?
[French: Avalanche, won't you carry me off in your fall?]
Baudelaire

101

Hothouse plant. – The talk of early or late development, seldom free of the death-wish for the former, is not binding. Whoever develops early, lives in anticipation. Their experience is an a-prioristic, intuitive sensibility, which gropes in pictures and words for what is later redeemed in things and human beings. Such anticipation, satiated in itself, as it were, turns away from the external world and lends the color of something neurotically playful to the relationship to the latter. If early developers are more than just the possessors of skills, they are thus compelled to catch up, a compulsion which normal people are fond of dressing up as a moral commandment. One who develops early must painfully conquer the space of the relation to the objects, which is encompassed by one's ideation [Vorstellung]: they must even learn to suffer. The feel for the not-ego, which hardly ever bothers supposed late developers from within, becomes an urgent necessity for early developers. The narcissistic direction of the drives, indicated by the preponderance of imagination in its experience, is precisely what delays their development. They make their way retrospectively, with crass violence, through the situations, fears, and passions which were softened in their anticipation, and these latter transform themselves, in conflict with the narcissism of the former, into something sickly and consuming. Thus early developers fall prey to what is childish, which they once mastered all too slight exertion and which now demands its price; they become immature and even silly, while the others, who were at every stage precisely what they were expected to be, are mature, and these now find unpardonable, what overwhelms formerly early developers outside of all proportion. Early developers are stricken by passion; sheltered all too long in the security of autarky, now they reel helplessly, where they once built castles in the air. It is not for nothing that the handwriting of early developers warns by its infantile traits. They are an embarrassment to the natural social order, and malicious good health feeds on the danger which threatens them, just as society mistrusts them as the visible negation of the equalization of success and exertion. What is fulfilled in their internalized economy, is the unconscious yet implacable punishment which was always in store for them. What was once proffered to them with illusory good will, is now cancelled out. Even in psychological destiny, an authority watches over to ensure that everything is paid for. The individual law is a puzzle-picture of the exchange of equivalents.

102

Always more slowly ahead. – Running on the street has the expression of terror. The fall of the victim is imitated in the very attempt to escape the fall. The posture of the head, which would like to remain raised, is that of someone who is drowning, the tense face resembles the grimace of torture. They must look straight ahead, cannot even glance

back, without stumbling, as if the pursuer [Verfolger: follower, persecutor] whose sight would cause them to freeze were breathing down their necks. Once one ran from dangers which were too desperate to stand and face, and those who are running after a bus speeding away still testify to this, without knowing it. The flow of traffic no longer has to reckon with wild animals, but at the same time it has not pacified running. This last estranges the bourgeois walk. The truth becomes apparent, that something is not right about security, that one must constantly evade the unrestrained powers of life, even if these are only vehicles. The body's habit of walking as something normal stems from the good old days. It was the bourgeois manner of getting somewhere: physical demythologization, free from the bane of the hieratic step, the homeless fellowship of the road, the breathless flight. Human dignity insisted on the right to the gait, a rhythm not drilled into the body by command or terror. Going on promenades, being a flaneur were private ways of spending time, the legacy of the feudal pleasure-jaunts of the 19th century. Walking is dying out along with the liberal epoch, even where autos are not being driven. The youth movement, which groped for such tendencies with unmistakable masochism, challenged the parental Sunday excursion and replaced it with the voluntary march of power, which they christened with the medieval name of trip [Fahrt: journey, travel], while the Ford model quickly became available to the latter. Perhaps the cult of technical speediness, just as in sports, conceals the impulse of mastering the terror of running, by turning it away from one's own body and at the same time high-handedly outbidding it: the triumph of the increasing mile-marker ritually attests to the fear of being pursued. Whenever however human beings are told: "run", ranging from the children, who are supposed to fetch the mother a forgotten handbag from upstairs, all the way to the prisoners, who are commanded by their escorts to flee, in order to have a pretext for murdering them, then the archaic violence becomes audible, which otherwise inaudibly directs every step.

103

Boy from the heath. – What one most fears for no real reason, apparently obsessed by a fixed idea, has the unnerving habit of occurring. The question which one would at no price like to hear, is asked by an assistant in a perfidiously friendly manner; the person, who one most wishes to keep distant from one's beloved, will end inviting the latter, even if the former is three thousand miles away, thanks to a well-meaning recommendation, leading to precisely the circle of acquaintances, from which the danger threatens. It is an open question as to what extent one invites such terrors oneself; if one perhaps elicits that question from the malicious one by an all too eager silence; if one provokes the fatal contact, by requesting the mediator, out of a foolishly destructive trust, not to mediate. Psychology knows, that whoever envisions the calamity, also somehow wishes for it. But why does the latter seem to eager to meet them? Something appeals, in the reality, to the paranoid fantasy which distorts such. The latent sadism of all unerringly guesses the latent weakness of all. And the persecution fantasy is infectious: whoever encounters it as a spectator is irresistibly driven to imitate it. This succeeds most easily, when one gives it justifiable grounds, by doing what the other fears. "One fool makes many" – the abyssal loneliness of delusion has a tendency towards collectivization, which cites the picture of delusion into life. This pathetic mechanism harmonizes with the socially determining one of today, wherein those who are socialized into desperate isolation hunger for togetherness and band together in cold clumps. Thus folly becomes epidemic: vagrant sects grow with the same rhythm as large organizations. It is that of total destruction. The

fulfillment of persecution manias stems from its affinity to bloody being [Wesen: nature, essence, character]. Violence, on which civilization is based, means the persecution of all by all, and those with persecution manias miss the boat solely, by displacing what is wrought by the whole onto their neighbors, in the helpless attempt to make incommensurability commensurable. They burn, because they wish to immediately grasp, with their bare hands, as it were, the objective illusion which they resemble, while the absurdity consists precisely of the perfected mediacy [Mittelbarkeit]. They fall as victims to the perpetuation of the context of delusion. Even the worst and most senseless conception of events, the wildest projections, contain the unconscious effort of consciousness, to recognize the fatal law, by virtue of which society perpetuates its life. The aberration is actually only the short-circuit of adaptation: the open foolishness of the one mistakenly calls, in others, the foolishness of the whole by its correct name, and the paranoid are the mocking image of the right life, by choosing on their own initiative to make it similar to the wrong one. Just as sparks fly in a short-circuit, so too does delusion communicate with delusion truly like lightning. Points of communication are the overpowering confirmations of persecution manias, which mock the one who is ill for being right, and thereby only push them in deeper. The surface of existence immediately closes up again and proves to them, that things are not that bad and that they must be mad. They anticipate subjectively the condition, in which objective madness and the powerlessness of the individual pass, unmediated, into each other, as in Fascism, where the dictatorship of those who are persecution maniacs realizes the fears of persecution of its victims. The question of whether an exaggerated suspicion is paranoid or realistic, the faint private echo of the tumult of history, can thus be solely determined retrospectively. Psychology does not reach into horror.

104 *Golden Gate* [in English]. – What dawns on those who are embarrassed or spurned, illuminates as harshly as the violent pain which wracks the body. They recognize, that in the innermost core of deluded love, which knows nothing of this and may know nothing, lives the demand of what is undeluded. They have been wronged; they derive their claim of justice from this and must at the same time reject it, for what they wish, can only come out of freedom. In such urgent necessity, those who are rejected become human beings. Just as love inalienably betrays the generality to the particular, by which alone the generality is honored, so too does the generality now turn fatally against love, as the autonomy of those who are nearest. Precisely the rejection, by which the generality asserts itself, appears to the individual [Individuum] as being excluded from the generality; whoever loses love, feels deserted by all, which is why they despise consolation. In the senselessness of the withdrawal they come to feel what is untrue of all merely individual fulfillment. Thereby however they awaken to the paradoxical consciousness of the generality: of the inalienable and unimpeachable human right, to be loved by the beloved. With their petition, founded on no title or claim, they appeal to an unknown court, which out of mercy accords to them what belongs to them and yet does not belong to them. The secret of justice in love is the sublation of rights, to which love points with speechless gestures. “So must love, deceived / silly yet everywhere be”. [lines by Hölderlin from *Tränen*, “Tears”]

105

Only a quarter of an hour left. – Sleepless night: there is a formula for this, agonizing hours, stretching without prospect of end or dawn, in the vain effort to forget the empty

duration. Horrifying, however, are the sleepless nights, in which time shrinks and runs fruitlessly through one's fingers. One turns the light out in the hope for long hours of rest, which would assist one. But while one cannot still one's thoughts, the healing nourishment of the night is squandered, and when one is finally ready, to see no more under the burning eyelids, one knows that it is too late, that soon the terrifying morning will arrive. The final hours of those who are condemned to death may elapse the same way, irresistibly, unused. What however is revealed by such a contraction of hours, is the counterpoint [Gegenbild] of fulfilled time. If in the latter the power of experience breaks the baleful spell of duration and gathers what is past and what is future into the present, then duration creates unbearable horror in the hurried, sleepless night. Human life becomes a moment, not by sublating duration, but by decaying to nothing, awakening to its futility in face of the bad infinity of time itself. In the overly loud ticks of the clock, one perceives the mockery of the eons for the span of one's own existence. The hours, which are already past like seconds, before the inner senses have grasped them, and sweep the latter away in their fall, register, how one including all of memory is ordained to forgetting in the cosmic night. Human beings are made compulsorily aware of this today. In the condition of complete powerlessness, what life-span remains to the individual [Individuum] appears as little more than a brief reprieve from the gallows. One no longer expects to live out one's life to the end. The prospect of violent death and martyrdom, present to everyone, perpetuates itself in the fear that the days are numbered, that the length of one's own life stands under the sway of statistics; that becoming old has become an unspoken advantage, as it were, derived by beating the averages. Perhaps the life-quota provided for by society, revocable at any time, has been used up. The body registers such fear in the flight of hours. Time flies.

106

All the little flowers. – The sentence, most likely from Jean-Paul, that memories are the only property which cannot be taken from us, belongs in the storehouse of a powerlessly sentimental consolation, which would like to think that the self-renouncing withdrawal of the subject into interiority is precisely the fulfillment, from which the consolation turns away. By establishing the archive of oneself, the subject commandeers its own stock of experience as property and thereby turns it once more into something entirely external to the subject. The past inner life turns into furniture, just as, conversely, every piece of Biedermeier furniture was memory made wood. The intérieur [French: interior], in which the soul stores its collection of curiosities and memorabilia, is invalid. Memories cannot be preserved in drawers and file cabinets, but rather in them is indissolubly interwoven what is past with what is present. No one has them at their disposal in the freedom and arbitrariness, whose praise resounds in the swollen sentences of Jean-Paul. Precisely where they become controllable and objective, where the subject thinks of them as wholly secure, memories fade like soft wall-papers under harsh sunlight. Where however they retain their energy, protected by what is forgotten, they are endangered like anything which is alive. The conception of Bergson and Proust, aimed against reification, according to which what is contemporary, what is immediacy, constitutes itself only through memory, the reciprocity of what is now and what is then, has for that reason not merely a providential but also an infernal aspect. Just as no earlier experience truly exists, which was not detached from the rigor mortis of its isolated existence by involuntary memorialization, so too is the converse true, that no memory is guaranteed, as existing in itself, indifferent towards the future of the one who harbors it; nothing which is past is

safe from the curse of the empirical present, through the transition into mere representation [Vorstellung]. The most blissful memory of a human being can, according to its substance, be repealed by a later experience. Whoever loved and betrayed love, does something awful not only to the picture of what has been, but to this last itself. With incontrovertible evidence, an unwilling gesture while awakening, a hollow cadence, a faint hypocrisy of pleasure, inveigles itself into the memory, making the nearness of yesterday already into the alienation, which it today has become. Despair has the expression of what is irrevocable not because things couldn't go better next time, but because it draws the previous time into its maw. That is why it is foolish and sentimental, to wish to preserve what is past as pure in the midst of the dirty flood of what is contemporary. This latter, delivered unprotected to calamity, is left with no other hope than to emerge once more from this latter as something else. To those however who die in despair, their whole life was in vain.

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Ne cherchez plus mon coeur. [French: Don't search for my heart, line from Baudelaire's poem *Causerie*]. – The heir of Balzac's obsession, Proust, to who every mundane invitation seemed to be the "open sesame" of the reconstituted life, leads into the labyrinths, where prehistoric gossip conveys to him the shadowy secrets of everything which gleams, until this latter becomes obtuse and cracked under the all too near and longing eyes. But the placet futile [French: useless petition], the concerns of a historically condemned luxury class, which every bourgeois could calculate as superfluous, the absurd energy, which is wasted on the wasters, finds itself more thoroughly rewarded than the impartial gaze for what is relevant. The schema of disassembly [Zerfalls: disintegration, disincorporation], according to which Proust cites the picture of his "society" [in English in original], proves to be one of the great social tendencies of development. What goes to pieces in Charlus, Saint-Loup and Swann, is the same thing, which the entire generation born afterwards lacked, who no longer even knew the name of the latest poet. The eccentric psychology of *décadence* [French: decadence] outlines the negative anthropology of mass society: Proust gives an allergic accounting of what was later done to all love. The exchange relationship, which this last partially contradicted during the bourgeois epoch, has entirely absorbed it; the last immediacy falls victim to the distance of all adversaries to all others. Love freezes from the value, which the ego ascribes to itself. Its love appears to it as a loving more, and whoever loves more, does wrong. They incur the suspicions of the beloved, and are thrown back on themselves, falling ill due to their inclination to possessive cruelty and self-destructive imagination. "The relation to the beloved," goes a passage in *Temps retrouvé* [French: time recovered, multivolume work by Proust], "may remain platonic out of entirely different reasons than the chastity of the woman and also not for the sake of the sensual character of love, which she inspires. Perhaps the lover is incapable, in the boundlessness of his love, of waiting for the moment of fulfillment with adequate dissimulation or indifference. He meets her incessantly, does not cease to write to her, attempts to visit her; she refuses, and he despairs. From this moment on she understands that if she only grants him her company or friendship, such a favor will appear, to someone who had already given up all hope, so great that she can spare herself the trouble of giving him any more concessions, so that she can securely wait, until he finds himself prepared, because he is incapable of going without seeing her any longer, to end the war at any price: then she can dictate the terms of the peace, whose first condition is the platonic nature of the

relationship... All this the woman guesses instinctively and knows that she can afford the luxury of never giving herself to the man whose unquenchable desire she feels, if he is too well-bred to hide it from her from the very beginning.” The young male prostitute Morel is stronger than his high-flying lover. “He always retained the upper hand, by only refusing himself, and in order to refuse himself, it probably sufficed for him to know he was loved.” The private motive of Balzac’s Duchess Langeais has spread universally. The quality of each one of the innumerable autos, which turn every Sunday evening back to New York, corresponds exactly to the prettiness of the girl sitting inside. – The objective dissolution of society manifests itself subjectively, by the fact that the erotic drive has become too weak, to bind self-preserving monads, as if humanity were imitating the physics theory of the exploding cosmos. The frigid unattainability of the beloved’s nature [Wesens], meanwhile an acknowledged institution of the mass-culture, is answered by the “unquenchable desire” of the lover. When Casanova named a woman unprejudiced, he meant that no religious convention hindered her from giving herself; today the unprejudiced woman is one who no longer believes in love, who doesn’t let herself be taken for a ride, by investing any more than she can expect back. Sexuality, for whose sake nevertheless the whole fuss is presumably about, has turned into the delusion, which consisted earlier in renunciation. By leaving no time anymore in the arrangements of life for a pleasure conscious of itself, and replacing it with physiological exercises, uninhibited sexuality is itself desexualized. Actually they no longer want the euphoria anymore, but merely the compensation, which stands for the effort, which they would like most of all to spare themselves as superfluous.

108

Princess Lizard. – The imagination is inflamed precisely by the women whose imagination has worn away. Those who glow with the most colorful nimbus, turned unremittingly to the outside, are entirely sober. Their attraction stems from their lack of consciousness of themselves, indeed the lack of a self at all: Oscar Wilde invented the name of the unenigmatic sphinx for them. They resemble their designated pictures: the purer their appearance [Schein] is, undisturbed by any sort of impulse, the more similar they are to archetypes, Preziosa, Peregrina, Albertine, who hint that all individuation is precisely mere appearance [Schein] and who nevertheless must always disappoint again through that, which they are. Their life is understood as an illustration or an everlasting children’s festival, and such perception does injustice to their needy empirical existence. Storm has dealt with this in the deeply symbolic children’s story “Pole Poppenspaeler”. The Friesian boy falls in love with the little girl, who is traveling with a group from Bavaria. “When I finally turned around, I saw a red dress appear before me; and truly, and truly, it was the little puppet-player; in spite of her tattered clothing she seemed to me to be surrounded by a fairy-tale glow. I gathered up courage and spoke to her: ‘Would you like to take a walk, Lisa?’ She looked at me mistrustfully with her black eyes. ‘Take a walk?’ she repeated at length. ‘Ah, you – you’re the limit!’ ‘Where do you want to go?’ – ‘I wanna to go to the draper’s shop!’ ‘You want to buy a new dress?’ I asked foolishly enough. She laughed out loud. ‘Get out of here! – No, only a little rag!’ ‘Little rag, Lisa?’ – ‘Sure thing! Just some scraps to dress up the doll; costs only a little bit!’ Poverty forces Lisa to limit herself to what is shabby – “rags” – although she herself would be happy if things were otherwise. Misunderstanding, she must mistrust everything as exaggerated, which is not practically justified. Imagination steps too close to poverty. For what is shabby has magic only for the observer. And nevertheless imagination needs poverty, to which it does violence: the happiness, which it clings to, is inscribed with the traits of suffering. Thus Sade names Justine, who falls into one trap of torture after another, notre

intéressante héroïne [French: our interesting heroine], and even Mignon, in the moment in which she is beaten, the interesting child. The dream princess and the whipping-girl are the same, and they suspect nothing of this. Traces of this are still evident in the relationship of the northern peoples to the southern: the well-heeled puritan seeks in vain from the brunette from foreign lands, what the course of the world, which the former commands, severs not merely from themselves but above all from the vagrants. Those who are rooted envy the nomads, the search for fresh pastures, and the green wagon is the house on wheels, whose path is accompanied by stars. Infatigability, ensorcelled in unplanned movement, the unhappily inconstant, momentary pressure to continue to live, stands for something undistorted, for fulfillment, and yet nevertheless excludes it, similar to the innermost core of self-preservation, from which it pretends to redeem itself from. That is the circle of bourgeois longing for what is naive. What is soulless in those who, at the borders of culture, are daily forbidden self-determination, charm and torture at the same time, turns into a phantasmagoria of the soul for the well-heeled, who have learned from culture, to be ashamed of the soul. Love loses itself in what is soulless as in the cipher of what has soul, because the living are the arena of the desperate desire for salvation, which has its object only in what is lost: love arises in the soul first in its absence. It is precisely the expression of the eyes, which is closest to those of an animal – the creaturely expression – which is human, distant from the reflection of the ego. In the end the soul is itself the longing of the soulless for salvation.

109 *L'inutile beauté*. [French: useless beauty]. – Women of especial beauty are condemned to unhappiness. Even those to have all the advantages, who have birth, wealth, and talent on their side, seem as if pursued or obsessed with the pressure to destroy of themselves and all human relationships, in which they enter. An oracle puts before them the choice of dooms. Either they cleverly exchange beauty for success. Then they pay with happiness for its condition; since they can no longer love, they poison love to others and remain empty-handed. Or the privilege of beauty gives them the courage and security, to defy the exchange-contract. They take the happiness seriously, which is promised in them, and do not limit themselves, thus confirmed by the attraction of all, that do not at first have to prove their worth. In their youth they have the choice. This makes them indiscriminate: nothing is definitive, everything can be replaced. Quite early, without much consideration, they marry and dedicate themselves to pedestrian conditions, relinquishing [entäussern: to relinquish, disclose, realize] to a certain extent the privilege of infinite possibility, degrading themselves to human beings. At the same time however they hold fast to their childhood dream of hegemony, which their life flashes before them, and do not cease – therein unbourgeois – to throw away what, tomorrow, could be something better. That is their type of destructive character. Precisely because they were once hors de concours [French: outside of the competition], they are rendered subalterns in the competition, which they now manically pursue. Solely the gesture of irresistibility remains, while the latter already disintegrates [zerfällt]; magic disintegrates [zerfällt], as soon as expresses itself as domesticated, instead of portraying itself as hope. She who resists however is simultaneously the sacrifice: she ends up under the social order, which she once flew over. Her generosity is given punishment. The fallen woman as well as the obsessive one are martyrs of happiness. Incorporated beauty has in the meanwhile turned into a calculable element of existence, a mere replacement for the non-existing life, without reaching beyond the latter in the slightest. She has broken her promise of happiness to herself and others. She however, who stands for this happiness, takes on the aura of calamity and is herself overtaken by calamity. Therein the enlightened world has completely and utterly absorbed mythos. The envy of the gods has outlived them.

110 *Constance*. – Everywhere bourgeois society insists on the exertion of the will; only love is supposed to be involuntary, the pure immediacy of the feelings. In the longing for this, which means the dispensation from labor, the bourgeois idea of love transcends bourgeois society. However by unmediatedly putting up what is true as what is universally untrue, it inverts the former into the latter. It is not merely that pure feelings, as far as they are still possible in the economically determined system, socially turn thereby into the alibi for the domination of interest and testifies to a humanity, which does not exist. But rather the involuntariness of love itself, even where it is not arranged quite practically in advance, contributes to that whole, as soon as it establishes itself as a principle. If love is supposed to portray in society a better one, then it is capable of doing so not as a peaceful enclave, but only in conscious resistance. That however requires just that moment of caprice, which the bourgeois, to who love can never be natural enough, forbids it. Love means the capacity to not allow immediacy to wither from the ubiquitous pressure of mediation, of the economy, and in such fidelity it is mediated in itself, as tenacious counter-pressure. Those who love are only those who have the energy to hold fast to love. If social advantage, sublimated, still preforms the sexual drive-impulse, causes, through a thousand shadings of what is confirmed by the social order, now this person and now that one to appear spontaneously attractive, then the attraction which has once taken root contradicts this, by persisting where the gravity of society, above all in the intrigue which is regularly taken into society's service, does not wish it to be. The test of the feelings is whether they endure beyond the feeling through duration, even if it were only obsession. The kind which, under the appearance [Schein] of unreflective spontaneity and proud of its presumed uprightness, rely completely and utterly on what it considers to be the voice of the heart, and runs away, as soon as it no longer thinks it perceives those voices, is in such sovereign independence precisely the tool of society. Passively, without knowing it, it registers the numbers, which roll out of the roulette wheel of their interests. By betraying the beloved, it betrays itself. The command of fidelity, which society legislates, is the means of unfreedom, but only through fidelity does freedom realize its insubordination against the command of society.

111 *Philemon and Baucis*. [Greek mythology:] – The household tyrant has his wife help him into his coat. She eagerly does the service of love and accompanies him with a glance, which says: what am I supposed to do, let him have his little joys, that's the way he is, only a man. Patriarchal marriage revenges itself on the man through the indulgence, which the woman practices and which has turned into a formula in the ironic lament of male vulnerability and dependence. Inside of the lying ideology, which posits the man as superior, lies a secret, not less untrue one, which reduces him to something inferior, to the victim of manipulation, maneuvers, deception. The hen-pecked husband is the shadow of the one who must venture out into hostile life. Children size up adults with the same narrow-minded perspicacity as the wife vis-a-vis the husband. In the disproportion between his authoritarian claim and his helplessness, which necessarily comes to light in the private sphere, something ridiculous is concealed. Every married couple appearing together is comic, and this is what the patient understanding of the wife attempts to balance out. There is scarcely any long-married woman, who does not disavow their spouse by whispering about small weaknesses. False nearness stimulates malice, and in the realm of consumption, those who have their hands on things are stronger. Hegel's dialectic of master and slave is as valid then as now in the archaic social order of the house and is strengthened, because the wife tenaciously holds fast to the anachronism. As suppressed matriarch she becomes the master there, where she must serve, and the patriarch need only appear as such, in order to become a caricature. Such a simultaneous dialectic of the epoch has presented itself to the individualistic gaze as the "battle of the sexes". Both opponents are wrong.

In the disenchantment of the man, whose power rests on the earning of money which pretends to be human rank, the woman expresses at the same time the untruth of the marriage, in which she seeks her entire truth. No emancipation without that of society.

112 *Et dona ferentes*. [Latin: fragment of “Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes,” “I fear the Greeks though bearing gifts.”] – The German philistines of freedom have always put great store in the [Goethean] poem of *God and the Bayadere* [bayadere: Hindu temple dancing-girl], with the closing fanfare that immortals raise lost children in their fiery arms to heaven. The approved warm-heartedness is not to be trusted. It thoroughly appropriates the bourgeois judgement on bought love; it attains the effect of all-fatherly understanding and forgiveness only by impugning the lovely one to be saved with shuddering delight as someone who is lost. The act of mercy is bound up with reservations, which make it illusory. In order to earn redemption – as if an earned redemption could be anything of the sort – the girl may herself participate in the “bed’s pleasant festival”, “neither for pleasure nor gain”. Well, then why else? Doesn’t the pure love expected of her clumsily touch the magic, which Goethe’s dance-rhythm winds around her figure and which then indeed is no longer to be cancelled out by the talk of deep perdition? But she is supposed to become the sort of good soul throughout, who forgets herself only once. In order to be admitted to the enclosure of humanity, the paramour, whose toleration humanity brags about, must first cease to be one. The deity of penitent sinners rejoices [quotation from Goethe’s poem]. The entire expedition to where the last houses are, is a kind of metaphysical “slumming party” [in English in original], an event of patriarchal meanness, inflating itself twice over, by first raising the distance between the male Spirit [Geist] and female nature into something immeasurable and then draping the supreme power, which takes back even its self-created distinction, as the highest benevolence. The bourgeoisie needs the bayadere, not merely for the sake of pleasure, which they simultaneously begrudge her for, but in order to feel like a god. The closer they approach the edge of their realm and forget their dignity, the crasser the ritual of violence. The night has its pleasure, but the whore is nevertheless burnt. The rest is the idea.

113

Spoilsport. – The affinity between asceticism and euphoria, noted by the humdrum wisdom of psychology, the love-hate between saints and whores, has the objectively valid ground, that asceticism accords to fulfillment more of its rights than cultural installment-payments. The hostility to pleasure is certainly not to be separated from the consensus with the discipline of a society, which has its essence [Wesen] in demanding more than it grants in return. But there is also a mistrust against pleasure which comes from the intuition, that the latter is in this world nothing of the sort. A construction of Schopenhauer unconsciously expressed something of this intuition. The transition from the affirmation to the repudiation of the will to life occurs in the development of the thought, that in every delimitation of the will by a barrier “which is placed... between it and its former goal” there is suffering; in contrast, “its attainment of the goal” would be “satisfaction, well-being, happiness.” While such “suffering”, according to Schopenhauer’s intransigent cognition, could easily enough grow to the point that death itself would be preferable, the condition of “satisfaction” is itself unsatisfying, because “as soon as a shelter is granted to human beings from urgent necessity and suffering, boredom is so close at hand, that it requires the killing of time. What occupies all living beings and keeps them in motion, is the striving for existence [Dasein]. They don’t know what to do with existence, however, what it is assured: thus the second thing, which they set into motion, is the striving to be free of the burden of existence, to make it imperceptible, ‘to kill time’, that is, to escape boredom.” (Schopenhauer, Collected Works, Grand Duke Wilhelm-Ernst Edition, Volume I: The World as Will and Idea. I.

Introduction by Eduard Grisebach. Leipzig 1920, pg 415). But the concept of this boredom which is sublated to such unsuspected dignity, is something which Schopenhauer's sensibility, which is hostile to history, would least like to admit – bourgeois through and through. It is, as the experience of antithetical "free time", the complement of alienated labor, whether this free time is supposed to merely reproduce expended energy, or whether it is burdened by the extraction of alien labor as a mortgage. Free time remains the reflex of the rhythm of production as something imposed heteronomously, to which the former is compulsorily held fast even in periods of weariness. The consciousness of the unfreedom of all existence, which the pressure of the demands of commerce, and thus unfreedom itself, does not allow to appear, emerges first in the intermezzo of freedom. The *nostalgie du dimanche* [French: Sunday nostalgia] is not homesickness for the workweek, but for the condition which is emancipated from this; Sundays are unsatisfying, not because they are observed, but because its own promise immediately represents itself at the same time as something unfulfilled; like the English one, every Sunday is too little Sunday. Those for who time painfully extends itself, who wait in vain, are disappointed that it failed to happen, that tomorrow goes past once more just like yesterday. The boredom of those however who do not need to work, is not fundamentally different from this. Society as a totality imposes, on those with administrative power, what they do to others, and what these latter may not do, the former will scarcely permit themselves. The bourgeoisie have turned satiety, which ought to be the close relation of ecstasy, into an epithet. Because others go hungry, ideology demands that the absence of hunger should count as vulgar. Thus the bourgeoisie indict the bourgeoisie. Their own existence, as exempt from labor, prevents any praise of laziness: the latter would be boring. The hectic bustle, which Schopenhauer refers to, is due less to the unbearable nature of the privileged condition than to its ostentation, which according to the historical situation either enlarges the social distance or seemingly reduces such through presumably important events and ceremonies, which are supposed to emphasize the usefulness of the masters. If those at the top truly felt bored, this stems not from too much happiness, but from the fact that they are marked by the general unhappiness; by the commodity character, which consigns the pleasures to idiocy, by the brutality of command, whose terrifying echo resounds in the high spirits of the rulers, finally by their fear of their own superfluosity. No one who profits from the profit-system is capable of existing therein without shame, and it distorts even undistorted pleasure, although the excesses, which the philosophers envy, may by no means be so boring as they assure us. That boredom would disappear in realized freedom, is something vouchsafed by many experiences stolen from civilization. The saying *omne animal post coitum triste* [Latin: all animals are sad after mating] was devised by bourgeois contempt for humanity: nowhere more than here does what is human distinguish itself from creaturely sorrow. Not euphoria but socially approved love elicits disgust: the latter is, in Ibsen's word, sticky. Those who are deeply moved by erotic sentiment transform fatigue into the plea for tenderness, and momentary sexual incapacity is understood as accidental, entirely external to passion. It is not for nothing that Baudelaire thought the bondage of erotic obsession together with the illuminating spiritualization, naming kiss, scent and conversation equally immortal. The transience of pleasure, on which asceticism stakes its claim, stands for the fact that except in the minutes *heureuses* [French: happy minutes], in which the forgotten life of the lover radiates from the arms and limbs of the beloved, there is no pleasure yet at all. Even the Christian denunciation of sex in Tolstoy's *Kreutzer Sonata* cannot entirely cancel out the memory of this in the middle of all the Capucin-style preaching. What he reproaches sensuous love for, is not only the grandiosely overweening theological motif of self-denial, that no human being may turn another into an object – actually thus a protest against patriarchal control – but at the same time the memorialization of the bourgeois malformation of sex, in its murky entanglement with every

material interest, in marriage as a humiliating compromise, however much of an undercurrent of Rousseau's resentment against pleasure raised to reflection runs in this. The attack on the period of the engagement is aimed at the family photograph, which resembles the word "bridegroom". 'And moreover there was that ridiculous custom of giving sweets, of coarse gormandizing on sweets, and all those abominable preparations for the wedding: remarks about the house, the bedroom, beds, wraps, dressing-gowns, underclothing, costumes.' [*The Kreutzer Sonata*, trans. R. Gustafson, Oxford UP: 1997, pg 107] He similarly mocks the honeymoon, which is compared to the disappointment after visiting an 'extremely uninteresting' fairground booth, extolled by a hawker. The exhausted senses are less to blame for this *dégoût* [French: disgust] than what is institutionalized, ordained, prefabricated in pleasure, its false immanence in the social order which adjusts it and turns it into something deathly sad, in the moment it is decreed. Such contrariness may grow to the point that all euphoria ultimately prefers to cease, inside renunciation, rather than violating the concept of euphoria through its realization.

114

Heliotrope. – Those awaiting the visit of the parents' guests, find their hearts beating with greater expectation than before Christmas. It is not due to the presents, but to a transformed life. The perfume, which the lady guest places on the bureau, while one is permitted to watch the unpacking, has a scent like memory, even when it is inhaled for the first time. The luggage with the stickers from the Hotel Suvretta [famous hotel in St. Moritz, Switzerland] and Madonna di Campiglio [famous hotel in Dolomite mountains of Italy, near Trentino] are chests, in which the precious gems of Aladdin and Ali Baba, wrapped in expensive cloth, the kimonos of guests, are borne out of the caravanserais of Switzerland and south Tyrol on sleeping-wagon cushions for sated observation. And just as fairies talk to children in fairy-tales, so too does the guest talk earnestly, without condescension, to the children of the house. They ask knowledgeably about lands and peoples, and the guest, not acquainted with their daily habits and seeing nothing but the fascination in their eyes, answers with profound statements about the feeble-mindedness of a brother-in-law and the marital spats of the nephews. Thus the children feel accepted at a stroke into the mighty and secret alliance of adults, the magic circle of reasonable people. The rules of the day are suspended – perhaps tomorrow they may even be allowed to skip school – along with the borders between the generations, and whoever has not been sent to bed by eleven o'clock has an inkling of true promiscuity. The single visit ordains Thursday as a festival, in whose euphoria all of humanity seems to be invited. For the guest comes from far away. The guest's appearance promises the children something beyond the family and reminds them that this latter is not the only thing. The longing for inchoate happiness, in the pond of salamanders and storks, which the child painfully learned to restrain and which is distorted by the bogeyman of the black man, of the villain who wishes to kidnap them – here the children find that longing again, without fear. Amidst the nearest and dearest, there appears the figure of what is different. The fortune-telling gypsy, who is let into the front door, is absolved in the lady visitor and transfigured into a rescuing angel. She dispels the curse on the happiness of what is nearest of all, by wedding it to what is most distant. The entire being [Dasein] of the child waits for this, and whoever does not forget the best part of childhood, must still be able to wait like this. Love counts the hours until the moment the parents' guests step over the threshold and once again reconstruct the washed-out life through something imperceptible: "Here I am again / back from the wide world". [lines from Mörike's *Peregrina*]

115

Pure wine [part of figurative German expression, "to give someone pure wine", i.e. to tell

someone the unvarnished truth]. – There is an almost foolproof criterium for determining whether a human being means you well: how they pass on unfriendly or hostile comments about you. Such reports are mostly superfluous, nothing but pretexts for expressing ill-wishes without responsibility, even in the name of what is good. Just as all acquaintances feel the inclination, to occasionally say something bad about someone, probably because they rebel against the greyness of the acquaintance, so is everyone simultaneously sensitive to the views of everyone else and secretly wish that they were loved, even where they do not love: the alienation between human beings is no less indiscriminate and universal than the longing to break through it. The news-hawker blossoms in this climate, for there is never any lack of material or calamities, and they can always count on the fact that those who wish to be liked by all, are agog to hear news of the opposite. One should relay derogatory remarks only when they immediately and transparently influence common decisions, to judgements of human beings one must rely upon, or with whom one has to work. The more disinterested the report, the murkier the interest, the suppressed pleasure, in inflicting pain. It is still harmless, if story-tellers simply wish to set two parties against each other while simultaneously putting their own qualities in the spotlight. More often they represent themselves as the unelected arbiters of public opinion and thereby impress, precisely through their affectless objectivity, the entire violence of anonymity upon the victim, before which this last is supposed to bow. The lie becomes visible in the unnecessary concern for the honor of the one injured, who knows nothing of the injury, for clear relationships, for inner purity: upholding these latter in the entangled world only encourages, on the model of Gregers Werle [character in Ibsen's *Wild Duck*], entanglement. By virtue of moral fervor, the well-meaning turn into destroyers.

116

And just hear, how evil he was. – Those who have unexpectedly ended up facing life-threatening dangers, sheer catastrophes, often report that they were to a surprising extent free of fear. The general terror does not turn specifically against them, but strikes them as mere inhabitants of a city, members of a larger association. They adapt to what is accidental, what is inanimate, as it were, as if it didn't really concern them. The lack of fear has its psychological explanation in the lack of readiness to be afraid vis-a-vis the overpowering blow. The freedom of eyewitnesses has something damaged about it, something related to apathy. The psychic organism, like the body, is compatible with experiences of an order of magnitude similar to itself. If the object of experience is raised out of proportion to the individual [Individuum], then the latter actually doesn't experience it anymore, but registers the former unmediatedly, through the non-intuitive concept, as something external to itself, something incommensurable, to which the latter relates as coldly as to the catastrophic shock. There is an analogy to this in what is moral. Whoever commits acts, which are egregiously unjust according to acknowledged norms, such as taking revenge on enemies, or refusing to be sympathetic, is scarcely conscious of their guilt and comes to realize this only with painful effort. The doctrine of reasons of state, the separation of ethics [Moral] and politics is not untouched by this state of affairs. Its meaning stems from the extreme opposition between public essence [Wesen] and individual existence. The major crime presents itself to the individual [Individuum] in large part as a mere misdemeanor against convention, not merely because the norms which it injures are themselves something conventional, frozen, unbinding on the living subject, but because their objectification as such, even where they are founded on substance, evades the moral innervation, the realm of the conscience. The thought of specific acts of tactlessness however, the microorganisms of injustice, which perhaps no one else noticed – that someone sits down too early in company, or put the guests' name-tags down during tea-time, rather than at dinner, as is customary – such trivialities may fill the delinquent one with

irreproachable remorse and a passionately bad conscience, at times with such a burning shame, that they cannot allow themselves to be pardoned by any other human being and preferably not even by themselves. They are therein by no means as noble as all that, for they know, that the society which has no objections against inhumanity, objects all the more strongly to misconduct, and that a man who sends away his lover and vouches for himself as an upright man, can be sure of social approval, while the man who respectfully kisses the hand of an overly young girl from a good family, earns himself ridicule. However these luxuriously narcissistic concerns afford a second aspect: that of the refuge of experience, which rebounds from the objectified social order. The subject reaches into the smallest features of what is correct or incorrect and is capable of vouching for itself therein as acting rightly or wrongly; its indifference towards moral guilt, however, is tinged with the consciousness that the powerlessness of one's own decision grows with the dimension of their object. If one established in retrospect, that by failing to call one's girlfriend after an ugly quarrel, this in fact ended the relationship, then there is something faintly comic in the conception of this; it sounds like the mute girl in Portici [character in Daniel Auber's 1828 opera *The Mute Girl of Portici*]. "Murder", goes an Ellery Queen detective novel, "is so... newspapery. It doesn't happen to you. You read about it in a paper, or in a detective story, and it makes you wriggle with disgust, or sympathy. But it doesn't mean anything." [Quote in English in original] That is why authors like Thomas Mann have described the catastrophes broadcast in the newspapers, ranging from train accidents to crimes of passion, grotesquely –ensorceling, as it were, the irresistible laughter which the solemn pomp of a burial would otherwise provoke, by making it the affair [Sache] of the poetic subject. In contrast to this, minimal violations are for that reason relevant, because we can see good and evil in them, without smiling, even if our earnestness is a bit delusory. In them we learn to deal with what is ethical [Moralischen], feeling it in our skin – as blushing – making it the subject's own, the subject which glances as helplessly at the gigantic moral-law in itself as at the star-studded heavens, which the former is badly modeled after. That these occurrences would be amoral in themselves, while nevertheless spontaneously good impulses, human sympathy without the pathos of maxims, also occurs, does not devalue the infatuation in what is proper. For by expressing the generality straightaway, without bothering about alienation, the good impulse easily enough permits the subject to appear as something alienated from itself, as a mere agent of commandments, with which that subject imagines itself to be as one: as a splendid human being. Conversely, those whose ethical impulse is oriented to what is external, fetishistic convention, is capable of grasping the generality, in the suffering of the unsurpassable divergence of inner and outer – indeed by holding fast to this divergence in its hardening – without sacrificing themselves and the truth of their experience to such. Their over-voltage [Überspannung] of all distance intends reconciliation. That is why the behavior of monomaniacs is not without some justification in the object. In the sphere of daily interactions, on which they insist, all aporias of the false life return, and what their blind alley has to do with the whole, is that only there can they carry out the paradigmatic conflict in strictness and freedom, which otherwise escapes their reach. In contrast, whoever conforms in their mode of reaction with social reality, finds their private life conducting itself as formlessly, as the estimation of power-relations which compels its form on them. They have the inclination, wherever they escape the supervision of the external world, wherever they feel at home in the expanded realm in their own ego, to reveal themselves to be inconsiderate and brutal. They revenge themselves on those who are near to them, for all the discipline and all the renunciation of the immediate expression of aggression, which was imposed on the former from a distance. They behave politely and with courtesy on the outside, towards objective enemies, but with coldness and hostility in friendly circles. Where civilization as self-preservation does not compel them towards humanity, they give free reign to their rage

against such and rebut their own ideology of home, family and community. It is against this which ethics [Moral], however micrologically deluded, is aimed. It detects in the relaxed familiarity, in what is formless, the mere pretext for violence, the appeal to be good to each other, in order to be as malevolent as one wants to be. It subjugates what is intimate to the critical claim, because intimacies alienate, grope towards the inconceivably fine aura of the other, which first crowns them to a subject. Solely the acknowledgment of distance in who or what is most near [Nächste] mitigates foreignness: accepted into consciousness. However the claim of undiminished, already achieved nearness, the flat denial of foreignness, does the utmost injustice to the other, virtually negating them as particular human beings and thereby what is human in them, “adds them up”, incorporates them into the inventory of property. Wherever what is unmediated posits and ensconces itself, the bad mediacy of society is thereby insidiously affirmed. The issue [Sache] of immediacy can be taken up only by the most cautious of reflections. The test of this is made in the smallest of all things.

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Il servo padrone. [Italian: the master as servant] – In regards to the dull-witted tasks, which are demanded by the ruling culture from subordinate classes, these latter become capable of such solely through permanent regression. Precisely what is unformed in them is the product of social form. The creation of barbarians through culture is however constantly deployed by this latter, in order to preserve its own barbaric essence. Domination delegates the physical violence, on which it rests, to the dominated. While these latter are given the opportunity of letting off steam with their warped instincts in what is collectively justified and proper, they learn to practice what the noble ones require, so that they have what it takes to let the noble ones remain noble. The self-education of the ruling clique, with all of the discipline, throttling of every immediate impulse, cynical skepticism and blind pleasure in command it demands, would not exist if the oppressor did not inflict, through those who are oppressed, a piece of the oppression on themselves, which they inflict on others. That is why the psychological differences between the classes are so much slighter than the objective-economic ones. The harmony of what is irreconcilable comes to benefit the continuation of the bad totality. The nastiness of the higher-ups and the gutsiness of the low-born understand each other. From the servants and governors, who bully the children of good households to teach them a lesson about life, to the teachers from Westerwald, who drive the usage of foreign words as well as all pleasure in language out of them, to the officials and clerks, who make them stand in line, the petty officers, who step on them, things go straight as a rail to the torturers of the Gestapo and the bureaucrats of the gas chambers. The impulses of the upper classes themselves speak early in favor of the delegation of violence to the lower ones. Whoever fears the good breeding of the parents, flees into the kitchen and warms themselves on the energetic expressions of the cook, which are secretly given over to the principle of parental good-breeding. The fine people are drawn to the unrefined ones, whose brutality deceptively augurs, what the culture of the former is supposed to bring. They do not know, that what is unrefined, which appears to them as anarchic nature, is nothing but the reflex of the compulsion, against which they stiffen themselves. What mediates between the class solidarity of the upper classes and their ingratiating towards the delegates of the lower classes is their justified feeling of guilt towards the poor. Whoever who doesn't fit in, who learns however to fit in, who is saturated by “that's how things are done here” into the innermost core, ultimately turns into one themselves. Bettelheim's observation on the identification of the victims with the executioners of the Nazi camps contains a judgement on the higher seeding-grounds of culture, the English “public school” [in English in original], the German officer academy. The absurdity perpetuates

itself: domination reproduces itself all the way through the dominated.

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Downwards and ever further. [quote from Schubert song] – The private relations between human beings seem to form themselves according to the model of the industrial “bottleneck” [in English in original]. Even in the smallest community, the level is determined by the most subaltern of its members. Whoever says something in a conversation which is beyond the grasp of a single person, becomes tactless. For the sake of humanity, the conversation is restricted to what is nearest, most dull-witted and banal, even if only one inhuman visage is present. Since the world has stolen speech from human beings, those who cannot be talked to are in the right. They need only stubbornly insist on their interest and their constitution, in order to prevail. The fact that the other, trying in vain to establish contact, ends up using a pleading or soliciting cadence, makes them weaker. Since the “bottleneck” [in English in original] knows no authority, which would be higher than what is factual, while thought and speech necessarily refer to such an authority, intelligence turns into naivete, and this is what the knuckleheads irrefutably perceive. The official fealty to what is positive acts like gravity, drawing everyone down. It shows its superiority to the opposing impulse, by refusing to even deal with the latter. Those who are more differentiated, who do not wish to perish, remain strictly constrained by the consideration of everyone who is inconsiderate. These latter need no longer be plagued by the disquiet of consciousness. Intellectual weakness, confirmed as a universal principle, appears as the energy to live. Formalistic-administrative task management, the desk-drawer separation of everything which only has meaning as something inseparable, the bull-headed insistence on arbitrary opinions in the absence of any foundation, in short the practice of reifying every stage of the failed ego-formation, withdrawing the latter from the process of experience and then maintaining it as a final “that’s just how I am”, suffices to conquer impregnable positions. One may be as certain of the understanding of others, who are similarly malformed, as of one’s own advantage. In the cynical self-trumpeting of one’s own defect lurks the intuition, that the objective Spirit [Geist] is liquidating the subjective one at the contemporary stage. They are “down to earth” [in English in original] like the zoological forebears, before these latter stood erect on their hind legs.

119

Model virtue. – It is well-known how oppression and ethics [Moral] converge in the renunciation of the drives. But the ethical ideas do not merely oppress other ones, but are immediately derived from the existence of the oppressor. Since Homer, the concepts of good and wealth are intertwined in the Greek language. The kalokagathie [Greek: perfection], which was upheld by the humanists of modern society as a model of aesthetic-ethical harmony, has always put a heavy emphasis on property, and Aristotele’s *Politics* openly confessed the fusion of inner value with status in the determination of nobility, as “inherited wealth, which is connected with excellence”. The concept of the polis [Greek: city-state] in classical antiquity, which upheld internalized and externalized nature [Wesen], the validity of the individual [Individuum] in the city-state and the individual’s self as a unity, permitted it to ascribe moral rank to wealth, without inciting the crude suspicion, which the doctrine already at that time courted. If the visible effect on an existent state establishes the measure of a human being, then it is nothing but consistency to vouchsafe the material wealth, which tangibly confirms that effect, as the characteristic of the person, since the latter’s moral substance – just as later in Hegel’s philosophy – is supposed to be constituted on nothing other than their participation in the objective, social substance. Christianity first negated that identification, in the phrase that it would be easier to pass a camel

through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter heaven. But the particular theological premise on voluntary chosen poverty indicates how deeply the general consciousness is stamped by the ethos [Moralität] of property. Fixed property is to be distinguished from the nomadic disorder, against which all norms are directed; to be good and to have goods, coincided from the beginning. Good people are those who control themselves as their own possessions: their autonomous nature [Wesen] is modeled on material disposition. The rich are therefore not to be accused of being unethical – that reproach has ever belonged to the armature of political oppression – but given to understand, that they represent ethics [Moral] to others. In this latter is reflected having [Habe]. Wealth as goodness [Gutsein: having goods/being good] is an element of the mortar of the world: the hard-bitten appearance [Schein] of such identity hinders the confrontation of the moral idea with the social order, in which the rich are right, while at the same time determinations of what is ethical different than those derived from wealth cannot be conceptualized. The more that the individual [Individuum] and society later diverged in the competition of interests, and the more the former is thrown back on itself, the more stubbornly do individuals hold onto the conception of moral nature [Wesen] as wealth. It is supposed to vouch for the possibility of reunifying what has been divided in two, into inside and outside. That is the secret of the inner-worldly asceticism, which Max Weber wrongly hypostatized as the limitless exertion of the businessman ad majorem dei gloriam [Latin: to the greater glory of God]. Material success binds individual [Individuum] and society not merely in the comfortable and meanwhile dubious sense, that the rich can escape loneliness, but in a far more radical sense: if the blind, isolated self-interest is driven only far enough, then it passes over, along with the economic one, into social power and reveals itself to be the incarnation of a universally binding principle. Whoever is rich or acquires wealth, experiences what is attained by the ego, “by one’s own initiative”, as what the objective Spirit [Geist], the truly irrational predestination of a society held together by brutal economic inequality, has willed. Thus the rich may reckon as benevolence, what testifies only to its absence. To themselves and to others, they experience themselves as the realization of the general principle. Because this latter is injustice, that is why the unjust turn regularly into the just, and not as mere illusion, but borne out of the hegemony of the law, according to which society reproduces itself. The wealth of the individual is inseparable from progress in society as “prehistory”. The rich dispose over the means of production. Consequently the technical progress, in which the entire society participates, is accounted for primarily as “their” progress, today that of industry, and the Fords necessarily appear to be benefactors, to the same degree which they in fact are, given the framework of the existing relations of production. Their privilege, already established in advance, makes it seem as if they were giving up what is theirs – namely the increase on the side of use-value – while those who are receiving their administered blessings are getting back only part of the profit. That is the ground of the character of delusion of ethical hierarchy. Poverty has indeed always been glorified as asceticism, the social condition for the acquisition of precisely the wealth in which morality [Sittlichkeit] is manifested, but nevertheless “what a man is worth” [in English in original] signifies, as everyone knows, the bank account – in the jargon of the German merchants, “the man is good”, i.e. they can pay. What however the reasons of state of the almighty economy so cynically confesses, reaches unacknowledged into the mode of conduct of individuals. The generosity in private intercourse, which the rich can presumably allow themselves, the reflected glow of happiness, which rests on them, and something of this falls on everyone who they consort with, all this veils them. They remain nice, “the right people” [in English in original], the better types, the good. Wealth distances itself from immediate injustice. The guard beats strikers with a billy club, the son of the factory-owner may occasionally drink a whisky with the progressive author. According to all desiderata of private ethics [Moral], even the most advanced

kind, the rich could, if they only could, in fact always better be than the poor. This possibility, while truly indeed left unused, plays its role in the ideology of those who do not have it: even the convicted con artist, who may anyway be preferable to the legitimate boss of the trusts, is famous for having such a beautiful house, and the highly paid executive turns into a warm human being, the moment they serve an opulent dinner. Today's barbaric religion of success is accordingly not simply counter-ethical [widermoralisch], rather it is the home-coming of the West to the venerable morals [Sitten] of the fathers. Even the norms, which condemn the arrangement of the world, owe their existence to the latter's own mischief [Unwesen]. All ethics [Moral] is formed on the model of what is unethical [Unmoral], and to this day reproduces the latter at every stage. Slave-ethics [Sklavenmoral] is in fact bad: it is still only master-ethics [Herrenmoral].

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Knight of the rose. [Opera by Richard Strauss] – Elegant people are attractive due to the expectation that they are free in private from the greed for the advantages, which flow to them from their position, and from the stubborn prejudice in the closest relationships, which is caused by the narrowness of these last. One has confidence in their pleasure of adventure in thought, sovereignty vis-a-vis the state of their own interests, and refinement of forms of reaction, thinking that their sensitivity would turn at least in Spirit [Geist] against the brutality on which their privilege depends, while the victims scarcely have the possibility to recognize what makes them such. If however the separation of production and the private-sphere ultimately proves to be a piece of necessary social appearance [Scheins], then this expectation of unbound spirituality must be disappointed. Even the most subtle snobbery has nothing of dégoût [French: disgust] vis-a-vis its objective prerequisite, but rather seals itself off from its cognition. It is an open question as to what extent the French aristocracy of the 18th century took part, playfully-suicidally, in the enlightenment and the preparation for the revolution, a participation which the antipathy against the terrorists of virtue was so glad to imagine. The bourgeoisie in any case has kept itself free in its later phase from such inclinations. No one dances anymore on the volcano, otherwise they would be declassed. Subjectively, too, the “society” [in English in original] is so thoroughly stamped by the economic principle, whose manner of rationality concerns the whole, that the emancipation from interests – even merely as intellectual luxury – is forbidden. Just as they are not capable of enjoying their immeasurably expanded wealth, they are equally incapable of thinking against themselves. The search for frivolity is in vain. What helps to eternalize the real distinction between the upper and lower strata, is the fact that the distinction between the modes of consciousness, both here and there, is vanishing more and more. The poor are prevented from thinking by the discipline of others, the rich from that of their own. The consciousness of the rulers is inscribing in all Spirit [Geist], what previously religion endured. Culture turns for the high bourgeoisie into an element of representation. That one is clever or educated, is ranked under the qualities which make one worthy of invitation or marriage, like horse-riding skills, love of nature, charm or a faultlessly tailored suit. They are not curious about cognition. Free of cares, they mostly busy themselves with mundane details, just like the small bourgeoisie. They furnish houses, throw parties, make hotel and airplane reservations with virtuosity. Otherwise they nourish themselves on the refuse of European irrationalism. They bluntly justify their own hostility to the intellect [Geistfeindschaft], already suspecting – and not unjustly – something subversive in thinking itself, in the independence from anything which is already given or already existing. Just as in Nietzsche's time, when educated philistines believed in progress, the uniformly higher development of the masses and the greatest possible happiness of the greatest possible number, so too do they believe today, without quite knowing it, in the opposite: the revocation of 1789, the incorrigibility of human nature, the anthropological

impossibility of happiness – actually only that things are all too good for the workers. The profundity of yesteryear has recoiled into the most extreme banality. Of Nietzsche and Bergson, the last canonized philosophers, nothing remains but the murkiest anti-intellectualism in the name of the nature, which its apologists mutilate. “Nothing is more annoying to me about the Third Reich”, said in 1933 the Jewish woman of a general director, who was later murdered in Poland, “than the fact that we can no longer use the word earthly, because the Nazis have impounded it”, and even after the downfall of the Fascists, the attractive Austrian lady of a wealthy house, on meeting a labor union leader at a cocktail party with a reputation as a radical, knew no better way to express her enthusiasm for his personality than the bestial expression: “and moreover he is totally unintellectual, totally unintellectual”. I remember my own shock, when an aristocratic girl of shadowy origins, who could barely speak German to me with a thick foreign accent, expressed her sympathy for Hitler, with whose picture her own seemed incompatible. At that time I thought, sheer idiocy prevents her from seeing who she is. But she was more clever than I, for what she represented, no longer existed, and by cancelling out her individual determination, her class consciousness helped her being-in-herself, her social character, to break through. Those at the top are integrating with such iron force, that the possibility of subjective deviation falls away and nowhere can difference be sought anymore than in the distinguished cut of an evening gown.

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Requiem for Odette. [female character in Proust’s *Swann’s Way*] – The Anglomania of the upper classes of continental Europe is based on the fact that feudal practices are ritualized on the British isle, which are supposed to suffice in themselves. Culture is maintained there not as the divided sphere of objective Spirit [Geistes], as participation in art or philosophy, but rather as a form of empirical existence. The “high life” [in English in original] wishes to be the beautiful life. It brings those, who partake in it, ideological pleasure-winnings. By turning the shaping of existence into a task, in which one follows guidelines, preserves artificial styles, and keeps the delicate equilibrium of correctness and independence, existence itself appears as meaningful and calms the bad conscience of those who are socially superfluous. The incessant demand, to say and do that which is exactly appropriate to one’s status and situation, demands a kind of moral effort. It becomes difficult, to be who you are, and this is believed to be sufficient for the patriarchal noblesse oblige [French: obligation of the high-born]. At the same time the displacement of culture from its objective manifestations into the immediate life dissolves the risk that one’s own immediacy will be shaken by the Spirit [Geist]. This last is reproached for disturbing assured styles, for being tasteless, although not with the embarrassing brutality of the East Prussian Junker, but rather according to a spiritual criterion, as it were – the aestheticization of everyday life. This gives rise to the flattering illusion, that one has been spared the split between superstructure and infrastructure, culture and corporeal reality. But rituals fall, in all their aristocratic trappings, into the late bourgeois habit of hypostatizing the attainment of something meaningless in itself as meaningful, degrading the Spirit [Geist] to the doubling of that which exists anyway. The norm which one follows is fictive, its social prerequisites have vanished along with its model, the court ceremony, and it is acknowledged not because it is experienced as binding, but for the sake of legitimating the social order, from whose illegitimacy one benefits. Proust thus observed, with the incorruptibility of someone susceptible to seduction, that Anglomania and the cult of a form-driven mode of living are to be found less in aristocrats than in those who wish to ascend into the heights: it is only a step from snob to parvenu. Thus the affinity of snobbery and Jugendstil [Art Nouveau], the attempt by a class defined by exchange, to project themselves into a picture of vegetable beauty, as it were, purified of

exchange. That the life which organizes its own events is not any more of a life, becomes apparent in the boredom of the cocktail parties and the weekend invitations to the countryside, in the golf, symbolic of the entire sphere, and in the organization of “social affairs” [in English in original] – privileges, where no one has any real fun and with which the privileged only deceive themselves, about how little opportunity for joy in the unhappy whole exists even for them. In the latest phase, the beautiful life is reduced to what Veblen characterized it as throughout the ages, ostentation, the mere being-selected, and the park offers no other pleasure anymore than that of the wall, against which those outside can press their noses. What can be crassly observed in the upper classes, whose malice is in any case being irresistibly democratized, is what has long been true for society: life has turned into the ideology of its own absence.

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Monograms. – Odi profanum vulgus et arceo [I hate the vulgar rabble and shun it], said the son of the freed slave.

When it comes to truly evil people, one cannot really imagine them dying.

To say “we” and to mean “I” is one of the choicest of all slights.

Between “I dreamt” [es träumte mir] and “I dreamed” [ich träumte] lie ages of the world. But which is truer? So little do spirits send dreams, so little is it the ego which dreams.

Before the eighty-fifth birthday of an in all respects well cared-for man, I dreamed that I asked myself the question, what could I give him which would make him truly happy, and immediately received the answer: a guide through the realm of the dead.

That Leporello complained about insufficient provisions and too little money, is a reason to doubt the existence of Don Juan.

In early childhood I saw the first snow-shovelers in thin shabby clothes. In answer to my question: those are men without work, who were given this job so they can earn their bread. Serves them right, that they have to shovel snow, I cried out angrily, bursting into uncontrollable tears.

Love is the ability, to perceive what is similar in what is dissimilar.

Parisian circus advertisement before WW II: Plus sport que le théâtre, plus vivant que le cinéma [French: more sporting than the theater, more living than the cinema].

A film which followed the code of the Hays Office to the strictest letter might succeed in being a great work of art, but not in a world in which a Hays Office exists.

Verlaine: the pardonable unpardonable sin [literally: the venial mortal sin].

Brideshead Revisited by Evelyn Waugh: socialized snobbism.

Zille gives misery a slap on the butt.

Scheler: the bedroom in philosophy [in French in original].

A poem of Liliencron describes a military fanfare. First it goes: “And around the corner crashing brays, like thumping tubas on Judgement Day,” and it closes: “Did a bright butterfly dart / ching-ching boom, around the corner?” A poetic philosophy of history of violence, with Judgement Day at the beginning and the butterfly at the end.

In Trakl’s *Along* there is the verse: “Say how long we have been dead”; in Däubler’s *Golden Sonnet*: “How true, that we have all long since died”. The unity of expressionism consisted of expressing the fact that the human beings into which life has withdrawn, wholly alienated from each other, are turned thereby into the dead.

Among the forms which Borchardt tested, there is no lack of reworkings of folk songs. He avoided saying “In peoples’ tone”, and wrote instead: “In the tone of the people”. This sounds however just like “in the name of the law”. The restorative poet recoils into the Prussian police officer.

Not the least of the tasks which stands before thought, is putting all the reactionary arguments against Western culture into the service of advancing enlightenment.

The only true thoughts are those, which do not understand themselves.

When the little old woman dragged wood to the stack of kindling, Hus called: *sancta simplicitas* [Latin: oh holy simplicity]. But what about the reason for his sacrifice, the Last Supper in both its forms? Every reflection seems naive beside the higher one, and nothing is simple, because everything becomes simple in the disconsolate flight-path of forgetting.

You are loved, solely where you may show yourself as weak, without provoking strength.

123

The bad comrade. – Actually I should have been able to deduce Fascism from the memory of my childhood. It sent its emissaries there in advance, like a conqueror into the most distant province, long before it arrived: my school comrades. If the bourgeois class harbored since time immemorial the dream of the wild popular community, the oppression of all by all, then children with first names like Horst and Jürgen and last names like Bergenroth, Bojunga and Eckhardt, theatrically staged the dream, before the adults were historically ripe enough to realize it. I felt the violence of the image of horror they were striving for so clearly, that all happiness afterwards seemed to be revocable and borrowed. The outbreak of the Third Reich did indeed surprise my political judgement, yet not my fearful premonitions. So closely had all the motifs of the permanent catastrophe brushed against me, so inextinguishably were the warning signs of the German awakening burned into me, that I recognized each one all over again in the features of the Hitler dictatorship: and often it appeared to my foolish horror, as if the total state had been invented solely against me, in order to inflict on me what I had been hitherto spared in my childhood, that state’s prehistory. The five patriots who attacked a single schoolmate, beat him up and, when he complained to the teacher, defamed him as a classroom snitch – aren’t they the same ones, who tortured prisoners, in order to prove the foreigners wrong, who said that torture was occurring? Whose hullaboo knew no end, when the smartest student made a mistake – didn’t

they surround the Jewish camp prisoner, grinning and embarrassed, making fun of him, after he all too clumsily sought to hang himself? Who couldn't write a single decent sentence, but found every one of mine too long – didn't they abolish German literature and replace it through their scribing [Schrifttum]? Many covered their chests with mysterious insignia and wanted to become naval officers in a landlocked country: they declared themselves leaders of storm troopers and detachments, the legitimizers of illegitimation. The involuted intelligent ones, who had as little success in class as the gifted tinkerer without connections under liberalism; who for that reason curried favor with their parents with wood-saw work, or indeed drew for their own pleasure on drawing-boards with colored inks during long afternoon days, helped the Third Reich to its cruel efficiency and are being betrayed once again. Those however who always defiantly stirred up trouble against the teacher and, as one called it, disturbed the lesson, the day – indeed, the hour – they graduated from high school, they sat down with the same teachers at the same table with the same beer, as a confederation of men, who were born followers, rebels, whose impatient blows of the fist on the table already drummed the worship of the masters. They need only stay put, to catch up with those who were promoted to the next class, and revenge themselves on them. Since they, officials and candidates for death sentences, have stepped visibly out of my dreams and have expropriated my past life and my language, I don't need to dream of them any longer. In Fascism, the nightmare of childhood has realized itself.
[written in] 1935

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Puzzle-picture. – Why, in spite of a historical development which has driven towards oligarchy, workers are ever less able to know that they are such, can be gleaned from many observations. While the relationship of property-owners and producers is objectively congealing ever more rigidly, subjective class-membership is fluctuating more and more. This is abetted by economic development itself. The organic composition of capital demands, as has often been noted, control by technical managers rather than factory owners. These latter were the counter-party, as it were, to living labor, the former corresponded to the share of machinery in capital. The quantification of technical processes, however, its compartmentalization in the smallest operations, for the most part independent of experience and education, turns the expert status of the new-styled directors to a considerable extent into a mere illusion, behind which is concealed the privilege of being appointed. That technical development has reached a state, that all functions would actually be accessible to all – this immanent-socialistic element of progress is travestied by late industrialism. Membership in an elite appears achievable for everyone. One waits only for the cooptation. Eligibility consists in affinity, ranging from the libidinous cathexis of all wheeling and dealing, to sound technocratic sensibility, to freshly-cured realpolitik. They are experts only of control. That anyone can do such, has not led to its end, but only that everyone may be called upon to do such. Preference is given to those who fit in most exactly. While the chosen ones certainly remain a vanishing minority, the structural possibility suffices to successfully preserve the appearance [Schein] of an equal chance under the system, which has eliminated the free competition which lived on that appearance [Schein]. That the technical forces would permit a non-privileged condition, is credited by all, even those in the shadows, to the social relationships, which hinder it. In general, subjective class-membership today shows a mobility, which causes the fixity of economic social order to be forgotten: what is rigid is also what can be moved about. Even the powerlessness of the individual, to calculate out its economic destiny, contributes to such a consoling mobility. What decides on the fall is not lack of proficiency, but an opaque hierarchal web, in which no one, not even at the very top, may feel safe: the egalitarianism of the condition of being threatened. When the heroic flying captain returns home, in the most

successful blockbuster film of the year, to be bullied by petit bourgeois caricatures as a “soda jerk” [in English in original], he does not only satisfy the schadenfreude of the spectators, but even strengthens them moreover in the consciousness, that all human beings are truly brothers [reference to the 1946 *The Best Years of Our Lives*]. The most extreme injustice turns into the deceptive image of justice, the disqualification of human beings into their equality. Sociologists however are confronted with the grimly joking question: where is the proletariat?

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Olet. [Latin: pecunia non olet, “money does not stink”]– In Europe, the pre-bourgeois past has survived in the shame of having personal services or favors paid for. The new continent knows nothing of this anymore. Even in the old one, no one did anything for nothing, but this was felt as a wound. To be sure, exclusiveness, which stems from nothing better than a ground-monopoly, is ideology. But it was nevertheless imprinted deeply enough into the character, to stiffen its neck against the market. The German ruling class disparaged any way of earning money outside of privileges or control of production well into the 20th century. What was considered disreputable about artists or the educated, was what these latter most rebelled against, remuneration, and the private tutor Hölderlin as well as the pianist Liszt, had therein precisely those experiences, which set them in opposition to the ruling consciousness. Well into our day, the membership of human beings in the upper or lower classes has been crudely determined by whether they took money or not. At times the bad arrogance recoiled into conscious critique. Every child of the European upper crust blushed at the gifts of money, which relatives gave them, and although the primacy of bourgeois utility quelled such reactions and overcompensated for them, doubts remained nonetheless as to whether human beings were made merely for exchange. The remnants of what was older were, in the European consciousness, the ferment of what was new. In America by contrast no child of similarly well-off parents has any qualms about earning a few cents through newspaper deliveries, and such thoughtlessness is expressed in the habitus of adults. That is why Americans appear to untutored Europeans on the whole as a people without dignity, ready for paid services, just as conversely the former are inclined to consider the latter vagabonds and cardboard royalty. The self-evidence of the maxim, that there’s no shame in working, the guileless absence of any snobbery vis-a-vis what in the feudal sense is dishonorable in market relationships, the democracy of the principle of commerce contributes to the continuation of what is utterly anti-democratic, of economic injustice, of human degradation. It occurs to no one, that there might be certain services which would not be expressible in exchange-value. That is the real prerequisite for the triumph of that subjective reason, which is not even capable of thinking something which is true and obligated to itself, perceiving it solely as something which exists for others, something exchangeable. If pride was the ideology over there [i.e. Europe], here it is delivering to customers. This applies as well to the creations of the objective Spirit [Geistes]. The immediate self-advantage inherent in the act of exchange, thus what is subjectively most limited, prohibits the subjective expression. Valorizability [Verwertbarkeit], the a priori of production consistently oriented to the market, does not permit the spontaneous need for such, for the thing itself, to arise. Even the cultural products produced and distributed throughout the world with the greatest of expenditures, repeat the gestures – even if only by virtue of an opaque machinery – of traveling musicians, who keep an eye peeled on the plate by the piano, while hammering out the favorite melodies of their patrons. The budgets of the culture industry run into the billions, but the law of form of their productions is the tip. What is excessively blank, hygienically clean in industrialized culture, is the sole rudiment of that shame, an adjutory picture, comparable to the suits of the highest hotel managers, who, in order not to look like head waiters, outclass the aristocrats in elegance and thereby make themselves

recognizable as head waiters.

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I.Q. – The modes of conduct appropriate to the most progressive technical state of development are not limited to the sectors, in which they are actually promoted. Thus thinking submits to the social supervision of its services not only where it is forced to do so by its occupation, but comes to resemble such in its entire complexion. Because thought has been well-nigh inverted into the solution of tasks assigned to it, what is not assigned is also dealt with according to the schema of the task. Thought, having lost its autonomy, no longer trusts itself to comprehend something real for its own sake, in freedom. This it leaves, with respectful illusion, to the highest-paid, and makes itself measurable for this. It tends to behave, for its own part, as if it had to unceasingly portray its usefulness. Even where there is no nutshell to crack, thinking turns into training [in English in original] for some sort of exercise or other. It relates to its objects as mere hurdles, as a permanent test of its own being in form. Considerations, which would like to be responsible for the relation to the material [Sache] and thereby for themselves, invite the suspicion that they are vain, overblown, asocial self-satisfaction. Just as the neo-positivists split cognition into the scrap-heaps of empiricism and logical formalism, the intellectual activity of the types, who regard the unity of the sciences as written on their foreheads, is polarized in the inventory of the known and the test sample of the capacity for thought: to them, every thought turns into a quiz of whether they are informed or of their qualifications. Somewhere the correct answers must already be posted. Instrumentalism, the latest version of pragmatism, has long since become not merely an affair of the application of thinking, but rather the a priori of its own form. When oppositional intellectuals caught in such a spell wish to approach the content of society differently, they are crippled by the shape of their own consciousness, which is modeled in advance on the needs of this society. While their thought has forgotten how to think for itself, it has simultaneously turned into the absolute exam-authority of itself. Thinking means nothing other than checking at every moment, as to whether one can think. Thus the asphyxiating quality of every seemingly independent intellectual production, the theoretical ones no less than the artistic ones. The socialization of the Spirit [Geistes] holds it, roofed over, ensorcelled, under a glass, as long as society is itself trapped. Where thinking previously internalized obligations imposed from outside, today it today incorporates its integration into the all-embracing apparatus, and goes to pieces, even before its economic and political verdict can overtake it.

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Wishful thinking. [In English in original] – Intelligence is a moral category. The separation of feeling and understanding, which makes it possible to say, free and blessed are the knuckleheads, hypostatizes the historically achieved splintering of human beings into functions. The praise of simplicity [Einfalt] resonates with the anxiety that whatever has been separated might reunite and thus put an end to the mischief. “If you have understanding and a heart”, goes a couplet by Hölderlin, “show only one of each / Both condemn you, if you display them together.” [from Hölderlin’s poem *Good Advice*] The denigration of restricted understanding in comparison with infinite reason which echoes in philosophy, a reason which, as infinite, is at the same time undiscoverable by the ultimately finite subject, echoes in spite of its critical justification the old saw: “Be ever true and faithful” [quotation from Mozart song]. When Hegel demonstrated to reason its stupidity, he not only brought the isolated determination of reflection, the positivism of every name, to its measure of untruth, but became complicit in the ban on thought, severing the negative labor of the concept, which the method claimed to achieve, and swears by the highest height of speculation like the Protestant priest, who recommended to his flock to remain one,

instead of relying on their own weak light. Rather, it is up to philosophy to seek out the unity between feeling and understanding precisely in their contrast: in the moral unity. Intelligence, as the power of judgement, opposes in its carrying out what is already given, by simultaneously expressing it. The capacity of judgement, which seals itself off from the drive-impulse, does justice to this last precisely by a moment of counter-pressure against the social one. The power of judgement is measured by the staunchness of the ego. Thereby, however, also in that dynamics of the drives, which is handed over by the division of labor of the soul to the feelings. Instinct, the will to stand fast, is an implication of the meaning of logic. By forgetting itself, showing itself incorruptible, the judging subject wins its victory. By contrast, just as the narrowest circle of human beings dumb themselves down, where their interests begin, and then turn their resentment against what they do not wish to understand, precisely because they could understand it all too well, so too is the planetary stupidity, which prevents the contemporary world from seeing the absurdity of its own arrangement, the product of the unsublimated, unsublated interest of the rulers. Short-term and yet irresistible, it hardens itself into the anonymous schemata of the historical trajectory. This corresponds to the stupidity and obstinacy of the individual; the incapacity, to consciously unite the power of bias and bustle. It is regularly found in conjunction with moral defects, a lack of autonomy and responsibility, while so much is true in Socratic rationalism, that a clever person, whose thoughts are directed at objects and do not circle formalistically around themselves, can scarcely be conceived of as evil. For the motivation of evil, blind prejudice in the contingency of what is one's own, tends to dissipate in the medium of thought. Scheler's comment, that all cognition is founded in love, was a lie, because he demanded that love be something immediately viewed. But it would become the truth, if love pressed for the dissolution of all appearance [Scheins] of immediacy and thereby, to be sure, became irreconcilable with the object of cognition. Neither the synthesis of psychic compartments, alienated from each other, nor the therapeutic displacement of the ratio with irrational ferments, is any help against the splitting of thought, but rather the self-constitution of the element of the wish, which antithetically constitutes thinking as thinking. Only when that element is completely dissolved, without any heteronomous remnant in the objectivity of thought, does it drive towards utopia.

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Regressions. – My earliest memory of Brahms, and certain not only mine, is *Cradle Song*. A complete misunderstanding of the text: I didn't know that Nägelein [flowers] was a word for lilacs or in many districts for pink flowers, but imagined the word meant little nail, the numerous pins by which the curtain around the heavenly bed, my own, was fastened, so that the child, protected in its darkness from every trace of light, could sleep endlessly long, without fear – “until the cows come home”, as they say in Hessen. How distant the blossoms remain from the tenderness of such curtains. For us, nothing stands for undiminished brightness other than the unconscious dark; nothing for what we once could be, other than the dream, that we had never been born.

“Sleep in peace, sleep / close your little eyes so sweet / listen to the rainfall drip / hear the neighbors' doggy yip / Doggy bit the beggar man / tore a hole in his pants / past the gate, the beggar flees / sleep in peace, sleep.” The first line of Taubert's lullaby is terrifying. And yet both its final lines bless sleep with the promise of peace. This is not entirely due to bourgeois hardness, the comforting thought, that the intruder was scared off. The sleepily listening child has already half-forgotten the exile of the foreigner, who looks in Schott's song book like a Jew, and intuits in the verse “past the gate, the beggar flees” peace without the misery of others. So

long as there is even a single beggar, goes a fragment in Benjamin, there is mythos; only with the disappearance of the latter would mythos be reconciled. Would not violence itself be forgotten as in the onrushing wave of the child's sleep? Would not in the end the disappearance of the beggar nevertheless entirely compensate, for what was done to him and which could not be compensated for? Doesn't there lurk in all persecution by human beings, who, along with the little dog, incite the whole of nature against the weak, the hope that the last trace of persecution would be extirpated, which is itself the share of what is natural? Would not the beggar, who is forced out of the gates of civilization, find refuge in his homeland, which is emancipated from the bane [Bann] of the Earth? "Now rest and let your worries pass, the beggar comes home at last".

For as long as I can think, I've been happy with the song, "Between mountain and deep, deep valley": by the two rabbits who were stuffing themselves with grass, who were shot at by hunters, and upon realizing they were still alive, ran off. But I only understood the lesson quite late: reason can endure only in despair and crisis; it requires the absurd, in order to not be overcome by objective madness. One should act exactly like the rabbits; when the shot rings out, fall foolishly to the ground as if dead, collect oneself and one's senses, and if one still has any breath, run like blazes. The energy to fear and that for happiness are the same, the limitless state of open-mindedness for experience, raised to self-sacrifice, in which the one who is overcome can find themselves again. What would any happiness be, which did not measure itself according to the immeasurable sorrow of what is? For the course of the world is deeply unsettled. Whoever cautiously adapts to it, partakes of its madness, while only the eccentric holds fast and commands the absurdity to halt. Only the latter may navigate the appearance [Schein] of calamity, the "unreality of despair", and innervate from this, not merely that one still lives, but that there is still life. The cunning of the powerless hares redeems, along with themselves, even the hunters, whose guilt they pilfer.

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Customer service. – The culture industry sanctimoniously claims to follow its consumers and to deliver what they want. But while it reflexively denigrates every thought of its own autonomy and proclaims its victims as judges, its veiled high-handedness outbids all the excesses of autonomous art. It is not so much that the culture industry adapts to the reactions of its customers, as that it feigns these latter. It rehearses them, by behaving as if it itself was a customer. One could almost suspect, the entire "adjustment" [in English in original], which it claims to obey, is ideology; that the more human beings try, through exaggerated equality, through the oath of fealty to social powerlessness, to participate in power and to drive out equality, the more they attempt to make themselves resemble others and the whole. "The music listens for the listeners", and the film practices on the scale of a trust the despicable trick of adults, who, when speaking down to a child, fall over the gift with the language which suits only them, and then present the usually dubious gift with precisely the expression of lip-smacking joy, that is supposed to be elicited. The culture industry is tailored according to mimetic regression, to the manipulation of suppressed imitation-impulses. Therein it avails itself of the method, of anticipating its own imitation by its viewers, and sealing the consensus that it wishes to establish, by making it appear as if it already existed. What makes this all the easier, is that it can count on such a consensus in a stable system and can ritually repeat it, rather than actually having to produce it. Its product is by no means a stimulus, but a model for modes of reaction of nonexistent stimuli. Thus the enthusiastic music titles on the silver screen, the moronic children's speech, the eye-winking folksiness; even the close-up of the start calls out "How beautiful!", as it were. With this procedure the cultural machine goes so far as to dress down viewers like the

frontally photographed express train in a moment of tension. The cadence of every film however is that of the witch, who serves soup to the little ones she wants to ensorcel or devour, with the hideous murmur, “Yummy soup, yummy soup? You’ll enjoy it, you’ll enjoy it...” In art, this kitchen fire-magic was discovered by Wagner, whose linguistic intimacies and musical spices are always tasting themselves, and who simultaneously demonstrated the entire procedure, with the genius’ compulsion of confession, in the scene of the *Ring*, where Mime offers Siegfried the poisoned potion. Who however is supposed to chop off the monster’s head, now that its blond locks have lain for a long time under the linden tree? [Unter den Linden: famous boulevard in Berlin]

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Grey and grey. – Not even its bad conscience can help the culture industry. Its Spirit [Geist] is so objective, that it slaps all its subjects in the face, and so the latter, agents all, know what the story is and seek to distance themselves through mental reservations from the nonsense which they create. The acknowledgment, that films broadcast ideology, is itself a broadcast ideology. It is dealt with administratively by the rigid distinction between synthetic day-dreams on the one hand, vehicles of flight from daily life, “escape” [English in original]; and well-meaning products on the other hand, which promote correct social behaviors, providing information, “conveying a message” [in English in original]. The prompt subsumption under “escape” [in English in original] and “message” [in English in original] expresses the untruth of both types. The mockery against “escape” [in English in original], the standardized outrage against superficiality, is nothing but the pathetic echo of the old-fashioned ethos, which denounces gambling, because it cannot play along with such in the prevailing praxis. The escape-films are so dreadful not because they turn their back on an existence squeezed dry, but because they do not do so energetically enough, because they are squeezed just as dry, because the satisfactions which they pretend to give, converge with the humiliation of reality, with renunciation. The dreams have no dream. Just as the technicolor heroes don’t allow us to forget for a second that they are normal human beings, typecast prominent faces and investments, what is unmistakably revealed under the thin flutter of schematically produced fantasy is the skeleton of cinema-ontology, the entire prescribed hierarchy of values, the canon of what is unwanted and what is to be imitated. Nothing is more practical than “escape” [in English in original], nothing is more wedded to bustle: one is kidnapped into the distance only to have it hammered into one’s consciousness, that even at a distance, the laws of the empirical mode of life are undisturbed by empirical deviations. The “escape” [in English in original] is full of “message” [in English in original]. That is how the “message” [in English in original], the opposite, looks, which wishes to flee from flight. It reifies the resistance against reification. One need only hear experts talk about how a splendid work of the silver screen has, next to other merits, also a constitution, in the same tone of voice that a pretty actress is described as even having “personality” [in English in original]. The executive can easily decide at the conference, that the escape-film must be given, next to more expensive additions, an ideal such as: human beings should be noble, helpful and good. Separated from the immanent logic of the entity, from the thing, the ideal turns into something produced on tap, the reform of ameliorable grievances, transfigured charity, thereby simultaneously tangible and void. They prefer most of all to broadcast the rehabilitation of drunks, whose impoverished euphoria they envy. By representing a society hardened in itself, according to anonymous laws, as if good will alone were enough to help matters, that society is defended even where it is honestly attacked. What is reflected is a kind of popular front of all proper and right-thinking people. The practical Spirit [Geist] of the “message” [in English in original], the tangible demonstration of how things can be done better, allies itself with the

system in the fiction, that a total social subject, which does not exist at present, can make everything okay, if one could only assemble all the pieces and clear up the root of the evil. It is quite pleasant, to be able to vouch for one's efficiency. "Message" [in English in original] turns into "escape" [in English in original]: those swept up in cleaning the house in which they live, forget the ground on which it was built. What "escape" [in English in original] would really be, the antipathy, turned into a picture, against the whole, all the way into what is formally constituted, could recoil into a "message" [in English in original], without expressing it, indeed precisely through tenacious asceticism against the suggestion.

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Wolf as grandmother. – The strongest argument of the apologists for film is the crudest, its massive consumption. They declare the drastic medium of the culture industry to be popular art. The independence of norms of the autonomous work is supposed to discharge it from aesthetic responsibility, a responsibility whose standards prove to be reactionary in relation to film, just as in fact all intentions of the artistic ennoblement of film have something awry, something badly elevated, something lacking in form – something of the import for the connoisseur. The more that film pretends to be art, the more fraudulent it becomes. Its protagonists can point to this and even, as critics of the meanwhile kitschy interiority, appear avant-garde next to its crude material kitsch. If one grants this as a ground, then they become, strengthened by technical experience and facility with the material, nearly irresistible. The film is not a mass art, but is merely manipulated for the deception of the masses? But the wishes of the masses make themselves felt incessantly through the market; its collective production alone would guarantee its collective essence [Wesen]; only someone completely outside of reality would presume to see clever manipulators in the producers; most are talentless, certainly, but where the right talents coincide, it can succeed in spite of all the restrictions of the system. The mass taste which the film obeys, is by no means that of the masses themselves, but foisted on them? But to speak of a different mass taste than the one they have now, would be foolish, and what is called popular art, has always reflected domination. According to such logic, it is only in the competent adaptation of production to given needs, not in consideration of a utopian audience, that the nameless general will can take shape. Films are full of lying stereotypes? But stereotyping is the essence of popular art, fairy-tales know the rescuing prince and the devil just as films have the hero and villain, and even the barbaric cruelty, which divided the world into good and evil, is something film has in common with the greatest fairy-tales, which have the stepmother dance to death in red-hot iron shoes.

All this is can be countered, only by consideration of the fundamental concepts presupposed by the apologists. Bad films are not to be charged with incompetence: the most gifted are refracted by the bustle, and the fact that the ungifted stream towards them, is due to the elective affinity between lies and swindlers. The idiocy is objective; improvements in personnel could not create a popular art. The latter's idea was formed in agrarian relationships or simple commodity economies. Such relationships and their character of expression are those of lords and serfs, profiteers and disadvantaged, but in an immediate, not entirely objectified form. They are to be sure not less furrowed by class differences than late industrial society, but their members are not yet encompassed by the total structure, which reduces individual subjects to mere moments, in order to unite them, as those who are powerless and isolated, into the collective. That there are no longer folk does not however mean that, as Romanticism propagated, the masses are worse. On the contrary, what is revealed precisely now in the new, radical alienated form of society is the untruth of the older one. Even the traits, which the culture industry reclaims as the legacy of popular art, become thereby suspect. The film has a retroactive

energy: its optimistic horror brings to light what always served injustice in the fairy-tale, and evokes in the parade of villains the countenances of those, which the integral society condemns and whose condemnation was ever the dream of socialization. That is why the extinction of individual art is no justification for one which acts as if it its subject, which reacts archaically, were the natural one, while this last is the syndicate, albeit unconscious, of a pair of giant firms. If the masses themselves, as customers, have an influence on the film, this remains as abstract as the ticket stub, which steps into the place of nuanced applause: the mere choice between yes and no to something offered, strung between the discrepancy of concentrated power and scattered powerlessness. Finally, the fact that numerous experts, also simple technicians, participate in the making of a film, no more guarantees its humanity than the decisions of competent scientific bodies vis-a-vis bombs and poison gas.

The high-flown talk of film art stands indeed to benefit scribblers, who wish to get ahead; the conscious appeal to naivete, however, to the block-headedness of the subalterns, long since permeated by the thoughts of the master, will not do. Film, which today clings as unavoidably to human beings, as if it was a piece of themselves, is simultaneously that which is most distant from their human determination, which is realized from one day to the next, and its apologetics live on the resistance against thinking through this antinomy. That the people who make films are by no means intriguers, says nothing against this. The objective Spirit [Geist] of manipulation prevails through rules of experience, estimations of situations, technical criteria, economically unavoidable calculations, the entire deadweight of the industrial apparatus, without even having to censor itself, and even those who questioned the masses, would find the ubiquity of the system reflected back at them. The producers function as little as subjects as their workers and buyers, but solely as parts of an independent machinery. The Hegelian-sounding commandment, however, that mass art must respect the real taste of the masses and not that of negativistic intellectuals, is usurpation. The opposition of film, as an all-encompassing ideology, to the objective interests of human beings, its entanglement with the status quo of the profit-system, its bad conscience and deception can be succinctly cognized. No appeal to a factually accessible state of consciousness would have the right of veto against the insight, which reaches beyond this state of consciousness, by disclosing its contradiction to itself and to objective relationships. It is possible, that the Fascist professor was right and that even the folk songs, as they were, lived from the degraded cultural heritage of the upper class. It is not for nothing that all popular art is crumbly and, like films, not "organic". But between the old injustice, in whose voice a lament is still audible, even where it transfigures itself, and the alienation which upholds itself as connectedness, which cunningly creates the appearance [Schein] of human intimacy with loudspeakers and advertising psychology, there is a distinction similar to the one between the mother, who soothes the child who is afraid of demons with a fairy-tale in which the good are rewarded and the evil are punished, and the cinema product, which drives the justice of each world order into the eyes and ears of audiences of every land harshly, threateningly, in order to teach them anew, and more thoroughly, the old fear. The fairy-tale dreams which call so eagerly for the child in the adult, are nothing but regression, organized by total enlightenment, and where they tap the audience on the shoulder most intimately, they betray them most thoroughly. Immediacy, the community produced by films, is tantamount to the mediation without a remainder, which degrades human beings and everything human so completely to things, that their contrast to things, indeed even the bane [Bann] of reification itself, cannot be perceived anymore. Film has succeeded in transforming subjects into social functions so indiscriminately, that those who are entirely in its grasp, unaware of any conflicts, enjoy their own dehumanization as human, as the happiness of warmth. The total context of the culture industry, which leaves nothing out, is one with total social delusion. That is why it so easily dispatches

counter-arguments.

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Expensive reproduction. [Piperdruck] – Society is integral, before it ever becomes ruled as totalitarian. Its organization encompasses even those who feud against it, and normalizes their consciousness. Even intellectuals who have all the political arguments against bourgeois ideology handy, are subjected to a process of standardization which, whether in crassly contrasting content or through the readiness on their part to be comfortable, brings them closer to the prevailing Spirit [Geist], such that their standpoint objectively becomes always more arbitrary, dependent on flimsy preferences or their estimation of their own chances. What appears to them as subjectively radical, objectively belongs through and through to the compartment of a schema, reserved for them and their kind, so that radicalism is degraded to abstract prestige, the legitimation of those who know what today's intellectuals should be for and against. The good things, for which they opt, have long since been acknowledged, their numbers accordingly limited, as fixed in the value-hierarchy as those in the student fraternities. While they denounce official kitsch, their sensibility is dependent, like obedient children, on nourishment already sought out in advance, on the clichés of hostility to clichés. The dwellings of young bohemians resemble their spiritual household. On the wall, deceptively original color prints of famous artists, such as Van Gogh's *Sunflowers* or the *Café at Arles*, on the bookshelf derivative works on socialism and psychoanalysis and a little sex-research for the uninhibited with inhibitions. In addition, the Random House edition of Proust – Scott Moncrieff's translation deserved a better fate – exclusivity at reduced prices, whose exterior alone, the compact-economic form of the omnibus, is a mockery of the author, whose every sentence knocks a received opinion out of action, while he now plays, as a prize-winning homosexual, the same role with youth as books on animals of the forest and the North Pole expedition in the German home. Also, the record player with the Lincoln cantata of a brave soul, which deals essentially with railroad stations, next to the obligatory eye-catching folklore from Oklahoma and a pair of brassy jazz records, which make one feel simultaneously collective, bold and comfortable. Every judgement is approved by friends, they know all the arguments in advance. That all cultural products, even the non-conformist ones, are incorporated into the mechanism of distribution of large-scale capital, that in the most developed lands a creation which does not bear the imprimatur of mass production can scarcely reach any readers, observers, or listeners, refuses the material in advance for the deviating longing. Even Kafka is turned into a piece of inventory in the rented apartment. Intellectuals themselves are already so firmly established, in their isolated spheres, in what is confirmed, that they can no longer desire anything which is not served to them under the brand of "highbrow" [in English in original]. Their sole ambition consists of finding their way in the accepted canon, of saying the right thing. The outsider status of the initiates is an illusion and mere waiting-time. It would be giving them too much credit to call them renegades; they wear overlarge horn-rimmed glasses on their mediocre faces, solely to better pass themselves off as "brilliant" to themselves and to others in the general competition. They are already exactly like them. The subjective precondition of opposition, the non-normalized judgement, goes extinct, while its trappings continue to be carried out as a group ritual. Stalin need only clear his throat, and they throw Kafka and Van Gogh on the trash-heap.

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Contribution to intellectual history. – In the back of my copy of Zarathustra, dated 1910, there are publisher's notices. They are all tailored to that clan of Nietzsche readers, as imagined by Alfred Körner in Leipzig, someone who ought to know. "*Ideal Life-goals* by Adalbert Svoboda.

Svoboda has ignited a brightly shining beacon in his works, which cast light on all problems of the investigative Spirit of human beings [Menschengeist] and reveal before our eyes the true ideals of reason, art and culture. This magnificently conceived and splendidly realized book is gripping from beginning to end, enchanting, stimulating, instructive and has the same effect on all truly free Spirits [Geister] as a nerve-steeling bath and fresh mountain air." Signed: Humanity, and almost as recommendable as David Friedrich Strauss. "*On Zarathrustra* by Max Ernst. There are two Nietzsches. One is the world-famous fashionable philosopher, the dazzling poet and phenomenally gifted master of style, who is now the talk of all the world, from whose works a few misunderstood slogans have become the intellectual baggage of the educated. The other Nietzsche is the unfathomable, inexhaustible thinker and psychologist, the great discerner of human beings and valuer of life of unsurpassable spiritual energy and power of thought, to whom the most distant future belongs. To bring this other Nietzsche to the most imaginative and serious-minded of contemporary human beings is the intent of the following two essays contained in this short book." In that case I would still prefer the former. The other goes: "*A Philosopher and a Noble Human Being, a Contribution to the Characteristics of Friedrich Nietzsche*, by Meta von Salis-Marschlins. The book grabs out attention by the faithful reproduction of all the sensations which Nietzsche's personality evoked in the self-conscious soul of a woman." Don't forget the whip, instructed Zarathrustra. Instead of this, is offered: "*The Philosophy of Joy* by Max Zerbst. Dr. Max Zerbst starts out from Nietzsche, but strives to overcome a certain one-sidedness in Nietzsche... The author is not given to cool abstractions, it is rather a hymn, a philosophical hymn to joy, which he delivers in spades." Like a student spree. Only no one-sidedness. Better to run straight to the heaven of the atheists: "*The Four Gospels*, German, with introduction and commentary by Dr. Heinrich Schmidt. In contrast to the corrupted, heavily edited form, in which the gospels have been delivered to us as literature, this new edition goes back to the source and may be of high value not only for truly religious human beings, but also for those 'anti-Christ's', who press for social action." The choice is difficult, but one can take comfort from the fact that both elites will be as agreeable as the synopticians: "*The Gospel of Modern Humanity (A Synthesis: Nietzsche and Christ)* by Carl Martin. An astounding treatise of edification. Everything which is taken up in the science and art of the present has taken up the struggle with the Spirits [Geistern] of the past, all of this has taken root and blossomed, in this mature and yet so young mind [Gemüt]. And mark well: this 'modern', entirely new human being creates for itself and us the most revivifying potion from an age-old spring: that other message of redemption, whose purest sounds resonate in the Sermon on the Mount... Even in the form of the simplicity and grandeur of those words!" Signed: Ethical Culture. The miracle passed away nearly forty years ago, plus twenty more or so, since the genius in Nietzsche justifiably decided to break off communication with the world. It didn't help – exhilarated, unbelieving priests and exponents of that organized ethical culture, which later drove formerly well-to-do ladies to emigrate and get by as waitresses in New York, have thrived on the posthumous legacy of someone who once worried whether someone was listening to him sing "a secret barcarole". Even then, the hope of leaving behind a message in a bottle amidst the rising tide of barbarism was a friendly vision: the desperate letters have been left in the mud of the age-old spring, and have been reworked by a band of noble-minded people and other scoundrels to highly artistic but low-priced wall decorations. Only since then has the progress of communication truly gotten into gear. Who are we to cast aspersion on the freest spirits [Geister] of them all, whose trustworthiness possibly even outbids those of their contemporaries, if they no longer write for an imaginary posterity, but solely for the dead God?

Juvenal's error. – It's difficult to write satire. It is not merely because of a condition, which needs the latter more than ever, which mocks all mockery. The means of irony have ended up in contradiction with the truth. Irony convicts the object, by taking it for what it claims to be, and without judgement, by blocking out, as it were, the reflecting subject, measuring it by its being-in-itself. It points out the negative by confronting the positive with its own claim to positivity. It sublates itself, as soon as it adds the interpreting word. It thus presupposes the idea of what is self-evident, originally of social resonance. Only where a compelling consensus of subjects is assumed, is subjective reflection, the fulfillment of the conceptual act, superfluous. Those who have laughter on their side, don't need proof. Historically, over the millenia, all the way to the age of Voltaire, satire has been happy to consort with those who are stronger and could be relied upon, with authority. Typically it agitated for older strata, threatened by the newer stages of the enlightenment, which sought to support their traditionalism with enlightened means: its immemorial object was the decline of morals [Sitten]. That is why what once flashed like a rapier, appears to those born to later generations like a thick truncheon. The double-tongued spiritualization of the appearance [Erscheinung] always wishes to show the satirist as amusing, as the height of progress; the metric however is that which is endangered by progress, which remains nevertheless so widely disseminated as a valid ideology, that the phenomenon singled out for denunciation is dismissed, without even being granted a fair trial. The comedies of Aristophanes, in which obscene tales are supposed to expose fornication, functioned as the modernistic *laudatio temporis acti* [Latin: praise for times past] for the rabble, which it defamed. With the victory of the bourgeois class in the Christian era, the function of irony loosened up. It has at times run over to the side of the oppressed, especially where these latter were in truth no longer anything of the sort. Admittedly, as something imprisoned in its own form, it has an authoritarian legacy, which never totally divested itself of an unprotesting nastiness. Only with the decline of the bourgeoisie did it sublimate itself into the appeal of an idea of humanity, which no longer permitted any reconciliation with the existent and its consciousness. But even to these ideas, self-evidence was what counted: no doubt in the objective-immediate evidence arose; no witticism of Karl Kraus hesitates to decide who is responsible and who is a scoundrel, what is Spirit [Geist] and what is stupidity, what is language and what is a newspaper. The vehemence [Gewalt: violence, power] of his sayings is due to his quick-wittedness. Just as they stop at no question, in the lightning-quick consciousness of the matter-at-hand [Sachverhalts], so too do they leave no question open. The more emphatically however the prose of Kraus posits its humanism as an invariant, the more it takes on restorative qualities. It condemns corruption and decadence, the literati and the Futurists, without having anything to commend itself over the zealots of the natural condition other than the cognition of their awfulness. That in the end the intransigence against Hitler showed itself to be yielding in the case of Schuschnigg, does not attest to a lack of courage, but the antinomy of satire. This latter needs something to hold on to, and he, who called himself the grouch [Nörgler], bent to its positivity. Even the denunciation of Schmock [stereotypical hack journalist] contains, beside its truth, its critical element, something of the "common sense" [in English in original], which cannot stand the fact that someone talks in such windy terms. The hatred of those who would like to seem more than what they are, holds them fast with the facts of their constitution. The incorruptibility vis-a-vis what is artificial, for the simultaneously unredeemed and commercially oriented pretension of the Spirit [Geistes], unmask those who failed to measure up to what stands before their eyes as something elevated. This elevation is power and success and stands revealed, through the botched identification, as itself a lie. But the *faiseur* [French: miracle-worker] always embodies at the same time utopia: even false jewels radiate with a powerless childhood dream, and this latter is condemned,

because it failed, adducing itself, as it were, before the forum of success. All satire is blind to the forces, which are released during disassembly [Zerfall: disintegration]. That is why terminal decline has absorbed the powers of satire. The scorn of the leaders of the Third Reich for emigres and liberal state officials was the latest version of this, a scorn whose power consisted solely in muscle-flexing. The impossibility of satire today is not to be blamed, as sentimentality would have it, on the relativism of values, on the absence of binding norms. Rather, consensus itself, the formal a priori of irony, has turned into the content-based universal consensus. As such, it would be the sole worthy object of irony and simultaneously pulls the rug from underneath it. Its medium, the difference between ideology and truth, has vanished. The former is resigned to the confirmation of reality through its mere duplication. Irony once expressed: this is what it claims to be, but that is what it is; today however the world alleges that things are just so, even in the radical lie, and that such a simple finding coincides with what is good. There is no crack in the sheer cliff of the existent, to which the grasp of the ironist may cling. Those who fall are regaled by the hellish laughter of the treacherous object, which disempowers them. The gesture of the non-conceptual “that’s that” is exactly the one which the world turns against each of its victims, and the transcendental consensus, which dwells in irony, becomes ludicrous before the real consensus of those which it should attack. Against the blood-drenched seriousness of the total society, which has absorbed its counter-authority as the helpless objection which irony formerly struck down, there stands solely blood-drenched seriousness, the understood truth.

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Sacrificial lamb. – Dictating is not merely more comfortable, and is not merely a spur to the concentration, but has in addition an objective advantage. Dictation makes it possible for the author to slide into the position of the critic during the earliest phases of the production process. What one puts down is non-binding, provisional, mere material for reworking; once transcribed, however, it appears as something alienated and to a certain extent objective. One need not fear establishing anything, which ought not to remain, for one does not have to write: one takes responsibility by playing a practical joke on responsibility. The risk of formulation takes the harmless initial form of effortlessly presented memos, then work on something which already exists, so that one can no longer even perceive one’s own temerity. In view of the difficulty, which has increased to desperate levels, of any theoretical expression, such tricks are a blessing. They are a technical means of assistance of dialectical procedure, which makes statements, in order to take them back and nevertheless hold them fast. Thanks however are due to those who take dictation, when they flush out the author at the right moment through contradiction, irony, nervousness, impatience and lack of respect. They draw rage to themselves. This rage is channeled from the storehouse of the bad conscience, with which authors otherwise mistrust their own texts and which the author would be that much more stubborn about leaving in the presumably holy text. The emotional affect, which ungratefully turns against the burdensome helper, benevolently purifies the relation to the matter [Sache].

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Exhibitionist. [in English in original]– Artists do not sublimate. It is a psychoanalytic illusion to think that they neither satisfy their desires nor repress them, but transform them into socially acceptable achievements, into their entities [Gebilde]; incidentally, legitimate works of art are today without exception socially unacceptable. On the contrary, artists display violent, free-floating instincts, which simultaneously collide with reality and are marked by neurosis. Even the petty bourgeois stereotype of the dramatist or violinist as a synthesis of nerve-bundles and heart-breaking is closer to the mark than the no less petty bourgeois drive-economy, according to

which the Sunday's children of renunciation are let loose in symphonies and novels. Their part is rather a hysterically exaggerated lack of inhibition vis-a-vis all humanly conceivable fears; a narcissism driven to the borders of paranoia. Against what is sublimated, they have idiosyncrasies. They are irreconcilable to the aesthetes, indifferent to cultivated milieus, and they recognize in the tasteful mode of life the inferior reaction-formation towards the propensity for what is inferior, as surely as the psychologists who misunderstand them. They have been attracted, everywhere from the letters of Mozart to his young Augsburg cousin to the word-jokes of the embittered tutor, to what is off-color, foolish, improper. They do not fit into Freudian theory, because it lacks an adequate concept of expression, in spite of all its insight into the functioning of symbolism of dreams and neuroses. It is certainly illuminating, that an uncensored drive-impulse, once expressed, cannot be called repressed, even when it no longer wishes to demand a goal which it does not find. On the other hand, the analytic distinction between locomotor – "real" – and hallucinatory satisfaction points in the direction of the difference of satisfaction and undistorted expression. But expression is not hallucination. It is appearance [Schein], measured by the reality-principle, and would like to bypass this latter. What is subjective never seeks, however, to substitute itself through the appearance [Schein] in delusive fashion, as through a symptom, in place of reality. Expression negates the reality, by holding up to it, what does not resemble it, but it does not deny it; it looks at the conflict straight in the eye – the conflict which otherwise results in the blind symptom. What the expression has in common with repression, is that the impulse finds itself blocked by reality. That impulse, and the entire context of experience which belongs to it, is denied immediate communication with the object. As expression it comes to the unfalsified phenomenon [Erscheinung] of itself and thereby of resistance, in sensuous imitation. It is so strong, that it experiences its modification to a mere picture, the price of survival, without being mutilated on its way outside. Instead of setting the goal of its own subjective-censoring "processing", it sets something objective: its polemical revelation [Offenbarung]. This distinguishes it from sublimation: every successful expression of the subject, one might say, is a small victory over the play of forces of its own psychology. The pathos of art stems from the fact that precisely by withdrawing into the imagination, it gives the hegemony of reality what is its due, and nevertheless does not resign itself to adaptation, does not perpetuate the violence of what is externalized in the deformation of what is internalized. For that reason, those who achieve this must without exception pay dearly as individuals, because they are left helplessly behind their own expression, which outpaces their psychology. Thereby however they awaken, no less than their products, doubts in the ranking of works of art under cultural achievements ex definitione [Latin: by definition]. No work of art can, in the social organization, evade its membership in culture, but none, which is more than arts-and-crafts, exists which does not turn to culture with a dismissive gesture: that it became a work of art. Art is as hostile to art as artists. In the renunciation of the drive-goal it keeps faith with this drive-goal, unmasking what is socially desirable, which Freud naively glorified as sublimation, which in all likelihood does not exist.

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Small pains, great songs. – Contemporary mass culture is historically necessary not merely as the consequence of the embrace of the entire life by monster enterprises, but as the consequence of what today seems most utterly opposed to the prevailing standardization of consciousness, aesthetic subjectification. Indeed the more that artists went towards the inner, the more they learned to renounce the infantile fun of imitating of what is external. But at the same time, they learned, by virtue of reflecting on the soul, to control themselves more and more. The progress of its technics, which constantly brought greater freedom and independence from what is

heterogeneous, resulted in a kind of reification, the technification of inwardness as such. The greater the virtuosity by which artists express themselves, the less must they “be” what they express, and the more what is to be expressed, indeed the content of subjectivity itself, becomes a mere function of the production process. Nietzsche sensed this, when he accused Wagner, the tamer of expression, of hypocrisy, without recognizing that it was not a question of psychology, but of a historical tendency. The transformation of expressive content from an unguided impulse into a material for manipulation makes it however simultaneously tangible, presentable, salable. The lyric subjectification in Heine, for example, does not stand in a simple contradiction to his commercial traits, rather what is salable is itself a subjectivity administered by subjectivity. The virtuoso usage of the “scale”, which has defined artists since the 19th century, crosses over out of its own drive-energy into journalism, spectacle, and calculation, not primarily through betrayal. The law of movement of art, which amounts to the control and thereby the objectification of the subject by itself, means its downfall: the hostility to art of film, which administratively looks over all materials and emotions, in order to deliver them to the customer, the second exteriority, originates in art as the increasing domination over inner nature. The oft-cited play-acting of the modern artists, however, their exhibitionism, is the gesture, through which they put themselves as goods on the market.

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Who is who. [in English in original] – The self-flattering conviction of the naivety and purity of artists or professors lives on in its inclination, to explain away difficulties by the cunning interestedness, the practically calculating Spirit [geist] of the counter-parties. But just as every construction, in which one is justified and the world is unjustified, every insistence on one’s own title, tends to justify the world in oneself, so too do things stand with the antithesis of pure will and slyness. The intellectual outsider, who knows what to expect, behaves reflectively today, steered by a thousand political tactical considerations, cautious and suspicious. The ones who understand each other, however, whose realm has long since converged across party lines on the way to living-space [Lebensraum: notorious term of Nazi propaganda], no longer consider the calculations necessary, which they were once capable of. They are so reliably committed to the rules of reason, their state of interests have sedimented themselves so transparently into their thought, that they have once again become innocuous. If one investigates their shadowy plans, their judgements are metaphysically true, because they are related to the gloomy course of the world, but psychologically false: they end up in the objectively increasing persecution-mania. Those who commit betrayal and iniquity according to their function and sell themselves and their friends to power, require no cunning or ulterior motivation for this, no planning institution of the ego, but conversely need only rely on their reactions and the unthinking satisfaction of the demands of the moment, in order to easily fulfill, what others could achieve solely through tortuously complex machinations. They inspire trust, by proclaiming it. They watch to see how things fall out for them, live hand to mouth, and recommend themselves as simultaneously unegoistic and as subscribers to a condition, which ensures that they will lack for nothing. Because all of them solely pursue their particular interest, without conflict, this interest appears once more as general and disinterested, as it were. Their gestures are open, spontaneous, disarming. They are nice and their critics are evil. Because they are not even left with the independence of action, which would oppose the interest, they depend on the good will of others and are themselves of good will. The abstract interest, as something entirely mediated, creates a second immediacy, while those who are not yet completely encompassed are unnaturally compromised. In order to not be ground beneath the wheel, these latter must thoroughly outbid the world in worldiness and are easily convicted of clumsy overcompensation. Suspicion, lust for

power, lack of camaraderie, falsity, vanity and lack of seriousness are what they are compulsively reproached for. Social enchantment unavoidably turns those who do not play along into self-seeking types, while those without a self, who live according the reality principle, are called selfless.

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Address unknown. – Cultivated philistines are wont to demand that the work of art should give them something. They are no longer outraged at what is radical, but draw back with the shamelessly modest assertion, that they just don't understand. This latter clears away the resistance, the last negative relation to the truth, and the offending object is catalogued with a smile under its own, under consumer goods, between which one has a choice and which one can reject, without incurring any responsibility. One is just too dumb, too outmoded, one just can't keep up, and the smaller one makes oneself out to be, the more reliably do they participate in the mighty unison of the vox inhumana populi [Latin: inhuman voice of the people], in the guiding force [Gewalt] of the petrified spirit of the age [Zeitgeist]. What is not comprehensible, from which noone gets anything, turns from an outraging crime into mere foolishness, deserving of pity. They displace the temptation along with the spike. That someone is supposed to be given something, by all appearances the postulate of substantiality and fullness, cuts off these latter and impoverishes the giving. Therein however the relationship of human beings comes to resemble the aesthetic one. The reproach that someone gives nothing, is execrable. If the relation is sterile, then one should dissolve it. Those however who hold fast to it and nevertheless complain, always lack the organ of sensation: imagination. Both must give something, happiness as precisely what is not exchangeable, what cannot be complained about, but such giving is inseparable from taking. It is all over, if the other is no longer reachable by what one finds for them. There is no love, that would not be an echo. In myths, the guarantor of mercy was the acceptance of sacrifice; love, however, the after-image of the sacrificial act, pleads for the sake of this acceptance, if it is not to feel itself to be under a curse. The decline of gift-giving today goes hand in hand with the hardening against taking. It is tantamount however to that denial of happiness, which alone permits human beings to hold fast to their manner of happiness. The wall would be breached, where they received from others, what they themselves must reject with a sour grimace. That however is difficult for them due to the exertion which taking requires of them. Isolated in technics, they transfer the hatred of the superfluous exertion of their existence onto the energy expenditure, which pleasure requires as a moment of its being [Wesen] all the way into its sublimations. In spite of countless small moments of relief, their praxis remains an absurd toil; the squandering of energy in happiness, however, the latter's secret, they do not tolerate. That is why things must go according to the English expression, "relax and take it easy" [in English in original], which comes from the language of nurses, not the one of exuberance. Happiness is outmoded: uneconomic. For its idea, sexual unification, is the opposite of being at loose ends, namely ecstatic tension, just as that of all subjugated labor is disastrous tension.

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Consecutio temporum. [Latin: sequence of tenses] – When my first composition instructor tried to drive the atonal nonsense out of me and failed to persuade me through tales of the erotic scandals of the atonal composers, he fell back on trying to pin me down, where he thought my weakness lay, in the wish to be up-to-date. The ultra-modern, so ran his argument, was already no longer modern, the stimulus I sought had already faded away, the figures of expression, which excited me, belonged to an outmoded sentimentality, and the new youth had, as he liked to call it, more red blood cells in them. His own pieces, where orientalist themes were regularly extended

through the chromatic scale, proved such hyper-subtle considerations to be the maneuvering of a concert director with a bad conscience. But I was soon to discover, that the fashion which he upheld against my modernity, did in fact resemble, in the Ur-homeland of the great salons, what he had cooked up in the provinces. Neoclassicism, that type of reaction which does not acknowledge itself to be such, but goes so far as to portray the reactionary moment as advanced, was the leading indicator of a massive tendency, which under fascism and in mass-culture quickly learned to deal with the tender considerations of the artistes, who were always hypersensitive anyway, and to unite the spirit [Geist] of Courths-Mahler with that of technical progress. What is modern has truly become unmodern. Modernity is a qualitative category, not a chronological one. The less it can be reduced to an abstract form, the more necessary is its rejection of the conventional superficial context, of the appearance [Schein] of harmony, of the social order, which is reinforced by mere duplication. The Fascist street thugs, who clamored furiously against Futurism, understood more in their rage than the Moscow censors, who put Cubism on the index of banned works, because it remained behind the Spirit [Geist] of the collective times in private impropriety, or the impudent theater critics, who find a play by Strindberg or Wedekind passé [French: obsolete], but find an underground news report “up-to-date” [in English in original]. Nevertheless the smug banality expresses a dreadful truth: that in the wake of the train of the entire society, which would like to dragoon all expressions into its organization, what remains behind is what opposes the wave of the future, as the wife of Lindbergh called it – the critical construction of essence [Wesen]. This latter is by no means merely ostracized by a corrupted public opinion, but the absurdity affects the matter [Sache]. The hegemony of the existent, which constrains the Spirit [Geist] to do exactly what it does, is so overpowering, that even the unassimilated expression of protest assumes the aspect of something tacked together, disoriented, clueless vis-a-vis the former, and recalls that provincialism, which once prophetically suspected modernity of being retrograde. The psychological regression of individuals, who exist without an ego, goes hand in hand with a regression of the objective Spirit [Geistes], in which dull-wittedness, primitivity and the sell-out push through what has long since historically decayed as the most modern historical power and thereby consign everything which does not enthusiastically join the train of regression to the verdict of yesteryear. Such a quid pro quo of progress and reaction makes orientating oneself vis-a-vis contemporary art nearly as difficult as vis-a-vis politics, and moreover cripples production itself, such that whoever holds fast to extreme intentions is made to feel like a backwoods hick, while the conformists no longer sit shyly in their arbors [Gartenlaube: arbor, also the name of 19th century family magazine], but barrel ahead like rockets into the pluperfect tense.

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La nuance / encor. [French: “nuance / once more”; quotation from Verlaine’s *Poetic Art*] The demand that thinking and knowing should renounce nuances is not to be summarily dismissed, as merely giving in to the prevailing dull-wittedness. If the linguistic nuance could no longer be perceived, then that would concern it itself and not merely reception. Language is, according to its own objective substance, social expression, even where it separated itself as something brusquely individual from society. The changes which it encounters in communication, reach into the non-communicative material of the author. What is spoiled in the words and speech-forms of common usage, arrives in the sequestered workshop as damaged. However the historical damage cannot be repaired there. History does not merely influence language, but also occurs in the midst of it. What continues to be used in spite of customary usage, presents itself as fatuously provincial or unhurriedly restorative. All nuances are so thoroughly attacked and inverted into “flavor” [in English in original], that even advanced literary subtleties recall

degraded words like gleaming, thoughtful, snug, aromatic. The institutions against kitsch become kitschy, artsy-craftsy, with an overtone of something idiotically consoling from the world of women, whose soulfulness, replete with flutes and folk-costumes, became standard issue in Germany. In the obligatory level of junk, with which happily surviving intellectuals apply to the vacant posts of culture, what yesterday still stylized itself as consciously linguistic and hostile to convention reads today like Old Frankish foppery. German culture seems to be faced with the alternative of a dreadful second Biedermeier or paper-administrative banality. The simplification, however, which is suggested not merely by market interest, but from excellent political motives and finally from the historical consciousness of language itself, does not so much overcome the nuance, as tyrannically promote its decay. It offers the sacrifice to the omnipotence of society. But this latter is, precisely for the sake of its omnipotence, as incommensurable with the subject of cognition and foreign as it was in more innocuous times, when it avoided daily language. That human beings are being absorbed into the totality, without the totality being mastered by human beings, makes institutionalized speech forms as void as the naively individual valeurs [French: standards], and the attempt to refunction such by accepting them into the literary medium remains just as fruitless: the engineering pose of those who cannot read a diagram. The collective language, which lures authors, who mistrust their isolation as Romanticism, is no less Romantic: they usurp the voices of those for whom they cannot at all immediately speak, as one of them, because their language, through reification, is so separated from them as everyone is from everyone else; because the contemporary shape of the collective is in itself speechless. No collective today, which is entrusted with the expression of the subject, is already a subject. Whoever does not follow the dictates of the official hymn-tone to festivals of liberation, which are supervised by totalitarians, but means in earnest what Roger Caillois ambiguously enough recommended as aridité [French: aridity], experiences the objective discipline solely as privation, without getting back a concrete generality for this. The contradiction between the abstraction of that language, which wishes to clean house with what is the bourgeois-subjective, and its expressly concrete objects, lies not in the incapacity of the author, but in a historical antinomy. That subject wishes to cede itself to the collective, without being sublated in it. That is why precisely its renunciation of the private maintains something private, something chimerical. Its language mimics, on its own initiative, the strict construction of society and imagines that it could make the very cement speak. As punishment, the unconfirmed common language incessantly commits faux pas [French: misstep, mistake] of materiality [Sachlichkeit] at the expense of the material [Sache], not so different from the bourgeoisie, when they wax rhetorical. The logical consequence of the decay of nuance is neither to obstinately hold fast to what is decaying, nor to extirpate every single one, but wherever possible to outbid the very quality of being nuanced, to drive it so far, until it recoils from subjective shading into the purely specific determination of the object. The writer must take the greatest care to ensure that the word means the thing and only this thing, without sidelong glances, in connection with the chiseling of every turn of phrase, listening with patient effort for what bears the linguistic, in itself, and what does not. Those who are afraid, however, of falling in spite of everything behind the spirit of the times [Zeitgeist] and of being thrown on the trash-heap of discarded subjectivity, are to be reminded that what is newly arrived and what is, according to its content, progressive, are no longer as one. In a social order, which liquidates the modern as retrograde, then what may befall what is retrograde, if it is overtaken by the judgement, is the truth over which the historical process rolls. Because no truth can be expressed, than the one which is capable of filling the subject, the anachronism becomes the refuge of what is modern.

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Which follows German song. [conclusion of Hölderlin's *Patmos*] – Artists like George have rejected free verse as an inferior form, as a hybrid of meter and prose. They are rebutted by Goethe and Hölderlin's late hymns. Their technical gaze takes free verse, for what it considers itself. They are deaf to the history, which stamps its expression. Only in the epoch of its decay are free rhythms nothing but intermittent prose sections, set in an elevated tone. Where free verse proves itself to be a form of its own essence [Wesens], it has emerged from the metrical strophe, pressing beyond subjectivity. It turns the pathos of the meter against its own claim, the strict negation of what is most strict, just as musical prose, emancipated from the symmetry of the eight-beat meter, is due to the implacable principles of construction, which matured in the articulation of what is tonally regular. In free rhythm, the rubble of artistically rhymeless antique strophes finds its voice. These latter, foreign, extend into modern languages and serve, by virtue of such foreignness, to express what is not exhausted in communication. But they give way, unsalvageably, to the flood of language in which they were raised. They signify, with brittleness, in the midst of the realm of communication and not to be separated from the latter by any caprice, distance and stylization – incognito, as it were – and without privilege, until the wave of dreams washes over the helpless verses, as in Trakls lyrics. It is not for nothing that the epoch of free verse was the French revolution, the debut of human dignity and human equality. But isn't the conscious procedure of such verse similar to the law, which language above all obeys in its unconscious history? Isn't all worked prose actually a system of free rhythms, the attempt to provide cover for the magic bane [Bann] of what is absolute and the negation of its appearance [Scheins], an exertion of the Spirit [Geistes], to rescue the metaphysical force [Gewalt] of the expression by virtue of its own secularization? If this were so, then a ray of light would fall on the labor of Sisyphus, which every prose author has taken on themselves, since demythologization has passed over into the destruction of language itself. Linguistic quixotry has become a commandment, because every sentence structure contributes to the decision as to whether language as such, ambiguous from Ur-times to the present, falls prey to the bustle and the dedicated lies, which belong to such, or whether it becomes a sacred text, by making itself demure towards the sacred element, from which it lives. The ascetic sealing off of prose against verse is tantamount to an oath of fealty to song.

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In nuce. [Latin: in the kernel] – The task of art today is to bring chaos into order [Ordnung: social order].

Artistic productivity is the capacity of volition in involution.

Art is magic, emancipated from the lie of being the truth.

Since works of art were at one time derived from the fetishes – can one blame the artists, when they behave just a little fetishistically towards their products?

The art-form which since time immemorial raised the representation of the idea to the highest pitch of spiritualization [Vergeistigung], drama, is simultaneously according to its innermost prerequisites oriented towards an audience.

When Benjamin remarked, that the dumb language of things is translated in painting and sculpture into a higher, yet related one, then one can assume in the case of music that it rescues

the name as pure sound – but at the price of its separation from things.

Perhaps the strict and pure concept of art is to be derived only from music, while great poetry and great painting – precisely the greatest – necessarily carry along with them something material, something which strides beyond the aesthetic ensorcelment, something not dissolved into the autonomy of form. The deeper and more consequential aesthetics becomes, the more inappropriate it is to, say, the significant novels of the 19th century. Hegel perceived this interest in his polemic against Kant.

The belief disseminated by aesthetes, that the work of art, as an object of immediate intuition [Anschauung], is to be understood purely out of itself, is not valid. The work of art has its boundary by no means merely in the cultural prerequisites of an entity, its “language”, which only the initiated can follow. Rather, even where there are no such difficulties in the way, the artwork demands more, than just abandoning oneself to it. Whoever wishes to find the *Fledermaus* beautiful, must know, that it is the *Fledermaus*: their mother must explain to them, that it is not about an animal with wings but about a costume mask; they must remember, that someone said: tomorrow you may go to the *Fledermaus*. To stand in the tradition meant: to experience the work of art as something confirming, affirming; in it, one takes part in the reactions of all those who ever saw it before. If that once falls away, then the work is exposed in its bareness and fallibility. The production turns from a ritual into idiocy, the music turns from a canon of meaningful phrases into stale and worn-out ones. It is truly no longer so beautiful. Mass culture draws from this its right to adaptations. The weakness of all traditional culture outside of its tradition delivers the pretext, to improve it and thereby to barbarically violate it.

What is consoling in the great artworks lies less in what they express, than the fact that they succeeded in defying existence [Dasein]. Hope is closest of all to those who are inconsolable.

Kafka: the solipsist without ipse [Latin: something]

Kafka was an enthusiastic reader of Kierkegaard, but he is connected to the existential philosopher only insofar as one can speak of “annihilated existences”.

Surrealism breaks the promesse du bonheur [French: promise of happiness]. It sacrifices the appearance [Schein] of happiness, which mediated every integral form, to the thought of its truth.

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Magic flute. – That culturally conservative ideology, which casts enlightenment and art as a simple opposition, is untrue insofar as it fails to recognize the moment of enlightenment in the genesis of what is beautiful. Enlightenment does not merely dissolve all the qualities, which adhere to what is beautiful, but simultaneously posits the quality of what is beautiful in the first place. The disinterested pleasure which works of art excite according to Kant, can only be understood by virtue of a historical antithesis, which trembles in every aesthetic object. What is considered with disinterest is pleasurable, because it once claimed the most extreme interest and exactly thereby cancels out contemplation. This latter is a triumph of enlightened self-discipline. Gold and precious gems, in whose perception beauty and luxury are still mixed up in each other, were venerated as magical. The light which they reflected, counted as their selfsame essence [Wesen]. What was struck by that light, fell sway to their bane [Bann]. That bane served early attempts to control nature. They saw in them instruments to subjugate the course of the world

with its own energy, cunningly wrested from such. The magic adheres to the appearance [Schein] of omnipotence. Such appearance [Schein] fell apart with the self-enlightenment of the Spirit [Geistes], but the magic lived on as the power of luminous things over human beings, who once trembled in awe of them, and whose eyes remained ensorcelled by such a view, even where its stately claim was seen through. Contemplation, as the remainder of the stock of fetishistic worship, is simultaneously a stage of its overcoming. By giving up its magical claim, by renouncing the violence, as it were, with which the subject endowed it and thought to practice with its help, luminous things transform themselves into pictures of something free of violence, into the promise of a happiness cured of the domination over nature. That is the Ur-history of luxury, which has migrated into the meaning of all art. In the magic of what reveals itself in absolute powerlessness, of what is beautiful, complete and void in one, the appearance [Schein] of omnipotence is negatively reflected back as hope. It has escaped every test of strength. Total purposelessness denies the totality of what is purposeful in the world of domination, and only by virtue of such repudiation, which the existent fulfills in its own principle of reason out of the latter's consequentality, has the existing society, to this day, become conscious of a possible one. The bliss of contemplation consists of disenchanting magic. What radiates, is the reconciliation of mythos.

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Art-figure. – To the unprepared, the heaped up atrocities of household ornaments are shocking due to their affinity with art-works. Even the hemispherical paperweights, which show a fir-tree landscape under glass with the title, greetings from Bad Wildungen, somehow recalls to mind Stifter's green Fichtau, and the polychrome garden gnome recalls a wight out of Balzac or Dickens. Neither the subjects nor the abstract similarity of all aesthetic appearances [Scheins] are at fault here. On the contrary, the existence of foolish and blatant junk expresses the triumph, that human beings managed to produce out of themselves a piece of what otherwise ensorcelles them as toilers, and symbolically break the compulsion of adaptation, by themselves creating what they feared; and the echoes of the same triumph resonate from the mightiest works, even though they renounce that triumph and style themselves as pure selves without relation to something imitated. In both cases, freedom from nature is celebrated and remains thereby mythically entangled. What human beings were in awe of, turns into their own disposable thing. What pictures and postcards have in common, is that they make the Ur-pictures tangible. The illustration "L'automne" [French: autumn] in the reading-book is a déjà vu [French: already seen], the Eroica [Beethoven's Third Symphony], like great philosophy, represents the idea as total process, yet as if this latter were immediately, sensuously present. In the end the outrage over kitsch is the rage, that it wallows shamelessly in the happiness of imitation, which has meanwhile been overtaken by a taboo, while the power of art-works is still secretly being fed from imitation. What escapes the bane [Bann] of existence, its purposes, is not only what is better and protests, but also what relates to self-preservation as what is less capable and dumber. This stupidity grows the more that autonomous art idolizes its divided, allegedly innocent self-preservation, instead of the real, guiltily imperial one. By presenting the subjective institution as a successful rescue of objective meaning, it becomes untrue. What convicts it of this is kitsch; the latter's lie does not even feign the truth. It draws hostility to itself, because it spills the beans about the secret of art and the affinity of culture to what is savage. Every work of art has its indissoluble contradiction in the "purposefulness without purpose", by which Kant defined the aesthetic; by representing an apotheosis of making, the capacity to control nature, which posits itself as the creation of second nature – absolute, free of purpose, existing-in-itself – while nonetheless the making of things, and indeed the radiance of the artifact, is inseparable from

precisely the purposeful rationality which art wishes to break out of. The contradiction between the making of things and the existent is the life-element of art and circumscribes its law of development, but it is also its shame: by following, however mediatedly, the preexisting schema of material production and “making” its objects, it cannot for its part escape the question of the “what for”, whose negation is precisely its purpose. The closer the mode of production of the artifact stands to material mass production, the more naively, as it were, does it provoke that fatal question. Works of art however seek to silence the question. “What is perfect”, in Nietzsche’s words, “should not be something which has become.” (*Human, All Too Human*, Vol. I, Aphorism 145), namely it should not appear as something made. The more consequentially however it distanced itself by perfection from the making of things, the more brittle its own existence, as something made, necessarily and simultaneously becomes: the endless pains taken to wipe away the trace of the making of things, damages artworks and condemns them to something fragmentary. After the disassembly [Zerfall: disintegration] of magic, art has undertaken to preserve pictures for posterity. In this work however it avails itself of the same principle which destroyed pictures: the root of its Greek name is the same as that of technics. Its paradoxical interweaving in the process of civilization brings it into conflict with its own idea. The archetypes of today, synthetically prepared by film and hit-songs for the desolate intuition of the late-industrial era, do not merely liquidate art, but blast the delusion into existence, through flagrant idiocy, which is already immured in the oldest works of art and which lends power to even the most mature. The horror of the end casts a harsh light on the deception of the origin. – It is the chance and limitation of French art, that it never completely uprooted the pride in the making of small pictures, just as it differentiates itself most strikingly from the German kind, in the fact that it does not acknowledge the category of kitsch. In countless significant manifestations it throws a reconciling gaze on what is pleasing, because it was skillfully produced: what is sublimely artistic holds on to sensuous life through a moment of harmless pleasure in the *bien fait* [French: well done]. While this renounces the dialectic of truth and appearance [Schein], and thereby the absolute claim of what has not yet become perfection, the untruth of those who Haydyn called the grand moguls is also avoided – those who would utterly reject the fun of little dolls or postcards and fall prey to fetishism precisely by driving out the fetish. Taste is the capacity to balance in art the contradiction between what is made, and the appearance [Schein] of what has not yet become; the true art-works however, never as one with taste, are those which develop that contradiction to the extreme and come to themselves, by going to pieces on such.

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Trader’s shop. – Hebbel raises the question, in a surprising diary entry, as to what “would take the magic from life in one’s later years”. “Because we see in all the brightly colored, jerkily moving puppets, the rotor which sets them in motion, and because just for that reason the enticing multiplicity of the world dissolves into a wooden monotony. When a child sees the acrobats singing, the musicians playing, the girl carrying water, the coachmen driving, it thinks to itself, all this is happening due to pleasure and joy in the matter; it cannot even begin to imagine that these people also eat and drink, go to bed and get up again. We however know, what it’s all about.” Namely, about acquisition, which commandeers all those activities as mere means, reducing them to abstract labor-time, as something exchangeable. The quality of things turns from their essence [Wesen] into the arbitrary phenomenon [Erscheinung: appearance] of their value. The “equivalent-form” disfigures all perceptions: what is no longer illuminated by light of one’s own determination as “pleasure in the thing”, pales before the eyes. The organs do not grasp anything sensual in isolation, but observe whether the color, tone and movement is there

for itself or for something else; they grow weary of the false diversity and submerge everything in grey, disappointed by the deceptive claim of qualities that they still exist at all, while they are guided by the purpose of appropriation, to which they for the most part owe their existence. The disenchantment of the world of intuition is the reaction of the sensorium to its objective determination as a “world of commodities”. Only things cleansed of appropriation would be simultaneously colorful and useful: neither can be reconciled under universal compulsion. Children however are not so much entangled in illusions about the “enticing multiplicity” as Hebbel thinks, rather it is that their spontaneous perception still comprehends the contradiction between the phenomenon and fungibility, which the resigned one of adults no longer even dares to reach, and seeks to escape it. Play is their counterstrike [Gegenwehr: counter, resistance]. What strikes incorruptible children is the “peculiarity of the form of equivalence”: “Use-value turns into the form of appearance of its opposite, value.” (Marx, *Capital I*, Vienna 1932, page 61). In their non-purposive doing they deploy a feint on the side of the use-value against exchange-value. Precisely by divesting the things which they handle of their mediated utility, they seek to rescue in their interaction with them whatever has good will towards human beings, rather than towards the exchange relationship which deforms human beings and things in equal measure. The little wagons on wheels lead nowhere, and the tiny barrels on them are empty; but they keep faith with its destination [Bestimmung: determination], by neither practicing nor taking part in the process of the abstractions which level out that destination [Bestimmung: determination], but rather preserve them as allegories of what they are specifically are. They wait, scattered to the winds and nevertheless unentangled, to see if society finally cancels out the social stigma on them; to see whether praxis, the life-process between the human being and the thing, will cease to be practical. The unreality of games announces that what is real, is not yet real. They are unconscious practice exercises of the right life. The relationship of children to animals rests entirely on the fact that in the latter, which Marx even begrudged the surplus value they deliver to workers, utopia is cloaked. Because animals exist without any mission recognizable to human beings, they represent their own names as expression, as it were – as what is utterly not exchangeable. This endears them to children and makes their contemplation a joy. I am a rhinoceros, signifies the form of the rhinoceros. Fairy-tales and operettas know such pictures, and the ludicrous question of the woman, who asked how we know that Orion is really called Orion, rises to the stars.

147 *Novissimum Organum*. [The newest organon: reference to Bacon’s *Novum Organum*, the new organon] – Long ago it was shown that wage-labor formed the modern masses, and indeed has produced the workers themselves. The individual [Individuum] is universal not merely as the biological substrate, but simultaneously as the form of reflection of the social process, and its consciousness of itself as something existing in itself, as the appearance [Schein] which it requires to raise its capacity of achievement, whereas individuals function in the modern economy as mere agents of the law of value. The inner composition of the individual [Individuum] is to be derived in itself, not merely out of its social role. What is decisive in the contemporary phase is the category of the organic composition of capital. What this meant in the theory of accumulation was, “the growth in the mass of means of production, compared with the mass of labor-power which brings it to life” (Marx, *Capital I*, Vienna 1932, page 655). When the integration of society, especially in the totalitarian states, determines subjects ever more exclusively as partial moments in the framework of material production, then the “transformation in the technical composition of capital” perpetuates itself through the technological demands of the production process in those it not only encompasses, but indeed first constitutes. The organic composition of human beings is increasing. That through which subjects are determined in

themselves as means of production and not as living purposes, rises just like the share of machinery vis-a-vis variable capital. The prevalent talk of the “mechanization” of human beings is misleading, because it thinks these latter as something static, which undergoes certain deformations due to an “outside influence”, as an adaptation to conditions of production external to them. But there is no substrate of such “deformations”, nothing which is ontically interiorized, on which social mechanisms merely act from outside: the deformation is not the illness of human beings, but the illness of the society, which raises its children as “hereditarily disadvantaged”, just as biologism projects onto nature. It is only by means of the process, which initiates the transformation of labor-power into a commodity, permeating human beings utterly and completely and making every one of their impulses simultaneously commensurable and objectified into an a priori variety of the exchange-relationship, is it possible for life to reproduce itself under the dominating relations of production. Its organizational follow-through [Durchorganisation] demands the amalgamation of what is dead. The will to live sees itself referred to the repudiation of the will to live: self-preservation annuls life in subjectivity. It follows that all the achievements of adaptation, all the acts of conforming described by social psychology and cultural anthropology, are mere epiphenomena. The organic composition of human beings refers by no means only to specialized technical capabilities, but – and this is something the usual cultural critique wishes at no price to reveal – equally to their opposite, the moment of what is natural, which indeed for its part already originated in the social dialectic and now falls prey to it. What still differs in human beings from technics, is incorporated as a kind of lubrication of technics. Psychological differentiation, as it originally emerged in freedom and out of the division of labor and the compartmentalization of human beings according to sectors of the production process, itself steps in the end into the service of production. “The specialized virtuoso”, wrote a dialectician thirty years ago, “the seller of their objectified and substantialized [versachlichten] intellectual capacities... ends up in a contemplative attitude towards the functioning of their own objectified and substantialized [versachlichten] capacities. This structure shows itself most grotesquely in the case of journalism, where it is precisely subjectivity itself – knowing things, moods, the capacity to express – which turns into something abstract, as independent from the personality of the ‘owner’ as from the material-concrete essence of the objects, which are dealt with independently and nomothetically [eigengesetzlich] as if by a moving mechanism. The ‘lack of sensibility’ of journalists, the prostitution of their experiences and convictions, is only comprehensible as the peak of capitalist reification.” [citation from Gyorgy Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness*, London: 1971, page 100] What was here established as the “phenomena of degeneration” of the bourgeoisie, which it itself still denounced, has meanwhile emerged as the social norm, as the character of full-fledged existence under late industrialism. It has long since ceased to be merely a question of the sale of what is living. Under the a priori of salability, what is living makes itself, as the living, into a thing, into equipage. The ego consciously takes the entire human being into service as its apparatus. In this reorganization, the ego gives, as a kind of enterprise director, so much of itself to the ego as a means of directing the enterprise, that it becomes wholly abstract, a mere reference-point: self-preservation loses its self. Personal characteristics, from genuine friendliness to hysterical outbreaks of rage, become serviceable, until they finally slide perfectly into their situation-specific assignment. With their mobilization, they transform themselves. They remain only as light, fixed and empty shells of impulses, as material transportable at will, devoid of personal traits. They are no longer subjects, but the subject directs itself at them as its internalized object. In their boundless accessibility toward the ego, they are simultaneously alienated from the latter: entirely passive, they no longer nourish it. That is the social parthogenesis of schizophrenia. The separation of personal characteristics as much from the basis of the drives as from the self, which

commands them where it previously merely held them together, causes human beings to pay for their increasing inner organization with growing disintegration. The division of labor which is fulfilled in the individual [Individuum], its radical objectification, ends up as its diseased splitting. Thus the “psychotic character”, the anthropological prerequisite for all totalitarian mass movements. Precisely the transition from fixed characteristics to pushbutton modes of behavior – seemingly enlivening – is the expression of the rising organic composition of human beings. Quick reactions, free of any mediation through constituted being, do not restore spontaneity, but establish the person as a measuring instrument, at the disposal of and read by the center. The more immediate their signal, the deeper in truth is mediation reflected in them: in promptly answering, non-resisting reflexes, the subject is entirely dissolved. So too with the biological reflexes, models of the contemporary social ones, which measured by subjectivity are something objectified, something foreign: it is not for nothing they are often called “mechanical”. The closer organisms come to death, the more they regress to jerkiness. It follows that the destructive tendencies of the masses, which explode in the totalitarian states of both kinds, are not so much death-wishes as manifestations of what they have already become. They murder, so that whatever seems living to them, resembles them.

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Knacker's yard. – The metaphysical categories are not merely the veiling ideology of the social system, but simultaneously express its essence [Wesens], the truth about it, and in its transformations are precipitated those of the most central experiences. Thus death falls into history, and conversely this latter conversely is understood through the former. Its dignity resembled that of the individual [Individuums]. The autonomy of such, which originated in the economy, fulfilled itself in the conception of its absoluteness, as soon as the theological hope of its immortality, which empirically relativized it, faded away. This corresponded to the emphatic picture of death, which entirely wiped out the individuated [Individuum], the substrate of all bourgeois conduct and thinking. Death was the absolute price of absolute value. Now it falls, along with the socially dissolved individuated [Individuum]. Where it is clothed with the old dignity, it chatters away with the lie, which already stood ready in its concept: to name what is impenetrable, to predicate what is subjectless, to prefabricate what falls out. In the administered consciousness, however, the truth and untruth of its dignity are done for, not by virtue of an otherworldly hope, but in view of the hopeless lack of energy of the secular world. “Le monde moderne”, noted the radical Catholic Charles Péguy already in 1907, “a réussi à avilir ce qu’il y a peut-être de plus difficile à avilir au monde, parce que c’est quelque chose qui a en soi, comme dans sa texture, une sorte particulière de dignité, comme une incapacité singulière d’être avili: il avilit la mort. [French: The modern world has succeeded in debasing something which perhaps is the most difficult thing to debase in the world, because it is something which in itself, as its texture, has a peculiar sort of dignity, a singular incapacity to be debased: it debases death.] (*Men and Saints*, New York 1944, page 98). If the individuated [Individuum] which death annihilates is null, devoid of self-control and of one’s own being, then the annihilating power also becomes null, as if in jest at the Heideggerian formula of the nihilating [nichtenden] nothingness. The radical replaceability of the individual practically makes its death – in complete contempt – to something revocable, as it was once conceptualized in Christianity with paradoxical pathos. Death however becomes totally incorporated as a quantité négligeable [French: negligible quantity, minute smidgeon]. For every human being, with all their functions, society stands ready with a waiting replacement, who regards the former from the very beginning as the bothersome holder of the job, as a candidate for death. The experience of death is accordingly transformed into the exchange of functionaries, and what does not completely go from the natural relationship

of death into the social one, is consigned to hygiene. Because death is no longer perceived as anything more than as the dropping out of a natural life-form from the social club of society, this has finally domesticated it: dying merely confirms the absolute irrelevance of the natural life-form in relation to what is socially absolute. If the culture industry anywhere testifies to the transformations in the organic composition of society, then it is through the scarcely concealed confession of this state of affairs. Under its lens, death begins to become comic. The laughter which greets it in a certain genre of production is in all likelihood ambiguous. It still registers the fear of something amorphous under the net which the society has spun over the entirety of nature. But the veil is so vast and tightly-knit, that the memory of what is not covered seems foolish, sentimental. Since the decline of the detective novel in the works of Edgar Wallace, which seemed to mock their readers through increasingly less rational constructions, unsolved mysteries and crass exaggerations, and nevertheless magnificently anticipated therein the collective imago of the totalitarian horror, the genre of the murder-comedy has formed. While it continues to poke fun at the false shudder, it demolishes the pictures of death. It represents the corpse as what it has turned into, as a stage prop. It still resembles human beings and is nevertheless only a thing, as in the film *A Slight Case of Murder*, where corpses are incessantly transported to and fro, allegories of what they already previously were. Comedy savors the false abolition of death, which Kafka described long ago in the history of the *Hunter Gracchus* with panic: for the same reason, music is also beginning to be comic. What the Nazis perpetrated on millions of human beings, the modeling of the living on the dead, then the mass production and cheapening of death, threw its shadow in advance on those who are spurred to laugh at corpses. What is decisive is the assimilation of biological destruction in the conscious social will. Only a humanity, which is as indifferent to death as to its members – one which itself has died – can administratively inflict death on myriads. Rilke's prayer for one's own death is the pitiful deception of the fact that human beings still only croak.

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Come off it. – The critique of the tendencies of contemporary society is automatically countered, before it is fully expressed, by saying that things have ever been so. The excitement thereby so promptly abjured, testifies merely to the lack of insight into the invariance of history – to an unreason, which proudly diagnoses everyone as hysterical. Moreover, the critic's attacks are said to be merely hamming it up for the gallery, a means of claiming special privileges, while whatever they are nonetheless upset about is well known and trivial, so that noone can be expected to waste their attention on such. The evidence of the calamity comes to benefit its apologists: because everyone knows everything, noone is supposed to say anything, and it may then continue unchallenged, hidden by silence. What is affirmed is what philosophies of all political stripes have trumpeted into the heads of human beings: that whatever has the persistent gravity of existence on its side, is thereby right. One need only be dissatisfied to be already suspected of being a global dreamer [Weltverbesserer]. The consensus employs the trick of ascribing to opponents a reactionary thesis of decay, which is untenable – for is not horror in fact perennial? – by discrediting the concrete insight into the negative through its alleged failure of thought, and those who rise up against the shadow, are maligned as agents of the shadow. But even if things were ever so, although nonetheless neither Timur nor Genghis Khan nor the British colonial administration of India deliberately burst the lungs of millions of human beings with poison gas, then the eternity of horror is revealed by the fact that each of its new forms outbids the older ones. What endures is no invariant quantum of suffering, but of its progress towards hell: that is the meaning of the talk about the growth of antagonisms. Any other kind would be innocuous and would pass over into mediating phrases, the renunciation of the qualitative leap.

Those who register the death-camps as a minor accident in the victory procession of civilization, the martyrdom of the Jews as world-historically insignificant, do not merely fall behind the dialectical insight, but invert the meaning of one's own politics: of stopping the extremity. Quantity recoils into quality, not only in the development of the productive forces, but also in the increase of the pressure of domination. If the Jews are exterminated as a group, while the society continues to reproduce the life of workers, then the comment that these former are bourgeois and their destiny unimportant to the larger dynamic, turns into economic spleen, even insofar as mass murder is in fact explicable by the decline of the profit-rate. The horror consists of the fact that it always remains the same – the continuation of “prehistory” – but unremittingly realizes itself as something different, something unforeseen, overwhelming all expectations, the faithful shadow of the developing productive forces. The same duality applies to violence, which the critique of political economy pointed out in material production: “There are determinations common to all stages of production, which are generally fixed by thought, but the so-called universal conditions of all production are nothing but... abstract moments, by which no real stage of production can be understood.” [Marx, *Grundrisse*, page 88] In other words, to abstract out what is historically unchanged is not neutral towards the matter [Sache], by virtue of its scientific objectivity, but serves, even where it is on target, as a fog in which what is tangible and assailable disappears. This latter is precisely what the apologists do not wish to concede. On the one hand they are obsessed by the dernière nouveauté [French: latest novelty] and on the other hand they deny the infernal machine, which is history. One cannot bring Auschwitz into analogy with the destruction of the Greek city-states in terms of a mere gradual increase of horror, regarding which one preserves one's peace of mind. Certainly, the martyrdom and degradation suffered by those in the cattle-cars, completely without precedent, casts a harsh, deathly light on the most distant past, in whose obtuse and unplanned violence the scientifically organized kind was already teleologically at work. The identity lies in the non-identity, in what has not yet been, which denounces what has been. The statement that it's always been the same, is untrue in its immediacy, true only through the dynamic of the totality. Whoever allows the cognition of the increase of horror to escape them, does not merely fall prey to cold-hearted contemplation, but fails to recognize, along with the specific difference of what is newest from what has gone before, simultaneously the true identity of the whole, of horror without end.

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Extra edition. – Central passages in Poe and Baudelaire set up the concept of what is new. In the former, in the description of the maelstrom, whose shudder is equated with “the novel” [in English in original], which none of the traditional reports is supposed to adequately give any idea of; in the latter, in the last lines of the cycle *La Mort* [French: death], which chooses the plunge into the abyss, indifferent as to whether it is heaven or hell, “au fond de l'inconnu pour trouver du nouveau” [French: to the bottom of the unknown to find the new]. Both times it is an unknown threat, which the subject entrusts itself to, and which in a dizzying recoil promises pleasure. What is new, a blank spot of consciousness, which one awaits with closed eyes, as it were, seems to be the formula by which pleasure can be taken in horror and despair, as stimulus-value. It causes evil to flower. But its stark outline is a cryptogram of the most unambiguous reaction. It circumscribes the precise information, which is communicated by the subject to a world become abstract, the industrial epoch. What is rebelled against in the cult of the new and thereby in the idea of what is modern, is the fact that there is no longer anything new. The unchanging uniformity [Immergleichheit] of machine-produced goods, the net of socialization, which in equal measure catches and assimilates objects and the gaze at those objects, transforms everything which is encountered into something which has already been, to the accidental

exemplar of a species, to the model's doppelgänger. The layer of what has not yet been thought, what is without intention, in which alone intention flourishes, seems to be consumed. The idea of the new dreams of this layer. Itself unattainable, it puts itself in place of the fallen god in view of the first consciousness of the decline of experience. But its concept remains under the bane [Bann] of its illness, and its abstraction testifies to this, turning powerlessly to the concretion which glides away from it. Much could be learned about the "Ur-history of what is modern" [concept from Walter Benjamin] by analyzing the change in the meaning of the word "sensation" – the exotic synonym for Baudelaire's nouveau [French: new]. The word became universalized in European education through epistemology. In Locke, it means the simple, immediate perception, the opposite of reflection. It later became the great unknown and finally, what is exciting on a mass scale, destructively intoxicating, the shock as consumer good. To still be able to perceive anything at all, regardless of quality, replaces happiness, because omnipotent quantification has taken away the possibility of perception itself. Instead of the fulfilled relation of experience to the thing, something what emerges is something at once merely subjective and physically isolated, sensation, which exhausts itself in the reading of a manometer. Thus the historic emancipation of being-in-itself is reconfigured into the form of the intuition, a process which the sense-psychology of the 19th century allowed for, by reducing the substrate of experience to a mere "basal stimulus", from whose particular constituted nature the specific energies of the senses were supposedly independent. Baudelaire's poetry however is filled with that flash of light, which the closed eye sees when struck by a blow. As phantasmagoric as this light, so phantasmagoric is the idea of the new itself. What flashes, while sedate perception still only achieves the socially preformed mold of things, is itself repetition. The new, sought for its own sake, to a certain extent reproduced in the laboratory, hardened to a conceptual schema, turns in the abrupt appearance [Erscheinen] into the compulsory return of what is old, not so dissimilar to the traumatic neuroses. To the dazzled, the veil of temporal succession tears away from the archetypes of unchanging uniformity [Immergleichheit]: that is why the discovery of the new is satanic, eternal return as damnation. Poe's allegory of the novel consists of the breathlessly circling movement, nonetheless at a standstill, as it were, of the boat spinning in the whirlpool. The sensations, in which masochists abandon themselves to the new, are as much regressions. This much is true of psychoanalysis, that the ontology of Baudelaire's modernity, like every other one which followed it, answers to the infantile partial drive. Its pluralism is the colorful fata morgana [Latin: mirage], in which what the monism of bourgeois reason glosses as allegorical hope, is that reason's self-destruction. This promise comprises the idea of what is modern, and for the sake of its core, for unchanging uniformity [Immergleichheit], everything which is modern takes on, once it is barely aged, the expression of something archaic. *Tristan*, which rises in the 19th century as an obelisk of modernity, is at the same time the towering monument to the repetition-compulsion. The new has been ambiguous since its enthronement. While it links everything which presses beyond the unity [Einheit] of the ever more fixed existent, it is at the same time the absorption by the new, which, under the pressure of that unity, decisively promotes the disassembly [Zerfall] of the subject into convulsive moments in which the subject deceives itself that it is still alive, and thereby ultimately promotes the entire society, which drives out the new in state-of-the-art style. Baudelaire's poem of the female martyr of sex, the murder victim, allegorically celebrates the sanctity of pleasure in the terrifyingly emancipating still-life of crime, but the intoxication in view of the naked headless body is already similar to that which drove the prospective victims of the Hitler regime to buy newspapers, greedily and powerlessly, in which the measures were announced portending their doom. Fascism was the absolute sensation: in a declaration during the time of the first pogroms, Goebbels boasted that at least the Nazis weren't boring. The abstract terror of news and rumors

was enjoyed in the Third Reich as the only stimulation, which sufficed to momentarily heat the weakened sensorium of the masses white-hot. Without the nearly irresistible violence of the desire for headlines, which caused the heart to seize as if thrust back into primeval times, the unspeakable could not have been borne by the onlookers, let alone the perpetrators. In the course of the war, eventually the most terrifying news was spread among the Germans and the slow military collapse was not hushed up. Concepts like sadism and masochism no longer suffice. In the mass society of technical dissemination they are mediated by sensation, by the comet-like, far removed, to-the-extreme new. It overwhelms the public, which squirms under the shock and forgets who the monstrosity is being perpetrated on, oneself or others. The content of the shock becomes truly indifferent vis-a-vis its stimulus value, just as it ideally was in the invocations of the poets; it is even possible that the horror savored by Poe and Baudelaire, once realized by dictators, loses its sensational quality, burns out. The violent rescue of qualities in the new was devoid of qualities. Everything can, as the new, divested of itself, be enjoyed, just as the numbed morphine addict finally reaches indiscriminately for any drug, even atropine. Every judgement perishes in sensation, along with the distinction of qualities: that is what actually allows sensation to become an agent of catastrophic retrogression. In the terror of regressive dictators, what is modern, the dialectical picture of progress, culminates in an explosion. The new in its collective form, something already hinted at by the journalistic traits in Baudelaire as much the noise of drums in Wagner, is in fact external life, cooked up as a stimulating and enervating drug: it is not for nothing that Poe, Baudelaire and Wagner were addictive personalities. The new turns into the merely evil first through totalitarian guidance, wherein that tension of the individual [Individuums] to society, which once realized the category of the new, is canceled out. Today the appeal to the new – regardless of what kind, provided only it is archaic enough – has become universal, the ubiquitous medium of false mimesis. The decomposition of the subject is completed by handing itself over to a constantly different, unchanging uniformity [Immergleichheit]. This sucks everything fixed out of personal character. What Baudelaire was capable of achieving by virtue of the picture, devolves to fascination devoid of will. Breach of faith and un-identity, the pathetic catering to the situation, are activated by the stimulus of something new, which as a stimulus is already no longer stimulating. Perhaps humanity's refusal to have children is thereby explained, because everyone can prophesy the worst: what is new is the secret figure of everyone not yet born. Malthus belongs to the Ur-fathers of the 19th century, and Baudelaire had reason to exalt what is infertile. Humanity, which despairs of its reproduction, unconsciously casts the wish to survive onto the chimera of never known things, but these latter resemble death. They point to the downfall of an entire constitution, which virtually no longer needs its members.

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Theses against the occult. – I. The penchant for the occult is a symptom of the regression of consciousness. It has lost the energy to think what is unconditional and to withstand the conditional. Instead of determining both, in unity and difference, in the labor of the concept, it heedlessly mixes them up. What is unconditional turns into a fact, what is conditional becomes immediately essential [wesenhaft]. Monotheism crumbles into a second mythology. "I believe in astrology, because I don't believe in God", responded an interviewee in an American social psychological study. The juridically-minded [rechtsprechenden] reason, which raised itself to the concept of a god, seems to be caught up in the latter's fall. The Spirit [Geist] dissociates itself into spirits [Geister: spirits, ghosts] and thereby forfeits the capacity to recognize, that the latter no longer exist. The veiled tendency of calamity of society cons its victims in the false revelation, in the hallucinatory phenomenon. They hope, in vain, that its fragmentary

obviousness will enable them to look at the total doom in the eye and withstand it. Panic breaks out once again after millenia of enlightenment on a humanity, whose domination over nature as domination over human beings surpasses in horror whatever human beings had to fear from nature.

II. The second mythology is even more untrue than the first. The latter was the precipitate of the state of cognition of its epochs, each of which showed its consciousness of the blind natural context to be somewhat freer than the previous one. The former, disturbed and entangled, throws away the cognition it once achieved of itself in the middle of a society, which eliminates through the all-embracing exchange relationship even what is most elementary, which the occultists claim to control. The gaze of the mariner at the Dioscuri [twin guardian deities of sea-voyagers in ancient Greece, rendered as statues on the ship's prow], the animism of trees and streams, in all the delusory bedazzlement at what is inexplicable, were appropriate to the historical experiences of the subject vis-a-vis its action-objects. As a rationally utilized reaction towards the rationalized society, however, in which the booths and consultation rooms of the spirit-seers of all grades, the reborn animism denies the alienation to which it testifies and on which it lives, and surrogates a nonexistent experience. The occultist draws the most extreme conclusion from the fetish-character of the commodity: threateningly objectified labor springs at them from objects in the guise of countless demons. What is forgotten in a world which has turned into products, its producedness [Produziertsein] by human beings, is recalled in divided, inverted form, as something existing in itself which is added to and equated with the in-themselves of objects [An sich der Objekte]. Because these latter have frozen under the light of reason, losing the appearance [Schein] of being animated, that which animates them, its social quality, makes itself something naturally-supernaturally independent, a thing among things.

III. The regression to magical thinking under late capitalism assimilates thought to late-capitalist forms. The dubious-asocial marginal phenomena of the system, the ramshackle institutions which squint through the cracks in its walls, indeed reveal nothing of what would be outside, but manifest the energies of disassembly [Zerfalls] in the interior that much more. The small-time sages, who terrorize their clients in front of a crystal ball, are toy models of the big-time ones, who hold the destiny of humanity in their hands. The obscurantists behind "Psychic Research" [in English in original] are as quarrelsome and conspiratorial as society itself. The hypnosis exerted by occult things resembles totalitarian terror: in contemporary processes, both converge with each other. The smile of the augury has overgrown itself into the scornful laughter of society; it feeds on the immediate material exploitation of souls. The horoscope corresponds to the directives of bureaus on nationalities [Völker: literally peoples or nations, but meaning a homogenous ethnic group], and number-mysticism is preparation for administrative statistics and cartel prices. Integration proves in the end to be the ideology of the disintegration into power-groups, which exterminate each other. Whoever casts their lot with them, is lost.

IV. The occult is a reflex-movement of the subjectification of all meaning, the complement of reification. When the objective reality seems more deaf to the living than ever before, they seek to worm out its meaning through an abracadabra. Meaning is indiscriminately ascribed to the next worse thing: the rationality of what is real, which is no longer quite convincing, is replaced with dancing tables and rays from heaps of earth. The refuse of the world of phenomena [Erscheinungswelt] turns into the mundus intelligibilis [Latin: world of intelligible realities] of the ailing consciousness. It comes close to being the speculative truth, just as Kafka's Odradek would almost be an angel, and is nevertheless, in a positivity which leaves out the medium of

thought, only barbaric error, the subjectivity which has relinquished [entäusserte] itself and thereby fails to recognize itself in the object. The more complete the disdainfulness of what is passed off as “Spirit” [Geist] – and in anything more animated the enlightened subject would of course recognize itself – the more the meaning sensed there, which in fact is totally absent, turns into the unconscious, compulsory project of the historically – if not necessarily clinically – disintegrating [zerfallenden] subject. It would like to make the world similar its own disassembly [Zerfall]: that is why it deals with stage-props and malicious wishes. “The third reads out of my hand / It wants to read my misfortune!” In the occult, the Spirit [Geist] groans under its own bane [Bann] like those caught in a bad dream, whose torment increases with the feeling, that they are dreaming, without being able to wake up.

V. The violence of the occult, just like Fascism, to which it is linked by thought-schemata of the sort which purvey anti-Semitism, is not only pathetic. It consists rather of the fact that in the lesser panaceas, cover-pictures, as it were, the consciousness hungry for truth thinks it can grasp the dimly present cognition, which official progress of every type assiduously withholds. It is that society, by virtually excluding the possibility of the spontaneous recoil, gravitates towards total catastrophe. The real absurdity is the model for the astrological one, which puts forward the impenetrable context of alienated elements – nothing is more foreign than the stars – as knowledge about the subject. The threat which is read out of the constellations, resembles the historical one, which rolls on in unconsciousness, in what is subjectless. They can bear the thought that everyone is a prospective victim of a whole, which is merely formed from themselves, only by transferring that whole away from themselves onto something similar, something external to it. In the miserable idiocy which they propagate, the empty horror, they allow themselves to let out the clumsy misery, the crass fear of death and nevertheless to continue to repress it, as they must if they wish to continue to live. The break in the life-line which indicates a hidden cancer is a fraud only in the place where it is asserted, in the hand of the individual [Individuum]; where it would not give a diagnosis, in the collective, it would be correct. Occultists rightly feel drawn to childish monstrous natural-scientific fantasies. The confusion they create between their emanations and the isotopes of uranium, is ultimate clarity. The mystic rays are modest anticipations of the technical ones. Superstition is cognition, because it sees all of the ciphers of destruction together, which are scattered on the social surface; it is foolish, because it still clings to illusions, in all of its death-drive: glossing the answer, from the transfigured form of society, displaced into the heavens, which can only be provided by the real transfiguration of society.

VI. The occult is the metaphysics of knuckleheads. The subalternity of mediums is no more accidental than the apocryphal nature and triviality of what is revealed. Since the early days of spiritism, the beyond has announced nothing more portentous than a greeting from a dead grandmother next to a prediction, that a journey is in the offing. The excuse that the spirit-world cannot communicate to feeble human reason any more than this latter is able to take in, is just as silly, the auxiliary hypothesis of the paranoid system: the lumen naturale [Latin: “natural light”, in the sense of everyday human reasoning] achieved greater things than the trip to the grandmother, and if the spirits do not wish to acknowledge this, then they are mannerless kobolds, with whom one had better break off all contact. The obtusely natural content of the supernatural message betrays its untruth. While it hunts outside for what is lost, what it runs into there is only its own nothingness. In order not to fall out of the grey prosaicness, in which they feel right at home as incorrigible realists, they adjust the meaning, on which they refresh themselves, into what is meaningless, before which they flee. The phoney magic is nothing other

than the phoney existence, which the former illuminates. That is why it makes itself at home with what is down to earth. Facts, which differ from what is the case, only in that they are nothing of the sort, are worked up into the fourth dimension. Their *qualitas occulta* [Latin: hidden quality] is solely their non-being. They deliver the world-view of idiocy. Abruptly, drastically, the astrologists and spiritists issue a response to every question, which does not even solve the latter, but cancels any possible solution through crude suppositions. Their sublime realm, conceived as analogous to space, no more needs to be thought than chairs and flower-vases. It thereby reinforces conformism. Nothing pleases the existent more, than the position that existence, as such, is supposed to be meaning.

VII. The great religions have either, as in the Jewish one, kept in mind the salvation of the dead, after the ban on graven images, with silence, or taught the resurrection of the flesh. They have their gravity in the inseparability of what is spiritual [Geistigen] and what is corporeal. There is no intention, there is nothing “intellectual” [“geistiges”], which would not somehow be grounded in corporeal perception and demand corporeal fulfillment. To the occultists, who consider themselves above the thought of resurrection and do not at all wish for actual salvation, this is too crude. Their metaphysics, which even Huxley can no longer distinguish from metaphysics, rests on the axiom: “The soul swings high into the air / the body rests on the couch over there”. The feistier the spirituality, the more mechanistic: not even Descartes separated it so cleanly. The division of labor and reification are driven to the extreme: body and soul are cut from each other in a perennial vivisection, as it were. The soul is supposed to dust itself off, in order to continue, in lighter regions, its eager activity right at the point it was interrupted. In such a declaration of independence, however, the soul turns into the cheap imitation of what it was falsely emancipated from. In place of the reciprocity, which even the most rigid philosophy upheld, the astral body sets up shop, the ignominious concession of the hypostatized Spirit [Geist] to its opponent. Only in the allegory of the body is the concept of the pure Spirit [Geists] is to be grasped at all, and the former simultaneously sublates the latter. With the reification of the spirits, the spirits are already negated.

VIII. Occultists fulminate against materialism. But they want to weigh the astral body. The objects of their interest are supposed to simultaneously surpass the possibility of experience and be experienced. Everything is supposed to be done strictly scientifically; the greater the humbug, the more carefully controlled the test arrangement. The pomposity of scientific controls is taken ad absurdum [Latin: to the point of absurdity], where there is nothing to control for. The same rationalistic and empiristic apparatus which put an end to the spirits, is employed to mandatorily foist them off on those who no longer trust in their own ratio. As if any elementary spirit would flee from the trap of the control over nature, which is posited by their fleeting essence [Wesen]. But even this the occultists make use of. Because the spirits don't like controls, a door must be held open to them in the middle of security precautions, so that they can make their appearance undisturbed. For the occultists are practical types. They aren't driven by idle curiosity, they seek tips. Things go in a jiffy from the stars to futures trading [Termingeschäft: future transactions, futures, options]. Mostly the information amounts to ill tidings for some acquaintance, who was hoping for something.

IX. The cardinal sin of the occult is the contamination of Spirit [Geist] and existence, the latter of which turns into an attribute of the Spirit [Geistes]. This last originated in existence, as an organ designed to preserve life. Since existence is reflected in the Spirit [Geist], this latter turns at the same time into something else. What exists negates itself as the memorialization [Eingedenken]

of itself. Such negation is the element of the Spirit [Geistes]. To ascribe it once more to positive existence, even if it were that of a higher social order, would deliver it to that which it stands against. Later bourgeois ideology had made it once more into what it was in pre-animism, something existing-in-itself according to the measure of the social division of labor, of the break between physical and intellectual labor, and of the planned domination over the former. In the concept of the Spirit [Geistes] which exists in itself, the consciousness ontologically justifies and eternalizes privilege, by making it independent of the social principle, which constitutes it. Such ideology explodes into occultism: the latter is an idealism which has come into itself, as it were. Precisely by virtue of the rigid antithesis of being and Spirit [Geist], this latter turns into a department of being. If idealism had promoted the idea solely for the whole, that being would be Spirit [Geist] and this latter would exist, then the occult draws the absurd consequence from this, that existence means determinate being: "Existence is, according to its becoming, above all being with something non-being, so that this non-being is taken up in simple unity with being. The non-being thus taken up in being, the fact that the concrete whole is in the form of being, of immediacy, comprises the determination as such." (Hegel, *Science of Logic I*, ed. Glockner, Stuttgart 1928, page 123). The occultists take not-being as a "simple unity with being" literally, and their kind of concreity is a fraudulent abbreviation of the path from the whole to the determinate, which can claim that the whole, as something once determined, is thereby nothing of the sort anymore. They call to metaphysics, hic Rhodus hic salta [Latin: here is Rhodes, here is where you jump]: if the philosophical investment of Spirit [Geist] with existence can be determined, then, they feel, any random, scattered existence must ultimately justify itself as a particular Spirit [Geist]. Consequently, the doctrine of the existence of the Spirit [Geist], the most extreme exaltation of bourgeois consciousness, would already teleologically bear the belief in spirits, its utmost denigration. The transition to existence, always "positive" and justification for the world, implies at the same time the thesis of positivity of the Spirit [Geist], its arrest as a thing [Dingfestmachung], the transposition of what is absolute into the phenomenon [Erscheinung]. Whether the entire tangible world, as "product", is supposed to be Spirit [Geist] or any sort of thing any sort of Spirit [Geist], becomes irrelevant and the world-spirit turns into the highest spirit [Geist], to the guardian angel of what exists, of what is de-spiritualized. The occultists live on this: their mysticism is the enfant terrible [French: scandalous young guard] of the mystical moment in Hegel. They drive the speculation to defrauding bankruptcy. By passing off the determinate being as Spirit [Geist], they subject the objectified Spirit [Geist] to the test of existence, and it must turn out negatively. No Spirit [Geist] is there.

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Not to be misused. – Dialectics originated in sophistry, a procedure of discussion designed to shake dogmatic assertions, and, as public prosecutors and comics call it, to make the weaker word into the stronger. It formed as a consequence of the perennial method of critique which opposed philosophia perennis [Latin: age-old philosophy], the asylum of all thoughts of the oppressed, even what they themselves could never think. But as a means of being right, it was from the very beginning also a means of domination, the formal technics of apologetics with no concern for content, serviceable to those who could pay: the principle, of always and successfully turning the tables. That is why truth or untruth does not stand in the method as such, but in its intention in the historical process. The split of the Hegelian school into a left and right wing was grounded in the ambiguity of the theory no less than in the political situation of the immediate pre-1848 period. Dialectics encompasses not just the Marxian doctrine, that the proletariat becomes, as the absolute object of history, its first social subject, capable of realizing the conscious self-determination of humanity, but also the joke, which Gustave Doré put into the

mouth of a parliamentary representation of the ancien régime [French: feudal order]: that without Louis XVI the revolution would never have happened, therefore this latter is to be thanks for human rights. Negative philosophy, universal dissolution, constantly dissolves too that which dissolves. But the new form, in which both what is dissolved and dissolving claim to be sublated, can never step forwards purely in antagonistic society. For as long as domination reproduces itself, so too will the old quality recrudescence in the dissolution of what dissolves: in a radical sense, there is no pure leap. That would first of all be the emancipatory event, which actually happens. Because the dialectical determination of the new quality sees itself referred back to the violence of the objective tendency, which hands down the bane [Bann] of domination, it stands under the almost unavoidable compulsion, whenever it achieves the negation through the labor of the negation, to substitute what is bad about the old for the non-existent other. The profundity, with which it plumbs the depths of objectivity, is bought at the price of participating in the lie, that objectivity would already be the truth. By strictly delimiting itself to extrapolating the non-privileged condition, from what owes to the process the privilege of existing, it bows to restoration. This is registered by private existence. Hegel objected to the latter for its nullity. Mere subjectivity, insisting on the purity of its own principle, would entangle itself in antinomies. It would go to pieces on its mischief [Unwesen], hypocrisy and malevolence, to the extent it does not objectify itself in society and the state. Ethics [Moral], autonomy posited on pure self-certainty, and even the conscience are mere appearance [Schein]. If “there is nothing ethically real” (Hegel, *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, ed. Lasson, 2nd Printing, Leipzig 1921, page 397), then it logically follows in the *Philosophy of Law* that marriage is placed higher than the conscience, and that this latter is said, even on its own grounds – which Hegel, along with Romanticism, designates as irony – to be “subjective vanity” in a double understanding of the term. This motif of dialectics, which operates through all layers of the system, is simultaneously true and untrue. True, because it unveils the particular as necessary appearance [Schein], the false consciousness of what is split off, of being only itself and not a moment of the whole; and it causes this false consciousness to melt away through the energy of the whole. Untrue, because the motif of objectification, “disclosure” [Entäußerung: relinquishment, disclosure, realization], is degraded into a mere rationalization, into a pretext for precisely the bourgeois self-preservation of the subject, as long as the objectivity, which thought upholds in opposition to what is badly subjective, is unfree, regressing behind the critical labor of the subject. The word disclosure [Entäußerung], which expects the redemption of private caprice from the obedience of the private will, acknowledges, by expressly holding fast to what is external as what is institutionally opposed to the subject, in spite of all protestations of reconciliation, the enduring irreconcilability of subject and object, which for its part comprises the theme of dialectical critique. The act of self-disclosure [Selbstentäußerung] is tantamount to renunciation, which Goethe described as salvational, and thereby justification for the status quo, then as now. Out of the insight, for example, into the mutilation of women through patriarchal society, in the impossibility of wiping away the anthropological deformation without its prerequisite, it is precisely implacable dialecticians, without illusions, who may deduce the standpoint of the master-in-the-house, speaking on behalf of the remaining stock of the patriarchal relationship. In this they lack neither for good reasons, such as the impossibility of relations of a different nature [Wesen] under contemporary conditions, nor even humanity towards the oppressed, who have to pay the bill for false emancipation; but all this, though true, would turn into ideology in the hands of masculine interest. Dialecticians know the unhappiness and the abandonment of the unmarried spinster, of what is murderous in separations. By anti-romantically awarding priority to the objectified marriage over the ephemeral passion, not sublated into the common life, they would turn themselves into the representatives of those who propagate marriage at the cost of

affection, who love what they are married to, therefore the abstract property-relationship. The final step of such wisdom would be, that the person really doesn't matter so much, if they would only adapt to the given constellation and do their duty. To protect itself from such temptations, an enlightened dialectics requires the unceasing suspicion against every apologetic, restorative element, which nevertheless comprises a part of what is unnaive. The threatening relapse of reflection into what is unreflected is betrayed by the superiority, which switches on the dialectical procedure and holds forth, as if it were itself that immediate knowledge of the whole, which is excluded precisely by the principle of dialectics. The standpoint of the totality is assumed, in order to slap down every determinate negative judgement by the opponent with the sign of the cautionary "that's not what was meant", and simultaneously to violently break off the movement of the concept, suspending dialectics with reference to the insurmountable gravity of facts. The calamity occurs through the *thema probandum* [Latin: self-evident supposition] one makes use of the dialectic instead of losing oneself in it. Then the sovereignly dialectical thought would regress back to the pre-dialectical stage: the sedate exposition, that every thing has its two sides.

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At the end. – The only philosophy which would still be accountable in the face of despair, would be the attempt to consider all things, as they would be portrayed from the standpoint of redemption. Cognition has no other light than that which shines from redemption out upon the world; all else exhausts itself in post-construction and remains a piece of technics. Perspectives must be produced which set the world beside itself, alienated from itself, revealing its cracks and fissures, as needy and distorted as it will one day lay there in the messianic light. To win such perspectives without caprice or violence, wholly by the feel for objects, this alone is what thinking is all about. It is the simplest of all things, because the condition irrefutably call for such cognitions, indeed because completed negativity, once it comes fully into view, shoots [zusammenschießt] into the mirror-writing of its opposite. But it is also that which is totally impossible, because it presupposes a standpoint at a remove, were it even the tiniest bit, from the bane [Bannkreis] of the existent; meanwhile every possible cognition must not only be wrested from that which is, in order to be binding, but for that very reason is stricken with the same distortedness and neediness which it intends to escape. The more passionately thought seals itself off from its conditional being for the sake of what is unconditional, the more unconsciously, and thereby catastrophically, it falls into the world. It must comprehend even its own impossibility for the sake of possibility. In relation to the demand thereby imposed on it, the question concerning the reality or non-reality of redemption is however almost inconsequential.