

**A TRANSLATION OF WEININGER'S
ÜBER DIE LETZTEN DINGE (1904/1907)
ON LAST THINGS**

BY OTTO WEININGER

**TRANSLATION FROM THE ORIGINAL GERMAN,
AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY STEVEN BURNS**



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Otto Weininger

(1880-1903)

Translated from the original German,
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Steven Burns

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For Janet

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Preface

Despite his (largely undeserved) reputation as proof positive of *fin de siècle* Vienna's decadence, and despite the huge influence he exerted upon many of the cretinous minds of his age, Otto Weininger merits the attention of anyone seriously interested in Old Vienna. So, if we need to be reminded of why we should welcome the translation of Weininger's posthumous collected writings, *Über die letzten Dinge*, we need but look to Ludwig Wittgenstein's friend and collaborator both in writing the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and in building the Stonborough house, Paul Engelmann. For Engelmann not even the scathingly witty apocalyptic satirist, Kraus, was as important a critic of the foibles of Old Vienna as Weininger. Thus Engelmann would write, "[Karl] Kraus was (after Weininger) the first to raise an earnest voice of warning, reminding an epoch given to judging life as well as art by one-sided aesthetic canons that the morality of an artist is vital to his work". Engelmann's testimony is particularly important here because he was in the very center of what Stephen Toulmin and I once called "Wittgenstein's Vienna". Having been the first assistant in the Adolf Loos Bauschule as well as Loos's favorite pupil, and personal secretary to Karl Kraus at the time when he wrote *The Last Days of Mankind* as well as helping Wittgenstein to articulate his most important ideas about mysticism, the unity of ethics and aesthetics and the like, Engelmann's view that Weininger was the moral center of The City of Dreams should carry considerable weight. Furthermore, for the Israeli, Engelmann, contrary to many people writing today, Weininger was anything but a fanatic misogynist or anti-Semite, whatever impact his *Sex and Character* might have had in dubious circles; rather he was the moral voice of a whole gen-

eration of “critical modernists” who reacted strongly against the superficialities of Viennese aestheticist subjectivism and irrationalism. Weininger, like Kraus, sought to dismantle the “romanticism of nerves” that was Viennese modernism from within, i.e., by challenging the philosophical foundations of Viennese hedonism and sentimental scurrility.

Yet, however true all that may be of Weininger in general, it does not bring us closer to understanding why Weininger's posthumous miscellany, *On Last Things*, is of particular significance for our understanding Vienna 1900. To correct that impression there are at least three important reasons for welcoming *On Last Things*. First, it shows Weininger at his best in the penetrating essay on Henrik Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, with which the book opens. Second, it was his analysis of the logic and the morality of the criminal mind that stimulated Wittgenstein to his thoughts about mysticism and the limits of language in the *Tractatus*. Third, as a considerably more accessible book than his *succès de scandale*, *Sex and Character*, it was influential to the point that some scholars such as the eminent Parisian Germanist, Gerald Stieg, believe that it actually had a stronger impact on thought and letters than *Sex and Character*. Let us look a little closer at each of these points.

The Ibsen essay is the most polished piece in the volume. It exhibits a profound knowledge both of Ibsen's oeuvre and of its place in western literature. Further, Weininger's Kantian reading of *Peer Gynt* anticipates modern philosophical interpretations of the Norwegian bard such as those of Bruce Shapiro in *Divine Madness and The Absurd Paradox* and Brian Johnston in *Text and Super-Text In Ibsen's Drama* (although they respectively try to link Ibsen to Kierkegaard and Hegel rather than Kant). In any case, Weininger certainly anticipates Johnston's notion that there is a philosophical “supertext” to Ibsen's drama. The essay is in fact Weininger's fullest account of what he takes to be the main problem that motivated him to write *Sex and Character*: the question of how there can be moral relations between the sexes.

As far as his influence upon Wittgenstein goes there is increasing evidence that the most dramatic development in Wittgenstein's thought on the way to the *Tractatus* came in the summer of 1916 in connection with his confrontation with Weininger's ideas about the nihilistic character of egoism in the section of his fragmentary essay on what he termed “metaphysics” called “animal psychology”.

Furthermore, Weininger's notion that the essence of immorality is failure to recognize one's limitations reverberates not only through the *Tractatus* but throughout all of Wittgenstein's thought.

As to Professor Stieg's point about *On Last Things* being perhaps even more influential than *Sex and Character*, it would take us far afield to do more than mention some of the best-known cases of Weininger's influence upon major figures. These include writers such as Franz Kafka and Hermann Broch as well as other culturally significant figures such as the composer Arnold Schoenberg or the philosopher Karl Popper. The point is that it is much more likely that such figures would be drawn to the more readable of Weininger's two books. In the case of Schoenberg, for example, praise of Weininger is linked to the critique of a society in which the idea of comfort is a fundamental value. This notion is only implicit in *Sex and Character* but is central to his discussion of Peer Gynt in *On Last Things*.

These considerations by no means exhaust the question of the significance of *On Last Things* but should serve as a reminder of why we should be happy to see the text finally available in a reliable English translation some hundred years after its original publication.

*Allan Janik
The Brenner Archives
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Acknowledgements

When I first set out to spend a research leave in Vienna, in 1977, I learned of Otto Weininger from Janik and Toulmin's *Wittgenstein's Vienna*. Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Vermischte Bemerkungen* was published at the same time, and I learned from it the extent of Wittgenstein's acknowledged debt to Weininger. In the following term, the late Peter Winch, who had supervised my doctoral thesis, was in Vienna. I worked a little with him on his translation of *Vermischte Bemerkungen* (as *Culture and Value*). Those events led me to think that it would be worthwhile making Weininger's second book available in English.

It was more than a decade later, however, before I published a translation of the "Metaphysics" chapter. I am grateful to many people whom I had occasion to thank at that time, and to the editor of the *Journal of Philosophical Research* for permission to re-use that chapter here, with minor alterations. I thought I had done with Weininger, but after another decade, and some signs of renewed interest in him from anglophone commentators who knew only *Sex and Character*, I had another chance to spend time in Vienna, and decided to finish what I had started. I have been helped by the library staff at the University of Vienna, and am very much indebted to two Professors of Philosophy there. The energy and creativity and friendship of Herta Nagl-Docekal and Ludwig Nagl have made Vienna philosophically rewarding for me. Ludwig, in addition, devoted many hours to helping me to understand better some of the eccentricities of Weininger's prose.

After many years of dabbling at this project on my own, I have been pleasantly surprised to find others now working at it as well. In particular, Martin Dudaniec and Kevin Solway have prepared a version of much of *Über die letzten*

Dinge, and of the *Taschenbuch* as well. With wonderful generosity they have offered me their help, and shown me their translations. They have saved me from many errors. I am particularly indebted to them for their very careful versions of chapters 2 and 7, the aphorism chapters. Others helped them, too, and I am happy to express my thanks at second-hand for the skilful first draft of many of the aphorisms that was made by Therese Foote. Albina Leibman-Klix, who is doing doctoral work on Weininger, has also corresponded helpfully with them as well as with me. Solway and Dudaniec have an on-going interest in Weininger research, and host a website where some of their translations are made available: *Otto Weininger on the Web* <www.theabsolute.net>.

I am grateful to Allan Janik for writing the Preface, and to Daniel Steuer, Béla Szabados and Jan Zwicky, who have read the MS. with keen and helpful eyes. Florian Bail has contributed many hours of invaluable editing during the final stages, and has saved me from many errors and moments of inelegance. I wish to acknowledge my colleagues in Philosophy at Dalhousie University who provide a wonderful working environment even when they often wish that I would spend time on different things. Vienna would not have had the attraction it has without the friendship of Alfred and Hildegunde Gratzl, and Gordon and Ann Murray. For many years the late Hertha Baumgartner kept an eye out for Weininger and Wittgenstein items for me, while her son, Franz Baumgartner, has been more help than I can say. Finally, for her wisdom and her patience, and her German, I am permanently indebted to my wife, Janet Ross, to whom I dedicate this translation, and without whom it would not and could not have been done.

In acknowledging my debts to these people, I should add that some of them have explicitly disagreed with some of my interpretations, and that I hold none of them responsible for the inaccuracies of translation that remain.

S.A.M.B.
Halifax, Canada
December, 2000

INTRODUCTION

by
Steven Burns

1. Why read Weininger?
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1. Why read Weininger?

I offer here a translation of a book by Otto Weininger (1880-1903). The book is *Über die letzten Dinge*, which was published in 1904 from Weininger's *Nachlaß*, but which has not been published in English. It is of interest to anyone concerned with “*fin de siècle*” Vienna (i.e., the beginning of the 20th century), and its extraordinary significance for history, the arts, criticism, sociology and psychology.¹ It is of interest to academic philosophers because Ludwig Wittgenstein read it with enthusiasm. It is also of interest in its own right, bearing as it does the stamp of precocious genius and intense moral commitment. I shall preface the translation with an introduction to Weininger, some information about the place of these essays in his writings, and some thoughts about how his work influenced Wittgenstein. Then I shall comment briefly on each of the chapters in turn.

Otto Weininger is usually known, if he is known at all, as one of the “roots of the anti-feminism and the anti-Semitism” of the twentieth century. The phrase

¹ See for instance *Jews and Gender: responses to Otto Weininger*, eds. Harrowitz and Hyams (full bibliographical details will normally be given in the Bibliography following this Introduction).

is Jacques Le Rider's.² It is the furthest thing from my intentions in translating this book to promote such prejudices in any way. Moreover, I think such a reading misconstrues Weininger's importance. Allan Janik's essay, "Writing about Weininger"³, is an intelligent guide to the task of reading Weininger through early 20th century eyes, rather than just through late 20th century ones. As for Wittgenstein, Rush Rhees, one of his three literary executors, has written an account of his attitudes to Jewishness and women.⁴ It sets out both the debts to Weininger, and the dissimilarities between his and Wittgenstein's words on these matters. Rhees's dozen pages are as philosophically relevant as they are personal, and I think that if they are not the last word on the subject they certainly must be the first.

On Last Things, however, is not about those issues, except tangentially. The "ultimate things" which this book is about are the perennial questions which confront each individual, questions about his or her relation to the universe, to the fact that there is something rather than nothing – and to the moral demand that we be one kind of person rather than another. Weininger is concerned about the role that absolutes play for us: the way we are attracted to truth, goodness and beauty, and measure ourselves by them. For example, philosophers since Socrates have been dismissive of those they think of as sophists, because they do not seek the truth. He is also concerned with the timelessness of these things in contrast with the temporality of our lives, and thus he writes about mortality and immortality.

Weininger also thought of himself as the developer of a "characterology". His first book, *Sex and Character*⁵, proposed to give a scientific and philosophical account of human (moral) character. He discusses this in terms of two extreme ideals, labelled "Man" and "Woman", which he treats as Platonic forms, as archetypes. All actual human beings, he claims, are to some extent bisexual, neither perfectly M nor perfectly W. Nonetheless, each person's character can be measured by his or her place on the continuum between the M and W extremes. To be dominated by W-nature is to succumb to "passivity ... to the flesh ... to sleep of the

² Jacques Le Rider, *Le cas Otto Weininger, Racines de l'antiféminisme et l'antisémitisme*.

³ Allan Janik, *Essays on Wittgenstein and Weininger*.

⁴ Rush Rhees, ed., *Ludwig Wittgenstein, Personal Recollections*, "Postscript" (especially pp. 195-208). For further discussion of Weininger, Wittgenstein and women, see Szabados, "Wittgenstein's Women".

⁵ I shall refer throughout to *Geschlecht und Charakter* by its English title. When Weininger refers to it himself, I shall give first the page numbers for the 1st German edition (1903), which he cites, and then (with the notation "E") the corresponding pages in the English edition of 1975.

spirit ... to procreation”⁶, while to fulfil an M-destiny requires prodigious effort, creativity, genius.

Someone who wants to read Weininger with sympathy might do well to start with Ellen Mayne. She not only gives an outline of his metaphysical first principles, but also gives a brave defense of his M / W dichotomy. Self-consciousness, awareness that one is self-identical, is what distinguishes humans from other animals. However, the abstract principle of self-identity ($A = A$, as Weininger puts it) does not imply the existence of a self-identical entity. For the expression “ $A = A$ ” to have a reference, someone must affirm it, and then it means, “I am”.⁷ Its first application is self-referential. Thus, although everything in the empirical world is constantly changing, I remain self-identical. Indeed, this is a condition of the assertion of any proposition; any other identity that we can meaningfully refer to, “is derived from this first one” (5). Memory and time are necessary conditions making it possible for this self-identity to perform its creative function, and the “ideal or goal of mankind ... is an intensification to perfection of self-consciousness. This [Weininger] calls genius” (6).

The principles “M” and “W” are opposites. M stands for self-consciousness, for the commitment to self-identity and the laws of logic, for commitment to truth, self-examination and responsibility – to the higher self or “ego” that transcends the temptations and demands of the lower, “empirical ego”. W, of course, as the opposite concept, is negative – it stands for none of the above, but for the social and heteronomous rather than the individual and autonomous, for the “meaningless” rather than for the “concept-positing self” (11).

Mayne advises women not to take the negativity of W “personally and subjectively.... For this could tend to demonstrate the inability of woman to value truth more highly than her personal vanity” (14). The truth she would thus miss is that Weininger gets some important things right. There is a fundamental difference between male and female. He is wrong, however, to think of W as negative. A world totally M, she argues, would destroy itself. M and W are complementary, and “taken together they would make up a complete human person, but every actual individual is an incomplete mixture” (10). It is difficult not to see this as an

⁶ The terms are taken from Le Rider, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

⁷ Ellen Mayne, “Otto Weininger on the Character of Man”, p. 3. Further page references to this booklet are in parentheses in the text.

attempt to rewrite Weininger. Nonetheless, Mayne points out that Weininger himself draws the conclusion that “no one has a right to forbid things to a woman because they are ‘unwomanly’” (18).

My own view is that this is not the place to look for “Weininger's error”. If there is such a thing, it lies deeper, in the metaphysics of dualism, itself. I shall return to this theme in section 6.

2. Biographical Sketch

Biographically, Weininger was decently served by his friends' memoirs, and very diligently served by his post-second-world-war biographer, David Abrahamsen. Further documents of interest have been discovered by Le Rider, Waltraud Hirsch, and Hannelore Rodlauer.⁸ I shall not attempt to reinterpret these materials, but only to summarize what needs to be known by a new reader of Weininger.

When just 23, and increasingly mentally ill, Weininger returned to Vienna from a trip to Italy, spent a few days seeing friends and writing aphorisms, rented the rooms in which Beethoven had died, wrote letters to his father and brother, then shot himself in the heart. He died the next morning, 4 October, 1903. Just a few days earlier (21 September) he had posted from Syracuse some essays and aphorisms forming most of *On Last Things*, a notebook, and a codicil to his will.

Barely four months before his death (29 May, 1903) *Sex and Character* was published. It was reviewed in a few places, more or less with respect, and by various international journals of psychotherapy, but it was not an immediate hit. It had been expanded from his doctoral thesis (July, 1902), which his supervisor, an accomplished philosopher named Friedrich Jodl, found disagreeable in parts but uniformly brilliant, original, and energetically researched.

Weininger had been born in 1880 in Vienna. His father was a noted goldsmith⁹ with a taste for opera; his mother was a bright woman whose husband did not allow her to have an opinion, let alone to go out of the house.¹⁰ It was a Jew-

⁸ See entries in the Bibliography by friends and supporters, Dallago, Lucka, Kraus and Swoboda, as well as the forewords by Rappaport and Gerber to *Über die letzten Dinge* and *Taschenbuch*, respectively. David Abrahamsen was able to interview many living friends, colleagues and relations for his 1946 study, *The Mind and Death of a Genius*. Rodlauer's chapter is found in Harrowitz and Hyams' *Jews and Gender*.

⁹ His paternal grandfather, Solomon Weininger, was a merchant in Hungary, not the goldsmith of the same name who died in a Viennese prison in 1879 for forging crown jewels.

¹⁰ In Abrahamsen's judgement, “There can be little doubt that his father's severity to his mother was instrumental in forming the devastating view of women Otto later held.” Op. cit., p. 13.

ish, but not a religious, family. Three of the children became converts to Christianity. Otto, himself, quietly but pointedly took leave of the Hebrew community and converted to Protestant Christianity on the day of his doctoral graduation. He had left high school with a command of half-a-dozen languages, and had spent his first university years in the sciences more than in philosophy. It was when a friend who was being psychoanalysed by Freud reported to Weininger some thoughts of Freud's, and a theory of Wilhelm Fliess's about the bisexuality of all people, that Weininger plunged into the research (Autumn 1901 to Summer 1902) which constituted the biological, psychological, sociological, medical, etc., background to his thesis on sexual differentiation. From that narrow starting point, he proceeded to "a harvest rich in its bearing on the fundamental problems of logic and their relations to the axioms of thought, on the theory of aesthetics, of love, and of the beautiful and the good, and on problems such as individuality and morality and their relations, on the phenomena of genius, the craving for immortality and Hebraism."¹¹ He had shown an early draft to Freud, who recommended that he work on it for several more years before seeking publication. Fliess later instituted a lawsuit against Freud for having passed his (Fliess's) theory to Weininger, but by then Weininger was dead, and anyway his theories, at least in detail, bear little resemblance to those of Fliess.

His book's reputation grew rapidly after his death. By 1906 its sixth edition had not only appeared but had been translated into English.¹² It was widely read and influential at least until the 1930s, going through 28 printings in 29 years.

3. Moriz Rappaport

In his revised Foreword to the second and later editions of *On Last Things*, Weininger's literary executor, Moriz Rappaport, writes that at university, Weininger was remarkable for his strong constitution and extraordinary industry. About two years before his death there was a radical change in his philosophical position. From a devotee of the empirio-criticism of Avenarius, he was converted

¹¹ *Sex and Character*, 6th edition, p. ix [E. xii]. (Most of this sentence and indeed another paragraph on the page preceding it are not to be found in the 1st edition. Presumably the additions are Weininger's, since they are part of what is identified as the "Author's Preface to the First German Edition".)

¹² The "authorized" translation (which Wittgenstein called "beastly") omits approximately one third of the original, including not only the 125 pages of often argumentative endnotes, but also whole pages and paragraphs of the main text. The translator is not named.

to a systematic metaphysics “soaked through with mysticism” (vi). He became a follower of Kant, Plato, Plotinus and Augustine, and it became clearer to him that the key to solving the *Welträtsel*, the riddle of the world, was to be sought in ethics. Rappaport speaks of his gift for musical appreciation, and for the emotional and natural phenomena which were vividly represented for him by even the most abstract music. For him the greatest musician, indeed the greatest of all artists, was Richard Wagner, but he also profoundly admired Beethoven for the “remarkable, transfigured joy of which [he] alone was capable” (vii).

An intense relationship to nature, and a vivid sense of the ethical and psychological symbolism of natural phenomena, was characteristic of him. “Every sensible thing became for him the symbol of a mental one.... Light was the symbol of the ethical; fire is the symbol of destruction, the spring of birth, the river of the Apollonian principle, the sea of the Dionysian; dog, pig, snake are symbols of crime, the horse the symbol of insanity, and so on” (viii).¹³ These intuitions intersect with philosophical idealism: reality comes to things only so far as they are symbols of the higher life, of timeless existence. This is an anthropocentric worldview in which the human being is the subject corresponding to the object, to the world. The human becomes the microcosm.

Rappaport believes that *On Last Things* is the culmination of Weininger's systematic thought, the mature reflection which exposes the foundations of the first book. Everything ultimately rests on his conception of dualism and its fundamental importance both for the world (object) and for the individual (subject).

4. Dualism

Dualistic categories are ubiquitous in *On Last Things*. It is not just a matter of the Man / Woman distinction of *Sex and Character*, but also of self-love / self-hate in the Ibsen essay (chapter 1), the sadist and the masochist (especially in the mini-essay in chapter 2), the seekers / priests of the characterology chapter (chapter 3), the circle v. the straight line (chapter 4), the criminal and the insane of the metaphysics essay (chapter 5), belief / superstition in chapter 6, and so on. All of these dichotomies Weininger traces to the dualism in the substance of the universe. The human being has two parts, too. One part originates in the All, the universe, the cosmos itself, the other comes from the Nothing, from chaos.

¹³ See especially the “animal psychology” section of Chapter 5, below.

The part from the cosmos concerns everything in which the good, the beautiful and the true is expressed; it contains everything positive, everything which exists independently.... The other half, the inheritance of chaos, contains everything negative, all that is unfree, that does not exist through itself (like vanity, for example) ... above all, crime and insanity. Ethics and logic unlock the universe to humans; crime and insanity take away their existence; for the human being, as a microcosm, only has real existence when he is, himself, an image of the universe. [Rappaport, Foreword, ix.]

From this Weininger derives the notion that Socratic self-knowledge is not just a moral imperative, it is a metaphysical one. The more clearly a person knows himself, the more real is the universe, and the more distinctly he exists himself. Our vocation is self-observation. The more a person succumbs to self-ignorance or self-deceit the more he is allied to chaos, to nothingness, and his existence becomes increasingly indistinct. The two main forms which such de-creation takes are criminality and insanity. Under the latter, Weininger includes all disturbances of “logical balance”, the whole range of mental disorders. To overcome such uncertainty a person must call to his aid “the highest, most general presuppositions of thought” (x); the law of non-contradiction is first among them. If in the insane person it is thought which is obscured, in the criminal it is the sense of value. “The value of human life, the value of freedom, of truth, of justice, of beauty – all of that becomes problematic for him” (xi). The self-observer who detects such tendencies in himself must turn to absolute value, to the good, for everything that illuminates such weaknesses of will, will overcome them. As Rappaport says, “Now it is clear what Weininger intended by the sentence: ‘Every real, eternal problem, however, is an equally real, eternal guilt; every answer is an atonement, every understanding a recovery’” (xi).¹⁴

Despite – or perhaps because of – its universal use in philosophy since Plato taught the method of division, Weininger's dichotomizing is now hard to accept. To start with, Weininger seems to conflate two kinds of opposites. It is one thing to insist that $A = A$, and that it is false that A is identical to not- A . Something and Nothing are opposites in this sense. “Something” is equivalent in meaning to “not-nothing”. Either there is something, or there is not anything. There is no third

¹⁴ See below, p. 145.

possibility. Other opposites to which Weininger appeals (he calls them “antitheses” on p. 110, below) are not like this. “Priest” is not equivalent in meaning to “not-a-seeker”, and “dog” is not equivalent to “not-horse”. These oppositions allow for third possibilities, and indeed for many more. By not distinguishing these kinds of opposition, Weininger leads his readers to think that everyone *must* be either sadistic or masochistic, or be either a seeker or a priest.

Wittgenstein tried to undermine such dependence on the method of division by teaching how *many more* differences there are than suggested by a dichotomy.¹⁵ Some post-structuralists have made “*la différence*” into a ruling principle. Some feminist philosophers have seen in the method of division a kind of male over-confidence and insensitivity, as well as a form of logical imperialism. For all of them, Weininger can stand as a methodological foil, as an example of how not to do philosophy. I shall return to this hypothesis in Section 6.

5. Ludwig Wittgenstein

My own interest in Weininger stems from reading Wittgenstein's claim, that Weininger was one of the ten thinkers whose creative ideas gave his “reproductive” mind something to work on.¹⁶ G. H. von Wright, one of Wittgenstein's literary executors, makes the following comment:

It is worth giving the list in full here: Boltzmann, Hertz, Schopenhauer, Frege, Russell, Kraus, Loos, Weininger, Spengler, Sraffa. This is Wittgenstein's order of enumeration and I think it answers to the chronological order of influence. The remark was written in 1931 but I doubt whether Wittgenstein would have added to the list later in life.¹⁷

The Viennese trio, Kraus, Loos and Weininger, may have been known to Wittgenstein before he became involved with Frege and Russell (in 1911), but they did not become influential until later. Wittgenstein met Adolf Loos in 1914¹⁸, and the influence of Weininger becomes apparent in the *Notebooks 1914-1916*. An understanding of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (finished in 1918, first published in 1921) insofar as it concerns ethics, depends on an understanding of

¹⁵ He also takes aim at Weininger's method in this remark: “Someone divides mankind into buyers and sellers, and forgets that buyers are sellers too.” *Culture and Value*, 1980 edition, p. 18.

¹⁶ *Culture and Value*, p. 19.

¹⁷ G. H. von Wright, *Wittgenstein*, p. 213.

¹⁸ See Brian McGuinness, “Ornament und Askese in der Denkweise Wittgensteins”.

Weininger.¹⁹ Wittgenstein continued to discuss Weininger the rest of his life, and his influence is also present in the later writings. For example, it is easy to recognize the remarks about Beethoven and Shakespeare which were published in *Culture and Value*, (e.g., “‘Beethoven's great heart’ – nobody could speak of ‘Shakespeare's great heart’.”), as Wittgenstein trying to work out some implications of Weininger's insight: “With Shakespeare, the world has no centre-point; with Beethoven it has one.”²⁰

In 1931, Wittgenstein had urged the reading of *Sex and Character* on G. E. Moore. Moore was unmoved, calling it fantastic, meaning “removed from reality”. Wittgenstein replied:

I can quite imagine that you don't admire Weininger very much, what with that beastly translation and the fact that W. must feel very foreign to you. It is true that he is fantastic but he is *great* and fantastic. It isn't necessary or rather [it's] not possible to agree with him but the greatness lies in that with which we disagree. It is his enormous mistake which is great. I.e., roughly speaking if you just add a “~” to the whole book it says an important truth.²¹

We also know from von Wright that in later life Wittgenstein spoke with enthusiasm of the animal psychology section in the “Metaphysics” chapter below.²²

There are many points of contact between Weininger and the later Wittgenstein: I have mentioned their reservations about Shakespeare, and I find clear parallels between Wittgenstein's alienation from the scientific culture of his time, which he articulates in the 1930 “Sketch for a Foreword” for *Philosophical Remarks* (see *Culture and Value*, 6-7), and Weininger's animadversions in Chapter 6 (below). There are common interests in talent v. genius, in the weaknesses of Francis Bacon's character, even in the phenomenon of having a word on the tip of one's tongue. None of this, however, seems substantial enough to constitute the exceptional influence to which Wittgenstein alludes. One account of such influence depends on reading *Sex and Character* as both an empirical and a conceptual

¹⁹ Cf., Allan Janik, “Wittgenstein and Weininger”, and “Philosophical Sources of Wittgenstein's Ethics”, in his *Essays on Wittgenstein and Weininger*.

²⁰ Wittgenstein's remark, from 1950, is in *Culture and Value*, p. 84. See also pp. 83-86. George Steiner has commented on these remarks in “Wittgenstein contra Shakespeare”, *The Listener*, 20-27 December 1984, pp. 38-9. The Weininger remark will be found below, p. 155.

²¹ Wittgenstein to G. E. Moore, 3 October, 1931, in *Letters to Russell, Keynes and Moore*, p. 159.

²² Reported by Allan Janik, *Essays* p. 65. “Animal Psychology” begins on p. 98, below.

investigation of concepts which give us a false understanding of ourselves.²³ Viewing oneself as masculine, for instance, requires having certain expectations of oneself, and making certain demands on others as feminine which have the character of transferring one's own actual lack to the other in a misunderstood search for fulfilment. Weininger opposed feminism which he took to consist of women rejecting one stereotype by attempting to conform to the other. Regardless of one's views on feminism, however, the deep point is that our own concepts can impose deception (and self-deception) upon us.

This possibility, uncovered by Weininger, is then very differently developed by Wittgenstein. Philosophical problems are not solved by theories (where there is theory there is only science), but they are deep disquietudes rooted in our very language itself. As Janik puts it, language can only be understood as “*interwoven* with action” (63). And the “very linguistic structures that make knowing and acting possible tend to deceive us when they themselves become the objects of inquiry.... Wittgenstein's uniqueness and standing in modern philosophy attach to his dual emphasis upon the facts that the human form of life is constituted by language and that there are quasitranscendental reasons why we are continually tempted to overlook or misinterpret ourselves when we theorize about language, knowledge...” (64-5). Thus we can see Wittgenstein's “work of clarification”, the most radical critique of language and philosophy in the 20th century, as a Weiningerian struggle against self-deceit imposed through our own concepts.

6. How not to do Philosophy

Another approach to finding traces of Weininger's influence in the later work of Wittgenstein, is to ask what is it, exactly, that is being negated when Wittgenstein says that Weininger's “greatness lies in that with which we disagree. It is his enormous mistake which is great. I.e., roughly speaking if you just add a “~” to the whole book it says an important truth.” Various answers have been suggested; here I want to mention only two, one stylistic, one methodological. Both identify a reaction by Wittgenstein against Weininger's *mode* of thinking.

First, one form taken by the old European anti-Semitism, is the idea that the Jew is not gifted for the factual and the real, for he is an oriental, and as such a fabulist who lives captured by pictures and dreams, and thinks in parables. Insofar

²³ See Janik's “How did Weininger Influence Wittgenstein?”, in Harrowitz and Hyams, op. cit.

as this identifies real stylistic traits, Weininger clearly is a gifted fabulist, who often thinks in similes, but he is a persistent rationalist in his metaphysical foundationalism, his dualistic principles, and his methodological dichotomizing. Much of Wittgenstein's later methodology deliberately rejects the theoretical "rationalism" of his own early book, and embraces the use of the *Gleichnis* (parable, or simile).²⁴ In its traditional anti-Semitic form, the prejudice continues (and we should note that this, too, proceeds by dichotomizing the nordic from the oriental): "The nordic man, under his strong and sober sky, must oppose this unmeasuring people with logic. We must block their religious fables with a healthy positivism."²⁵ Thus, one way of reading the negation sign that Wittgenstein recommends putting in front of *Sex and Character* is as an indication that he is prepared to write philosophy in an "oriental" style, and thus to embrace the diversity that Weininger strove so hard to reject. Second, doing philosophy, for Weininger, essentially turns on the original dualism, and on the many instances of dichotomy which seem to him to arise inevitably from it. Those who see many differences between males and females, but no one essential difference, will not be convinced by Weininger's methodology, either in this case or in general. Wittgenstein sets a new pattern, he shows how to do philosophy differently. Rather than pursue the dualist game of either-or, with the quasi-absolutes that it thrives on, he tries to exorcise the bewitchment of such thinking by teaching us *many* differences, all of them grounded in the practice of various "language games".

True, a dualist like Weininger can reply: I do allow for infinite differences. For instance, there can be an infinity of differences among the actual people who fall between the ideal extremes of M and W. The Wittgensteinian, however, can reply: those differences are ranged along a continuum that only makes sense itself when it is established by the dualism of polar opposites. I, on the other hand, rec-

²⁴ For discussion of the methodological role played by the parable in Wittgenstein's later philosophy, see Steven Burns, "Zu einem Gleichnis bei Wittgenstein", and "The Place of Art in a Reasonable Education".

²⁵ This is discussed by Theodor Lessing, in his book on "Jewish self-hatred", *Der jüdische Selbsthaß* (Berlin, 1930). His chapter on Weininger is reprinted as an appendix to the Matthes & Seitz edition of *Über die letzten Dinge*. What I have quoted, here, is Lessing's quotation of the blind rationalist, Eugen Dühring; it is found on p. 200.

See, too, Sander Gilman's claim that the very language of Talmudic disputation (*pilpul*) is implicitly rejected by Weininger as "but another intuitive means of lying". Weininger thus associates the Jew with women, who "do not think logically. Rather they 'think' by association." *Jewish Self-Hatred*, pp. 144 ff.

ognize differences that lie *off* any such continuum, ones that act as new paradigms for clusters of differences, and ones that can share “family resemblances”, but are not categorizable by essential differences. There is, here, a new method in philosophy, one which puts a negation sign in front of the old.²⁶

7. Truth and the Lie

Let us now return to Weininger territory by returning to another of his dichotomies. One of the perennial debates in Austrian literature has been the debate about truth and falsehood. It was a commonplace, especially after Kant, to think of lying as forbidden by honour as well as by the categorical imperative. Telling the truth was a core part of virtue. Franz Grillparzer even titles one of his plays, “*Weh’ dem, der lügt*” – woe to him who lies. This is the advice given by a French Bishop to his kitchen boy, who has promised to go to the neighbouring Germanic territory to rescue the Bishop's imprisoned nephew. The cook keeps his promise, rescues the nephew with the help of the German Count's daughter, and all ends happily. The dictum is upheld. A closer reading, however, reveals that the author is not unaware of the title's irony. The Count's daughter, for instance, must lie to her father to aid the cook's cause, while the cook himself is successful not just because he tells the truth, but because others do not expect him to, and so are deceived when he does. When they have returned to France, the Bishop is led to reflect that by saying what they think is the truth, the young couple have deceived both others and themselves about their incipient love:

Who can explain to me this mottled, muddled world!
They all speak the truth, and proudly so.
And she deceives herself, and him; he me,
And even her; he lies because he's not believed –
And they all speak the truth, all of them.
The weeds, I see, can never be destroyed;
With luck, the wheat just grows to greater heights.²⁷

²⁶ For an introduction to the scholarly literature on this aspect of Wittgenstein's thought, see Reford Bambrough, “Universals and Family Resemblances”, in George Pitcher, ed., *Wittgenstein: the ‘Philosophical Investigations’* (London: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 186-204.

²⁷ Franz Grillparzer (1791-1872), *Weh' dem, der lügt* (1840), Act V (my translation). Although his view that earthly ambitions and endeavours are vanity was in tune with the Viennese spirit, this play, his only comedy, was a theatrical failure. This, and frustrations with the censors, led him to give up presenting further plays to the public.

The debate had become subtler by Weininger's time. Consider this exchange from *Das weite Land*.²⁸ “There is, perhaps, really only one thing in the world that is serious – and that is the lie.” Frau Genia replies: “The lie? Are there any, then, in a game?” (Act IV) Earlier, in Act III, her husband allows the play's title to be offered to him by a fellow adulterer: “Has it not occurred to you yet what complicated subjects we humans are? There is room for so much in us–! Love and deceit ... faith and faithlessness ... adoration for one and desire for another, or for others. We try hard to create order in ourselves, as well as we can, but this order is still only something artificial.... What is natural ... is chaos. Yes, my good friend, the soul ... is a vast country.”

Weininger is fully aware of these contemporary opinions, that truth and falsehood are not related as simple opposites, and he cuts through them with the enthusiasm of a young moralist who is repelled by the superficiality and duplicity of his society. Truth and falsehood are clearly and distinctly opposed. He thinks that Ibsen is the only one of the modern dramatists who follows Kant in taking truth and the lie to be the deepest ethical problem (see below, p. 7). It is the ethical problem of the individual (p. 11n.), who must decide whether to be moral or not. What is most important is that one not lie to oneself about the real demands of morality. Peer Gynt is quintessentially just such a self-deceiver, and this is a central point of Weininger's reading of that play. It illumines, for instance, his conception of the Great Boyg as symbolizing the life of lying which Peer cannot escape by more acts of deception (p. 30). What is required is exactly the opposite, a great recognition of the truth about himself. This discussion is conducted in terms of the radical opposition of these two concepts. The reader who is prepared to accept such a starting point is equipped to approach Weininger with understanding. I shall now offer some remarks on each of the seven chapters of *On Last Things*, lingering longest on the first, the most polished of his essays.

8. Ibsen as Thinker

Otto Weininger's essay on *Peer Gynt* is a substantial document in the early reception of Ibsen. His central concern is to expose the intellectual content of the work, so he can be counted a pioneer in what Errol Durbach calls the “supertex-

²⁸ Arthur Schnitzler (1862-1931), *The Vast Country* (1909) (my translation).

tual” branch of Ibsen commentary.²⁹ There are other branches to which he is not as sympathetic.

Many commentators have agreed with Ibsen's early English translator, William Archer, who thought him a master of dramatic effect, but no thinker. “As works of reflection [Ibsen's plays] may be mediocre, but as works of imagination they are superb.”³⁰ Weininger, however, is precisely interested in him as a thinker. Other critics have insisted on taking his social commentary to be central. The feminist campaigner, Eleanor Marx, one of Karl's daughters, organized a public reading of *A Doll's House* in 1886, and began to proselytize for Ibsen's recognition in England. The social realism of the later plays was also central for those whom Durbach calls “modern” commentators, such as George Bernard Shaw, Henry James, and Sigmund Freud. Freud used Ibsen the way he did Sophocles and Shakespeare, for their intuitive understanding of the human psyche. Weininger is interested in the human psyche, but not in Ibsen as a social commentator.

A third branch of criticism consists of those who think Ibsen essentially a poet. Muriel Bradbrook claimed that the plays are “crystallized” out of poetry already finely crafted. E. M. Forster wrote that Ibsen was always a poet, not a thinker. It is an obstacle to understanding him, he claims, that “although he is not a teacher he has the air of being one, there is something in his method that implies a message, though the message really rested on passing irritabilities, and not on any permanent view of conduct or the universe.”³¹ His stage throbs with a certain air of mystery, continues Forster, and he concludes that “Ibsen is at bottom Peer Gynt ... he is a boy bewitched.” Ibsen, himself, on at least one occasion, defended this view of himself as a poet. Speaking in 1898 to the Norwegian Society of Women's Rights, he said: “I have been more of a poet and less of a social philosopher than people have been generally inclined to believe.”³²

Weininger falls into none of those critical camps. What Durbach calls the textual and subtextual criticism exposes the governing mood, and explains the images of the plays. The supertextual critics are epitomized by Bruce Shapiro and Brian Johnston, who claim that intellectual process and philosophical idea form

²⁹ Errol Durbach, “A Century of Ibsen Criticism”, in James McFarlane, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Ibsen*, p. 244.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

³¹ E. M. Forster, “Ibsen the Romantic”, in Harold Bloom, ed., *Henrik Ibsen*, p. 8.

³² Quoted by Richard Gilman, “Ibsen and the Making of Modern Drama”, in Bloom, p. 90.

the deep structure of the dramas.³³ These critics see an inheritance from the philosophers Kant and Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Kierkegaard, and from Hebbel, Goethe and Blake. This is almost exactly Weininger's pantheon, and it is his central claim that intellectual process and philosophical idea form the deep structure of *Peer Gynt*.

Weininger inscribes the essay, "on the author's 75th birthday". That would have been 20 March, 1903, not long after Weininger finished *Sex and Character*. A year earlier, however, he had already written his friend, Artur Gerber, that he needed to discuss *Peer Gynt* with him, because he wanted to "conclude his notes and thoughts" on the play.³⁴ Later that same year he made a trip to Germany and Scandinavia. He had hoped to meet Ibsen, himself, but the great man was too ill. Ibsen did not die until 1906, but had been in very fragile health since suffering a stroke in 1900. Weininger had to settle for seeing a production of *Peer Gynt* at the National Theatre in Oslo.³⁵ It was performed, of course, in Norwegian, but Weininger was fluent in Norwegian, and knew the text inside out. He also had seen it on stage in 1902, when it received its Viennese première.³⁶ He did not admire either of the performances: "If the Vienna production was very *bad* and the audience loathsome, the one here was foolish and the spectators idiotic."³⁷

There is further reason to believe that the essay was not finished until about the time of Ibsen's 75th birthday. During March of 1903, Weininger's book was not on the front burner; it was in the hands of his publishers, so he had time to devote to the essay. He spent April correcting the proofs. In addition, although the mother/prostitute dichotomy is firmly established in *Sex and Character*, Weininger stewed about it. The previous October, just back from his northern journey, he wanted urgently to discuss "my division of women into mother and prostitute".³⁸ On 10 March, 1903, he wrote: "I am doubtful again with regard to mother / prostitute."³⁹ In the final section of the Ibsen essay, however, the two functions of the woman that are united in Solveig are mother and *lover*. This is consistent

³³ Durbach, p. 244, referring to Bruce Shapiro, *Divine Madness and the Absurd Paradox*, and Brian Johnston, *Text and Supertext in Ibsen's Drama*.

³⁴ Letter of 8 February, 1902, *Taschenbuch*, p. 69.

³⁵ 25 August, 1902. See letters of 22 and 26 August, 1902, *Taschenbuch*, pp. 85, 86.

³⁶ George B. Bryan, *An Ibsen Companion*, p. 286.

³⁷ *Taschenbuch*, p. 86.

³⁸ Letter of 18 October, 1902, *ibid.*, p. 90.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

with Gerber's observation about the degree to which Weininger's position regarding the problem of the sexes, about the very possibility of moral sexual relations between a man and a woman, had altered toward the end of his life.⁴⁰ I conjecture, therefore, that he did, indeed, start the essay in early 1902, but that he finished it, as the dedication suggests, in March, 1903.

Between 1849 and 1899, Ibsen published 25 plays. In the year of his 70th birthday, 1898, the city of Vienna witnessed productions of no less than 12 of them!⁴¹ The reception of Ibsen in Vienna had begun slowly. The first play of his to be produced there was *The Vikings of Helgeland* (under its alternate title, *The Nordic Expedition*), in 1876. It was not a great success. Two years later, however, *The Pillars of Society* was a success, and in 1881 *A Doll's House* (also under an alternate title, *Nora*) was sufficiently controversial to make a big impression. Although the Viennese public was accused by one critic of watching “this profound searcher of the human soul through sleepy eyes”⁴², it was clear that by the end of the century he was established there as *the* great modern playwright. In fact, he was ripe for renewed neglect, which Weininger parodies by saying that everyone had read him long since. What Ibsen said, people believed they had more than sufficiently understood and long since inwardly digested (see below, pp. 2, 4).

Meanwhile, *Peer Gynt* started slowly, too. Ibsen had written it as a poem, and had not intended it for the stage. Although published in 1867, it was not produced on stage until 1876, and not outside Scandinavia until 1896 in Paris. It reached the stage in Vienna, as noted above, in 1902. Against this background, Weininger takes up the challenge of explaining what *Peer Gynt* is really about, and what makes it Ibsen's greatest play. As a pioneer “supertextualist”, he argues that Ibsen, although not a learned philosopher-psychologist, nonetheless has an intuitive understanding of the most profound things about the human soul. It is the *individual* that is the true locus of moral value; the true vocation of each individ-

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 24.

⁴¹ They were: *The Vikings of Helgeland* (first published in 1857), *The Pretenders* (1863), *The League of Youth* (1869), *The Pillars of Society* (1877), *A Doll's House* (1879), *Ghosts* (1881), *An Enemy of the People* (1882), *The Wild Duck* (1884), *Rosmersholm* (1886), *The Lady from the Sea* (1888), *Hedda Gabler* (1890), and *The Master Builder* (1892). This information is taken from Wilhelm Eisenthal, *Ibsen und das Wiener Theater*, doctoral thesis, University of Vienna, 1923, p. 85. It is perhaps noteworthy that apart from the very early and the very last of Ibsen's plays, this list leaves out only the three acknowledged as his masterpieces, his three longest plays: *Brand* (1866), *Peer Gynt* (1867) and *Emperor and Galilean* (1873).

⁴² Eisenthal, p. 66.

ual is to seek the highest *value* and to strive for *autonomy*. Peer Gynt's inconsistent, deceitful and self-deceitful character portrays exactly the essence of immorality.

Weininger's language at times rises to a Kierkegaardian level, and he will use “God”, “Absolute” and “Higher Value” interchangeably. The central point, however, can be made in secular terms. It is in the Kantian tradition to maintain that the empirical ego, the locus of one's drives and desires, is a sort of external influence, like the social pressures of tradition and authority, convention and the opinions of others. The moral self, the higher or transcendental ego, will make moral choices from a position free from such external influences. It will recognize moral laws through an exercise of pure reason, will freely legislate those laws for itself, and will freely strive to obey its own moral laws. This is the essence of autonomy, and the opposite of the heteronomy in which a person is governed by external forces.

It is a stroke of genius that leads Weininger from this analysis of the ethical basis of the play to a re-evaluation of its most striking structural feature: that Peer is redeemed, in the end, by the love of Solveig. After some 22 pages, in which he comments on the play and its major episodes, Weininger begins a digression on self-love and self-hate. Typically, he divides people into two types according to these opposite characteristics (and this time he does *not* warn that actual people are always a mixture). Although he breaks this digression after four pages, he continues to work with the distinction for several more pages. This digression illuminates his reading of “The Great Boyg” (29-31), but its main purpose is to prepare us to understand the theme of redemption by a woman. (31 ff.)

Weininger explores the familiar parallels – in works by Goethe and Wagner, for instance. Although the theme may be common, however, he thinks that it is unintelligible that a person's moral value should be determined by an external influence. No one can be redeemed by something external.⁴³ To understand such redemption through a woman's love we must think that the man “*projects onto*

⁴³ Weininger considers this an unanswerable objection. Someone who wished to challenge him on this point might invoke Professor Dumbledore's words to Harry Potter: “[L]ove as powerful as your mother's for you leaves its own mark.... [T]o have been loved so deeply, even though the person who loved us is gone, will give us some protection forever. It is in your very skin.” (J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1997), p. 216.) The efficacy in this case, however, is admittedly magical.

the woman his better self” (32). It thus cannot be Solveig, no matter how much she may love him, who causes Peer's redemption. It must be “the Solveig within him” who redeems him from hatred of his higher self, makes possible self-love, leads him to the recognition and acceptance of his *higher* moral potential. That this implies using the *actual* Solveig as a *means* is the paradox which leads Weininger to conclude the essay with a consideration of male/female relations in some of Ibsen's other plays, as well as in some of Wagner's works.

9. Aphorisms

This chapter is made up of “remarks that have remained in aphoristic form”. The aphorism, which aspires to compress wisdom, should not be confused with the epigram, which compresses wit. It is rare for philosophers to write aphoristically, since it seems to omit the argumentative context of the thought. It is even rarer for this form (much like the dialogue form, never again used as well as by Plato) to be used successfully. It nonetheless can be strikingly powerful in the hands of a Pascal, a Nietzsche or a Wittgenstein. Some of Weininger's short remarks in this chapter do not remain aphoristic, but are taken up at greater length elsewhere. For instance, remarks about the psychology of the criminal, or the moral character of plants, are developed in Chapter 6. Others are systematically developed right here. As indicated by the chapter's subtitle, sadism and masochism are a major theme, and they are discussed in a sustained essay-fragment (pp. 56-59), as well as in individual aphorisms. The masochist has elements of the self-hater of the previous chapter. More important here, however, is the connection with metaphysics. Weininger attributes philosophical idealism (and the relative unreality of the material world) to the masochistic character, and realism to the sadist. He weaves a pattern of associations with mysticism and the need for a heaven (masochist), and with the taking of space and time to be real (sadist). These associations, many of them expressed with wonderful conciseness, might seem merely bizarre if it were not for their haunting consistency.

Finally, in a thought much too complex for an aphorism, Weininger analyzes the philosopher as a person who requires three characteristics: those of the mystic, the scientist, and the systematizer. His argument consists of showing how the lack of any one of the three creates a very different character: if a person has the other characteristics, but is unsystematic, then he is only a dogmatic theolo-

gian; if unscientific, then an intuitive theosophist; if unmystical, then a theoretical scientist. A few pages later, this conception of the philosopher as embodying all three characteristics is illustrated in an extraordinary endnote. Weininger considers the parallel morphology of the oral and the anal-genital regions; he combines scientific information, systematic relations to other phenomena, and mystical concern for the meaning of these bodily areas for the individual's relation to the cosmos! This is a tiny *tour-de-force*.

10. Characterology

The chapter entitled “Characterology” consists of three brief essays, united by their concern for character as the central feature of a person which gives him whatever worth he has. Here Weininger discusses aspects of the character of two notable artists, after first developing one of the relevant paradigms.

The paradigm is given in “Seekers and Priests”, which was first published in Karl Kraus's *Die Fackel* (Nr. 145, 28 October 1903, pp. 2 ff.). It presents another of the sweeping dichotomies that Weininger likes so much. People can be divided into those who feel inadequate, and search for fulfilment, and those who are content, and try to radiate this to others. The latter are nicer; the former are more moral, according to Weininger. As usual, these are Types, or theoretical paradigms, and individual people are a mixture of both characteristics. Indeed, it is assumed here that a person's character may change. Many artists are cited, Wagner notable among them, who begin as seekers and end as priests.

“On Friedrich Schiller” was later reprinted in *Die Fackel* (Nr. 290, 11 November, 1909, pp. 1 ff.) It is a very critical account of the failure of character of this icon of German literature. Particularly acute is the contrast with Goethe, compared to whom Schiller is said to lack originality; he is out of touch with what Wittgenstein (writing about Mendelssohn) calls the “primitive drives” which give all great art its “ground bass”.⁴⁴

The fragment on Wagner is, like the earlier essay on Ibsen, concerned to distinguish the intellectual structure of his work from its theatrical effectiveness. His claim that “the problems that he has chosen as his subject are the most enormous that any artist has chosen” (p. 75), rests on a thesis of great significance for aes-

⁴⁴ Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, p. 37. For evidence that Wittgenstein might have shared Weininger's unusually critical view of Schiller, see *Culture and Value*, pp. 65, 66.

thetics. It has recently been defended by Michael Tanner, for instance, who argues that a necessary condition for greatness in art is the tackling of human problems of universal significance.⁴⁵ What are these problems for Wagner? First the innocence of the Rhinemaidens, at one with their world. (A full discussion of this would invoke Weininger's notion of the "henid", a unitary, undifferentiated state of (sub-)consciousness – knowledge/feeling – that is not infected with the dualism of self-conscious and conceptual thought.⁴⁶) Second the disruption which creates dualism, the absolute separation from the wholeness that existed before. Then the tension between fate and freedom. Finally the possibility of redemption, and a life of eternal wholeness.

In his remarks on *Parsifal*, it is clear that Weininger is still preoccupied with the mother/prostitute dichotomy. He is struck, here, by Wagner's allowing Kundry, the primeval seductress who is almost redeemed by Parsifal's innocence and purity, to die at the end of the opera. He discusses this at the end of his *Peer Gynt* essay, too, where he attributes to Wagner a very different final view of woman from that achieved by Ibsen. The latter, he claims, believes in "the resurrection of the woman, in a higher life of man and woman together" (37). Wagner, on the other hand, seems to have abandoned such an ideal. Weininger follows Wagner at least so far as to wonder whether the woman's place in the universe is to be the *object* in which "only a *subject* will be able to attain consciousness of itself" (40). However appalling this moral vision may seem, as an extension of the traditional dualism of subject and object it is a telling insight about Parsifal.

11. Time

Retrograde motion is both circular and backwards. It is epitomized by the epicycles with which Ptolemaic astronomers tried to plot the occasional appearance of a planet's moving backwards. Weininger argues that such motions are symbolically contrary to morality. That is why he thinks men are reluctant to return home by retracing their steps; going backwards indicates a lack of resolve or imagination. Going around in circles is also a failure of will, this time via frivolity or purposelessness. He singles out the merry-go-round and the Viennese waltz as

⁴⁵ Michael Tanner, "The Total Work of Art", in Peter Burbidge and Richard Sutton, eds., *The Wagner Companion* (London: Faber and Faber, 1979), especially p. 144.

⁴⁶ See the discussion in *Sex and Character*, E. pp. 99, ff.

amusing instances. There is nothing light-hearted about Weininger's intentions, however. These remarks about motion are connected to thoughts about time. The thesis is that time's arrow is the mark of progress and purpose. Here, without making it explicit, Weininger is in modern company; he rejects the ancient physics which held circular motion to be complete and perfect, and he accepts straightline motion (inertial motion which will in theory continue forever unless hindered by some external resistance) as the symbol of the good. Not only is it a symbol, however, but it is also a derivative. Not only will he later provide a moral reason for being logical, he will also claim: "the reason that time is unidirectional must lie in morality" (88).

Weininger maintains that the deepest problem of all – the riddle of the universe – is to be found here. He intends to go beyond both Plato and Kant, recognizing that the fundamental dualism of the universe pits past against future, and truth against lie. A lie tries to change the past, to alter history, by claiming that something happened that did not happen; but the past is fixed, and truth *ought* to be acknowledged. That is why the fundamental decision to be *moral* brings with it the commitment to acknowledge the truth, and to accept the laws of logic. Thus, too, the human will expresses itself in trying to alter the *future* only.

12. Metaphysics

The "Metaphysics" chapter is not so much an essay as the outline of a book. It is clearly unfinished, breaking down to a series of notes, and ending in an aphorism of doubtful quality. This, of course, lends plausibility to the contention that *On Last Things* should be considered a collection of working documents, and not the culmination of the brilliant young philosopher's system. Nonetheless, the essay begins as though the project were well under way. It attempts to stand on its own, to provide its own starting point, explaining why it is not a contribution to traditional metaphysics, but is in some sense a post-Kantian inheritor of the title. It again makes morality absolutely central. Moreover, it gives a theoretical context for the use of metaphor in philosophy.

I wrote earlier about Weininger's idea that for a human consciousness to be a microcosm, things in nature must have "meanings". In his account, the dog is the symbol of the criminal. In this chapter we begin to find out why: "The eye of the dog irresistibly evokes the impression that the dog has *lost* something. There

is written in it (as in the dog's whole bearing) a certain mysterious relation to the *past*. What he has lost is the ego, self-worth, freedom.” (See below, p. 103.) There is no lack of evidence, too, for his claim that criminality can be seen in dogs. “The dog behaves as though it felt its own worthlessness. It lets people beat it, and then right away *presses up* to them again, the way the bad person always does to the good. The dog's importunity, its jumping up on people, is the functionalism of the slave.” (106) The dog's tail-wagging is a sign that it recognizes every other thing as more valuable than itself. Its sexual promiscuity expresses its having abdicated choice.

Moreover, in proper fashion Weininger raises and deals with possible counter-evidence. The dog's vaunted faithfulness? It is a symbol of lowness, of the slave mentality, of resignation to being kicked. If there is counter-evidence he cannot discount, he still presents it: certain noble dogs are a problem: Bulldogs, Mastiffs, Great Danes.

In the first part of this chapter, the main topic is criminality. That there is an essence to the criminal character had been a theory at least since Lombroso, and Weininger seeks to give it a moral and metaphysical analysis. He sets out to connect it to the terms which he will then use of the dog: loss of ego, freedom, slavery and atomism. Humans can have “intelligible character”. This flows from the commitment, which only a moral person can make, to the principle of identity and the laws of thought. The existence of the ego is actually contained in pure logic, it is the condition of intelligible existence. Thus, we find our *selves* in cognition; all error, all failure of cognition, should feel criminal.

Criminality, Weininger maintains, is the abandonment of the duty to truth. One gives up along with it the guarantee of *selfhood*, one *loses* the *ego*, leaves the realm of *freedom* and becomes just the plaything of unnumbered causal determinants. Paradoxically, the criminal is a “social” being, determined by others. In this sense, the moral person is profoundly non-social. The splendid supremacy of the Kantian duty to oneself, having the law within one, involves a kind of radical solitude. The essence of criminality is what Weininger calls *functionality*. He means by this a life the components of which are purely functions of other elements or forces, which are caused by desires or emotions, or by external circumstances, and which are not at all determined by the Kantian self-legislation that alone guarantees a person a self, an ego. That is what is missing in the eye of the dog.

Another basis of Weininger's account is his notion of microcosm and metaphor. We can find in many philosophers, Leibniz and Schopenhauer not least among them, ideas of the individual consciousness as a microcosm, a reflection, however dim, of everything in the universe. Weininger's version, however, is that especially the genius, the person whose mind is most universal, must find significance in everything in the world, and find reciprocally his own psychology mirrored significantly in everything else. This makes clear the enormous ambition of his project. Everything has symbolic significance; this makes the meaningfulness of the universe complete. This aspires to be a kind of metaphysics, because it tries to tell us the significant character of everything that is, and to solve the problem of the meaning of the world. Thus the deep sea, cut off from light, which is the symbol of the highest and purest life, must represent that which wishes to hide. It is the symbolic place of criminality, and its denizens, the polyps and krakens of the darkest deep, "can only be regarded as symbols of evil" (see below, pp. 97-8).

13. Science and Culture

This essay is Weininger's expansion of his own rhetorical question: "Is the present generation with its electrical railways and empirical psychology so much higher than these earlier times? Is culture, if culture has any real value, to be compared with science, which is always social and never individual, and to be measured by the number of public libraries and laboratories? Is culture outside human beings and not always in human beings?" (*Sex and Character*, 6th ed., p. 276 [E. 211]) This question is intended to be rhetorical; Weininger's answer is that culture is not external, not a matter of museums and libraries, but is essentially a matter of the individual's consciousness. The answer is given with such enthusiasm that this is the best place to turn to for the reader who despairs of Weininger's having a sense of humour. These passages are abundantly witty, even if the wit is biting and sarcastic.

I have treated this essay as essentially epistemological. "*Wissen*" is rendered as "knowledge", and "*Glaube*" as "belief". Weininger uses "*Glaube*" not for reasoned assent appropriate to a probability, but rather for the ungrounded affirmation that is sometimes called "faith". I have used "belief", however, even where the context is in the ordinary sense religious, because Weininger thinks that the same ungrounded affirmation is found both in religion and in science. He also ex-

exploits the fact that the German word for “superstition”, “*Aberglaube*”, makes a pointed contrast with “*Glaube*” that cannot be captured in English.

“*Wissenschaft*” is rendered “science”, though in German it retains the wider sense of “knowledge”, rather than just the special set of disciplines by which it is often pursued (the natural sciences). “*Kultur*” is translated “culture”, although this should not be confused with its contemporary use to refer to a multiplicity of conflicting life-styles. Weininger is thinking of “civilization” or “cultivation” in general, and what distinguishes the cultured person from the uncultured.

14. Final Thoughts

Weininger travelled to Italy during the final months of his life. He waited impatiently for reviews of *Sex and Character*, and continued to write. On 21 August he posted a package to his friend, Dr. Moriz Rappaport. It contained most of the present volume, with instructions to publish it after his death. It also contained a diary, and a last testament. Weininger returned to Vienna in late September.

Über die letzten Dinge was published early in 1904. Rappaport, who is responsible for the title and the chapter headings, also included the 69 aphorisms which Weininger wrote during his final few days in Vienna. In the second edition (1907), for which he revised his Foreword, and made minor corrections to the text, Rappaport also removed 47 of these final aphorisms. He did so because they were “composed in a sort of secret language”. There is no consistent subject matter in the aphorisms he removed, and I am inclined to agree that he removed them not to avert scandal, but to minimize unintelligibility. It is true that 9 of the 47 mention Jews, and some of those, as Abrahamsen says, are charged with apparent hatred⁴⁷, but it does not seem plausible that this is Rappaport's systematic motive. I have chosen to translate this revised edition. A further set of aphorisms, written in a shorthand that took years to decipher, is described in the Appendix, below.

My original intention was to publish all of these coded aphorisms as an appendix to the present volume, but time and space have made this impractical. I have been able to put in an Appendix several aphorisms collected earlier by Rappaport, and included by him in his Introduction to the original German editions.

⁴⁷ It is worth noting, however, that his friends did not think of Weininger as a person of hatreds. “To call Weininger a hater of women is completely to misunderstand him as a human being. For his anti-feminism was the direct opposite of hatred, even if the sentences that he wrote sounded that way. Otto Weininger *was incapable of hating!*” (Arthur Gerber, *Taschenbuch*, p. 11.)

15. Translator's Note

Über die letzten Dinge literally means “about the last things”. Weininger writes about the riddle of the meaning of the world (the “*Welträtzel*”), life and death, time and eternity, the vocation of the human individual, freedom and responsibility, the common foundation of logic and ethics, the absolute as a necessary first principle, and of course, human character. Allan Janik would like to focus all this, and call it *The Four Last Things* (namely, the four last things of Christian eschatology: death, judgement, heaven and hell), while Otto's brother, Richard, renders it as *About the Last Dreams of Life*. I have chosen *On Last Things* for its simplicity, its rhythm, and its eschatological ring.⁴⁸

Weininger is not easy to read in German. I have not sought to make him easy to read in English. This translation aspires to be reasonably literal, to avoid circumlocution where possible, and to preserve where not too awkward the author's complex thought and sentence structure. Nonetheless, many long sentences have been rearranged. I have taken minor liberties with the format. (a) Weininger sometimes inserts phrases in Greek, Latin, French and Italian. I have left them as such, but when required I have inserted English translations in footnotes or in square brackets. (b) I have occasionally added other information in square brackets, both in Weininger's footnotes and in the text itself. Nothing in square brackets is by Weininger. (c) I have identified my footnotes with an “(sb)”. Unidentified footnotes are Weininger's own. (d) “*Mensch*” is a gender-neutral term in German, and I have tried to avoid the traditional translation, “man”. It would be inappropriately anachronistic, however, to seek gender-neutrality in the use of pronouns, so I have left “he”, “him” and “his” even in gender-neutral contexts.

It is an established convention in German philosophy and psychoanalysis to translate “*das Ich*”, literally “the I”, as “the ego”. It is used to refer to the self, usually not to the lower, empirical self but to the higher, transcendental self for which Weininger argues. Although there is danger of confusion (e.g., because of associations with “egoism” and “egotism”) I have kept to the convention.

Finally, I thank readers who prefer British or American spelling for their patience with the idiosyncrasies of my Canadian orthography.

⁴⁸ Special thanks to Jan Zwicky, who gave me reasons to reconsider an earlier title.

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***Peer Gynt* and Ibsen**

**(Containing remarks on the erotic, hate and love, crime,
and the ideas of father and son)**

Henrik Ibsen and his Dramatic Poem, *Peer Gynt*

(for the author's 75th birthday)

In our relationship to the works of an artist, we would be wise to distinguish a variety of aspects. We may find in them thoughts that enlighten us, a solution that liberates us, a form that pleases us and appears to fit the subject, skill for which we envy the artist, imagination that can stir our love or fear, and on the other hand, whatever of the artist himself, in all his subjectivity, has entered into the work – of the artist, not as a great thinker and creative genius but simply as an *ordinary* human being. It may well look as though it were just this latter element that determines the “style” of his art. Granted, only men of genius do find a style, that is, *their own* personal style, but *differences* in style stem from other differences in their personalities. According to how close or distant these are to our own, we can measure our emotional response to the artist – and the great majority of people base their ultimate judgement of him exclusively on this.

One must take this into consideration in order to understand the relationship which the current generation and their spokesmen have to Ibsen. People no longer get worked up about him, either for or against. He is a “modern”, but not at all the “mode”. Everyone has read him long since; one reader he notably attracted, another he left indifferent, to a third he was utterly antipathetic. People know that he is for women and against living a lie, and they praise his dialogue. They do not agitate for him as for Goethe, nor abuse him as they do Schiller. A man whose books can be bought for a few pennies can scarcely satisfy the need for costly intellectual furnishings felt by the culture mob, whose reading them, too, is merely a matter of rare *meublements*. This explanation of the current Ibsen-rejection, or cool Ibsen-reception, may appear wrong-headed, but it is no more wrong-headed than the list of motives which today leads to dethroning and dismissing the artistic greats. An era that dimly feels an inner *unrest* over its own loutishness, and which desperately seeks trendy art as a counter-weight, rather rashly believed it had found this in every mediocre writer of mere *idylls*, like Gottfried Keller or Theodor Storm. It dared to name them in the same breath with Goethe without fear of

being laughed at, instead of thinking, in lively mistrust of itself, of inner self-examination, a task of which it must have felt uncomfortably reminded by Ibsen.

Admittedly, Ibsen had the misfortune to be badly compromised three times. As a young man he fell into the hands of a Danish journalist who mainly owed his fame to the circumstance that he was the first to feel no shame for indulging his urge to interview all the famous men of Europe.¹ His incredibly superficial, pretty rhetoric about tendencies in 19th-century literature could only succeed because professorial writing about the history of literature had become insufferable. The second misfortune was that his writing coincided with the demand of women for admission to the civil professions, a coincidence which people considered causal, and not merely accidental. Understandably, it was contrary to men of a deeper nature to support a man who was praised by women for his views. Finally, third, he was seized upon by the male theoreticians of the contemporary culture. He was claimed by socialism and by humanist ethics. The greatest dust was always stirred up by those of his works which were topical, and therefore transitory. Just as the last words of Faust² were brought into ever closer relation to the workers' movement during the second half of the 19th century, so all women (of both sexes) interpreted the conclusion of *Little Eyolf* as the clarion call for the "century of the child".³ The other side of womanliness, the "life of love", was fully accounted for by *Ghosts*, the drama that had made Ibsen's name most famous. The Darwinists also liked it, because it gave a terrifying example of simply applying hygienic heredity-theory at home and in school. The blasé socialists finally accepted Ibsen as an unclear and indecisive forerunner of Nietzsche. If his rich symbolism was offensive to the cliché-masters of both of those movements, he was also, for the Symbolists themselves, not emotional enough, too *logical*, too *cold*.

All this came together to create the bored, morose tone in which one almost always hears the name Ibsen spoken today. To the avant-garde his name is a triviality, a rallying cry against the latter-day classicists; in the hard-fought victory over them it had served its purpose. What Ibsen said, people believe they have

¹ The reference is to Georg Brandes, who wrote *Main Currents of 19th-Century Literature*. See the Weininger and Ibsen chapter in Allan Janik, *Wittgenstein's Vienna Revisited* (Full bibliographical details will normally be given in the Bibliography) (sb)

² I.e., his speech beginning: "How good to hear the sound of shovels! / The mass of workers serve my pleasure..." Goethe, *Faust*, Part 11, Act V, scene 5. (sb)

³ This is a reference to *The Century of the Child* (1900), by Ellen Key, a Swedish feminist and educator. (sb)

more than sufficiently understood and long since inwardly digested. He is for them the forerunner of a time that has already arrived anyway, the author of such works as are already the common property of the learned. Nothing, however, is more deadly for a work of art than this. That everyone knows him, and his dramas are everywhere produced without objections, only contributes to consigning him to the past.

Anyone today, then, who wants to say something more about Ibsen, is in an embarrassing position. He runs the risk of being immediately grouped with those stragglers to whom the news of the latest fashion only penetrates after several decades, like the light of stars to the earth. And anyone who sees in Ibsen's work, and above all in his most powerful "dramatic poem", *Peer Gynt*, not the products of a period but creations for eternity, knows full well *for* whom, but not exactly *against* whom, he is bearing witness.

Before discussing the essential thought content of *Peer Gynt* we must explicitly renounce an explanation based on the generally current opinion that sees in this work merely a mockery of Norwegianism, something which would be understandable only to the author's countrymen. Certainly in *Peer Gynt* there are scenes and passages like that. *The hero of Peer Gynt however, is humanity itself.* Anyone who takes the trouble to read further, or who looks forward to the pleasure of taking up the play, itself, again, will find that that viewpoint strikes him just the same way as would someone's insisting that, with *Faust*, Goethe only wanted to write a satire on German student life. Moreover, Ibsen is nowhere so little understood as in his homeland, a land where people think of Knut Hamsun, whose *Pan* is perhaps the most beautiful novel ever written, as a common scribbler, far inferior to the talented Garborg; where they always say "Ibsen and Björnson"; and where, in Christiania⁴ to be precise, *Peer Gynt* is performed in a field in a circus atmosphere – a performance that with the best of wills can only be called idiotic. In such a land, Ibsen must indeed have suffered frightfully. In fact he has admitted in his epilogue⁵ how little understood he is.

Peer Gynt is a redemption drama, and indeed, just to admit this right away, it is one of the greatest. It is deeper and more comprehensive than any of Shakespeare's, without being any less beautiful; it is superior in sensuous brilliance to

⁴ Christiania, Norway's capital and the site of the National Theatre, became Oslo in 1925. (sb)

⁵ I.e., in *When we Dead Awaken* (1899), which Ibsen called a "dramatic epilogue". (sb)

all of Ibsen's other works; in the significance of its conception it is the equal of, and in the power of its execution it is far above, Goethe's *Faust*; and it very nearly reaches the heights of Richard Wagner's *Tristan* and *Parsifal*. Together with these three great works, it presents the problem of humankind in its widest range and with its most implacable opposites.

The central point of *Peer Gynt* concerns the role of the loved woman in man's life, and one cannot hope to understand man until one has got clear about woman.

At first we are reminded less of *Parsifal* and *Tristan* than of the role of the women in Wagner's earlier dramas, *The Flying Dutchman* and *Tannhäuser*, of Dante and of Goethe. Solveig is the *virgo immaculata*, beloved but no longer desired, the Madonna, Beatrice. Man – every man, and herein lies the great puzzle of love, as well as, briefly stated, the true meaning of *Peer Gynt* pure and simple – *is never so truly himself as when he loves*. Love is a *path*, and the easiest and most common path, *to achieving consciousness of oneself*, of one's person, his individuality, his soul. That he is *he*, a particular person, a centre of the world, and not lost and drowning in a sea of sensations – if he is aware of this at all, and does not deny it like those who now reject the existence of soul – comes to him mostly when he loves. That is why love turns so many people into mystics, and even converted such a philistine empiricist as Auguste Comte.⁶ Philosophers are more likely to attain the individuation which they (Schelling, Bahnsen, Maine de Biran, Augustine) describe as “intuitive self-understanding of the subject” through becoming aware of their being alone in the universe, and through reflection on the problem of ethics. For artists, what draws *them* on is above all “the eternal feminine”, even if it is ultimately the problem of morality which underlies their and the philosophers’ final certainties and uncertainties.

What redeems in *Peer Gynt* (this deepest feature of the work is the least comprehended), according to Ibsen (here his realism surpasses the young Wagner's), is not the living, embodied Solveig, who could be just any chick; rather it is the Solveig in *Peer Gynt*, his capacity for *realizing her in him*. This possibility of attaining his better self through Solveig and in loving her is something he has

⁶ Auguste Comte (1798-1857), French father of sociology and of the term “positivism”. See *Auguste Comte and Positivism: the essential writings*, ed. Gertrud Lenzer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975). (sb)

disregarded all his life. That is why Solveig can say to him: “You, your true (intelligible) being, *was with me* your whole life long”; when he in wild consternation asks her, or *much better* asks *himself*-

Where was my real self

Since we last met, the Peer who bore

The stamp of God upon his brow? [Act V: scene 11]⁷

To Peer Gynt, himself, his existence seemed like an onion: many skins and no core, many attributes and modes, but no substance.⁸

It may be surprising that Ibsen is interpreted very philosophically, here, even though in *Peer Gynt* he makes fun of German (especially Hegelian) philosophy.

Ibsen belongs, however, to the list of great men who have no very intimate relation to what was thought and written *before* them, rather like, e.g., Zola, or Knut Hamsun; extreme examples of this type are Kleist and Shelley; among philosophers one thinks of Giordano Bruno and Kant, but especially of Descartes, Socrates and Fechner. The other sort of great man feels it one of his starkest duties to *come to terms* with the cultural past that lies behind him.⁹ Extreme examples are Goethe and Wagner, also Grillparzer and Herder, the *romantics* in general. Among the philosophers, examples are Plato¹⁰, Leibniz, Hegel, Nietzsche, and even more so, Schopenhauer.

Among composers, Beethoven and Bruckner have to belong to the first group, Schumann to the second. Naturally, only extremes are being signposted here; many intermediate steps lie between them. The Carlyle-Emerson distinction between the “poet” and the “writer” may be somewhat related, and seems to be broadened and more rigorously grounded through our new classification.¹¹ Whether the distinction between these two categories has deeper roots, constitutes a difficult problem to which I have not found the solution.

⁷ I shall sometimes add scene references to *Peer Gynt* in square brackets. Ibsen, himself, does not number the scenes, but many editors do. I have consulted various English translations of *Peer Gynt*, but have made my own translation from the German version that Weininger quotes. (sb)

⁸ Substance, attribute and mode are the key metaphysical terms in Spinoza's *Ethics*. (sb)

⁹ Without being less original on that account.

¹⁰ Who always lets Socrates do the talking!

¹¹ Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), English writer and historian, and Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), American poet and essayist, met several times and formed a life-long friendship. Emerson thought that his “poetic” nature explained his eclectic and unsystematic use of the thoughts of his predecessors. (sb)

I was speaking of Ibsen. His obviously limited acquaintance with the philosophical literature, given his so strong and naturally deep interest in the chief problem of ethics, can only have that one explanation. Otherwise, he would have to have known that *his poetry is Kant's philosophy*. No one else, only Kant and Ibsen, took truth and the lie to be the deepest problem of ethics (I can legitimately ignore Fichte, who simply took over exactly where Kant left off). They were the only ones who recognized that truth can only flow from having an ego in the higher sense, having individuality. This, however, is the lesson of Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* no less than of the *Critique of Practical Reason*. While all other religion, philosophy and art agreed to compromises, they alone dared to express, and thus to display before humanity, the moral command in all its strength and implacability, just as the inner voice in people *actually puts* it. "All or nothing" is just as much Kant's motto as it is that of Ibsen's *Brand*. Their fates are the same, too, even to the label "rigorist", which all those of incomplete and insincere nature have used in replying to them. Ibsen was specially occupied, from beginning to end, with the problem of the lie, from the *Love's Comedy*, through Skule, the *Enemy of the People*, and Hjalmar, to Gabriel Borkman's friendship with Foldal. He pursued it furthest, however, in his greatest work, in *Peer Gynt*.

Dr. Begriffenfeld, who is usually viewed merely as a parody of the German scholar, is rather more than a mere caricature. He recognizes very clearly the hollowness of the Gyntian self (his "empirical ego"), and knows that the only place where Peer Gynt is really an emperor is in the madhouse, among the insane, whose reason (again in the Kantian sense) is totally wanting.¹²

Ibsen knows (and if he does not teach it in concepts, he shows it clearly in his portrayal of Peer Gynt), that the only thing that lends a person value is the possession of an ("intelligible") *ego*, of a *personality*, and that when this is lacking in a person, he needs to assume value from somewhere else outside of himself. Nietzsche's great realization, that the will to power lies endlessly deep in all living things, has been long under-appreciated because of our preoccupation with his breeding ideal.¹³ Particularly relevant for humans, however, and lying even deeper in them, is not the will to power but the *will to value*, which I believe is

¹² No one is ever fully himself as long as he lives on earth. Only someone totally deluded is able to believe that he has fully found himself because he is no longer looking.

¹³ I.e., of the "overman" or "superman". See especially Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. (sb)

what finally distinguishes them from the animals. From the lack of intrinsic value comes the striving to gain value from elsewhere; that is the source of all fame-seeking, and all confidence trickery in the wider sense. All humans, man *and* woman, are constituted as such by the will to value. If someone cannot create value of and for himself – and this is *always* the case with women – then he tries to get it from someone else and for someone else; one always acts for the audience that makes the value judgement. In contrast to animals, which strive only for pleasure, for the satisfaction of natural drives, every human being constantly seeks, wherever and however, *to gain* the greatest possible *value for himself*.

We learn in Act 1 that Peer Gynt has no such value in himself, when we get to know him right away as a braggart and a showoff.

Ibsen knows that having a personality is revealed above all through striving to follow the moral law. Peer Gynt, who lacks what Schopenhauer calls a “centre of gravity”¹⁴, gets thereby into the Kingdom of the Trolls, whose slogan is: “Troll, to thyself be *enough*.” A being who lacks the morality derived from the intelligible subject, also lacks the drive *to become* this intelligible being, the pure ego; it has no need to perfect itself, it does not know the “*progressus*” towards the ethical ideal of which Kant spoke (without often being understood). *Animals are to themselves enough*. That is why Peer Gynt deserves his monkey's tail. Ibsen knows that only the possession of an “I” in the higher sense leads to the recognition of a “Thou” in others. It is the fundamental condition of altruism that self-awareness is a prerequisite of the awareness of others. This is why individualism is the exact opposite of egoism, and it is why he shows us Peer Gynt as petty and self-seeking.

The human is, for Ibsen as for Kant, an intermediate being between animal and something higher; made of mud and fire, to cite Goethe; both clay and sculptor, to cite Nietzsche. *Will moral thought triumph, or will man, lacking soul and lacking value, be destroyed? That is the question that Ibsen poses through his character, Peer Gynt*. Humanity would be a failed attempt by the deity, and would have to be melted down and recast, if we “defied our destiny to the end”, i.e., if we proved ourselves to be unfaithful and disobedient in the service of the highest within us, of *logos*, of spirit, of reason (in Kant's sense). The Button Molder in *Peer Gynt* represents in name and demeanour, though with as little so-

¹⁴ Has it been observed what kind of name Ibsen has chosen for his hero? Peer Gynt – it has so little gravity. The name is like a rubber ball that keeps bouncing off the ground.

lemnity as possible, the deity which signifies for Ibsen, as for Kant and Plato, the moral idea and its claim on humanity.

You were meant to be a gleaming button

On the world's waistcoat; but the eyelet was missing. [V: 7]

In a magnificent scene, Peer Gynt, on whom (as on most people) only two apparently moral things, love and death, have any effect whatever, begins just before his death to question the course of his life. He calls up memory after memory, which ought to prove to him that all is not lost, that his life is not to be seen as totally pointless. The allegory here is followed through with strength and skill, as perhaps nowhere else in world literature. The characters are handled with the greatest economy, and have not in the slightest been cast to justify their essence and existence. They act in such a way that we relate to them the way children do to a fairy-tale; we find it *natural* that they appear, so natural that Ibsen could refuse to give them the more appropriate abstract names which would have made their deeper, universal significance more understandable. The Button-Molder is conscience, through which (for Ibsen, as for Kant and Socrates) the divine (the “Master”) speaks to the human; and as his conscience demands and requests, Peer tries to establish his identity using his past life. For he does not yet feel at all guilty, he accepts responsibility for no crimes. He just wants to protect himself from the threatening claim of the moral law – as if one could fulfil that *by doing something else instead*, as if one could pay it off with a single instalment, and then need to do nothing more. Peer Gynt is still too deluded to recognize that, “only he who has to conquer them anew *each day* deserves his freedom or his life.”¹⁵ The thing that he seeks just to placate his conscience, however, never does occur to him. On the contrary. What he is forced to remember is the Old Man of the Dovrë, and his life in the Kingdom of the Trolls. He never did tie on the monkey's tail, so he did not become wholly animal. He did, however, incur guilt in the animal realm; he had a child with the daughter of the Troll King, and accepted her slogan, became complacent instead of “trying to make an effort”. Now he sees for the first time that the soul is not the sanction of the body, and of its lust and sloth. Earlier he had always indulged them, deflecting any misgivings on principle (beginning of Act 4), indeed doing all he could for the benefit of *this* self. Now he sees that it does less harm to lose a finger, to give up something of the empirical

¹⁵ A quote from *Faust II*, Act V, scene 5. (sb)

ego, when one can, for this price, affirm his individuality (something he could not earlier comprehend). “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”¹⁶ He now sees that the higher self is at war with the lower, and that the complete victory of one is the death of the other. “To be thyself, is to slay thyself.”¹⁷ [V: 9] He must say all this to himself, and convict himself. It now occurs to him that perhaps it is exactly his destiny (“his Master's will”, which he ought to have worn “as a sign-board”), *consciously and in principle* to offend against that other destiny, to oppose it. Perhaps he was just a little bit *evil*, at least a little bit *something*, not just blotted out, common, nothing. But no, even there he had not really *meant* anything. “Sinners in the true grand style are seldom met with nowadays.” [V: 7] He cannot even believe in the great offender, and the Thin One (the Devil) to whom he willingly pledged himself in order not to be *nothing* would not get much fatter on his account. The Napoleons and Don Juans, the Iagos and Hagens, are just as thinly distributed as the saints. Here one feels all the scorn, the deep contempt of the poet for the bulk of humanity. They should not imagine themselves worthy of hell, which is much too noble, too magnificent for them. The Devil exists for completely different people, not for monkeys and for swine. To the thought of Satan, whose majesty they ought not to insult, Ibsen contrasts his conception of the Button-Molder. *He* is what humanity richly deserves; *he* is necessary for them.

Think of the passage in “Revelation” (3: [15-]16): “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” Peer Gynt would be “undying in God” or “undying in Satan” if he had consciously maintained an individuality, either good or evil. However, he was altogether without an ego that would have removed him from time, and guaranteed him a higher existence and an afterlife, independent of the physical, natural law of birth and death; he did not have a white soul, nor a black one either. Peer Gynt is the paradigm of the countless immoral, inconstant people among us, who are deemed to be moral because they are not anti-moral, who do not have enough greatness either of instinct or of free decision to reject morality. They do not openly act on a

¹⁶ Mark 8: 36; cf. Matthew 16: 26; Luke 9: 25. (sb)

¹⁷ Cf. the Gospel of Mark, 8: 34-36. (“For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.”)

declared unbelief in the good and the true, demonstrating in practice their derision for morality¹⁸, but without deep inner devotion they think that they do believe. Thus they are not criminals in deed or in intent, and yet are criminals in-themselves, because they deceive themselves, for the command they obey is not from the heart. They behave legally, and outwardly often more than legally, but though they do not clearly know it their motive is that they would otherwise lose, not their self-esteem, but the esteem of others. Peer Gynt thus stands for all those for whom the other person is the measure, all those who really worship Jehovah. For Jehovah is just the colossal personification of the *other person*, so far as he gains influence over an individual's thinking and behaviour.¹⁹ Peer Gynt believed himself to be acting autonomously where he was living the most heteronomously (compare his lecture on the Gyntian self in Act 4), to be a cool and selfdetermined individualist when he was merely a miserable and cowardly egoist.

He did not grant power over himself to his eternal personality, his true self, and so he “was already long dead before his death”. We find here already²⁰ the form in which the fundamental thought of his last, dramatic “epilogue” appears: the motif of the higher, eternal life, the fundamental thought of the teaching of Christ as the determining factor in his thinking and writing. Without individuality, without an essential core that merely looks at the things of this world through the medium of unreal time, no immortality. Immortality of the soul is only for beings who have a soul. So Peer Gynt goes into the great melting pot, where he loses his

¹⁸ I was duty-bound here to adopt and portray an example of greatness in anti-morality, in order not to be untrue to Ibsen. I, myself, hold greatness in evil to be a fiction (*Sex and Character*, 1st ed., pp. 235 ff. [E. pp. 182 ff]).

¹⁹ People have tried to pretend that Ibsen, the greatest and most profound individualist since Kant, is a social ethicist, to exploit the author of *Brand*, *The Pillars of Society* and *The Lady from the Sea* as maintaining the superiority of the collectivity over the freedom of the individual. Certainly, Ibsen is no disrespecter of the social, of the idea of society, as are those modern pseudo-individualists who bear the responsibility for the common identification of individualism with egoism. They are the ones who interpret Nietzsche as a Darwinist, and use his name as a cover for their desire never to be *disturbed*, e.g., by phenomena like illness or poverty, in their enjoyment of the pleasures of the table or the bedroom, or even just in their eagerness to read the paper or to gossip in a warm salon. Ibsen's individualism is much more decisive than Nietzsche's, because more refined. However, Ibsen takes care to give *the same answer to each* of his commentators, who all seek his approval for their own interpretations, namely, that each of them has understood him best of all. Thus he has apparently not found it worth the trouble to utter a word of protest even to those who wanted to label him a social ethicist. But how could those who rave on about the species exploit a man whose main problem is truth and the lie, the *individual* ethical problem *par excellence*.

²⁰ If not even earlier (in *Catiline*). Cf. Schlenther, *Ibsens Werke*, Vol. I, 1903, Introduction, p. 48. [*Catiline* was Ibsen's first play. It was rejected for performance in 1849, and published in 1850.]

form, and only matter persists (like the metal that survives when coins are melted down). Here Ibsen touches on the Buddhist teaching on the fate of humans after death, although he did not know the esoteric Buddhist doctrine, which had not yet penetrated to Europe. One is also reminded here of the Aristotelian view of the soul as form.

Finally, tormented by the most frightful anguish at departing after a life bare of all eternity, Peer Gynt finally recognizes, in thinking about Solveig, what he could have been and what he had not become. After all, he was most himself in his love for her; and just as love was able to carry him high above a miserable earthly existence, so now he is going to be carried out of this earthly existence – in love. At last he is entering a higher life, and can sustain his self – though not on earth. Solveig appears to him as a little old woman, and simultaneously as death. No one has explicitly conceived this before, but Ibsen's creative genius makes an unfathomably deep, unconscious discovery here, the same one that lies behind the Mandrake of Kleist's *Herrmann's Battle*, that announces to Varus his approaching demise (fifth Act, fourth scene).²¹ *The old woman has a mysterious relation to death* (one thinks also of the Rat-Wife in *Little Eyolf*). Everything that stands in a close relation to physical life is also related to physical death. The woman, through motherhood, has an intimate relation to earthly life, and thus also to earthly death. *Fear of old women is just fear of death*. Thus in the Solveig of the final Act, two things come together: Peer Gynt's pure self, which can only come into full existence with the death of the empirical ego, and the dying of that ego in its own unique way. That is why Solveig is death for Peer Gynt; that is why Peer Gynt – dies. The Button-Molder exhorts, demands, and insists; but louder yet, in the Whitsun-morning sunrise, an indescribably wonderful song rings out, the lullaby of Solveig:

*Jeg skal vugge dig, jeg skal våge –
Sov og drøm du, gutten min!
I will rock you, I will guard you
Sleep and dream, my dearest boy. [V: 11]*

Peer Gynt is redeemed.

²¹ Heinrich von Kleist (1777-1811) was imprisoned for six months by the French in 1807. He then turned to polemical drama, and wrote *Herrmannsschlacht* in 1808 as a call to arms against Napoleon. (sb)

At the end of his life, victory goes to his invisible self after all, to the higher life of his spirit, which was only revealed to him in his love of Solveig.

It is now clear that this Peer Gynt is not a particular person, and not a particular people. Humanity itself is being chastised in this man, who thinks that he is rid of the animal in him, who boasts of his humanity without having any idea of *what* this ought to mean.

The ape-man, personified by the Old Man of the Dovrë [the Troll-King], complains of the injustice that he has been given up for dead.

My daughter's children, as already said,
No longer ask after old granddad.
They think that I am already dead,
Or at most live in legends they've already read. [V: 8]

The human being, for Ibsen as for all deep thinkers, consists from the outset of body *and* soul, or, in the formulation that the oldest dualism has been given by Kant, of phenomenal and noumenal subject, or empirical ego and intelligible ego (as the moral law-giver). Most people, however, know nothing of the existence of a soul, and deny its existence, because the great majority of them, except *perhaps* momentarily, *live a completely soulless life*. *Peer Gynt* is the tragedy of the person who seeks his soul, and surely, therefore, it is the poem written for the greatest number of people (if not for all).

It is soullessness that plays the biggest role in the work. Anitra represents it in the most developed form that is possible for humans. She is the coquette who arouses a man sensually without giving him an occasion for higher emotion. She does not even strive after an inner self, here; instead she is enticed like a magpie by a shining gem.²² In *Peer Gynt*, the man, on the other hand, there is such a striving, even if it is thoroughly misdirected. It is a seeking for self that cannot succeed, because it continually piles as much as possible on its empirical ego. From this it cannot get more than sham value, which can at any moment fall off him like the Prophet's cloak. Ibsen shows us this essence of *Peer Gynt* – and this is one of the most powerful effects and one of the most inspired ideas in the work – as staying continually the same through all changes, as being eternally itself. For Ibsen is permeated by the unshakeable truth that there is a constant which remains

²² Women seek souls, as they seek sexual characteristics like a beard and muscular strength, only as embodied in men and not for themselves.

the same through all the moments of life, that the real *character* of a person does not change.²³

In the first Act, we see how Peer Gynt tries desperately to improve his reputation by inventing tall tales. He is not concerned about respecting himself; it is merely disrespect from the others that he cannot abide. He cries out:

If only I could, with one blow, like a butcher,
Tear all the scorn and contempt from your breast! [1: 3]

However, in the moment when he shouts this out, he feels that *there is something more there*, beyond his words; this is a moment of enormous eeriness – despite its brevity. He peers around him, as if a disdainful dwarf had said to him that *that*, the admiration of others, was not *all* there is. This is the only moral impulse that Peer Gynt feels before he meets Solveig. In the second Act [scene 5], the ironic slogan is: “Great folk are known by the steeds that they ride.”²⁴ For at this point Peer Gynt has renounced, in revenge, all that is better. This is the phenomenon of introspection scorned, of remorse rejected. In its place there comes a forceful return to the earthly treasures he had given up (Tannhäuser, following the judgement of the Pope). Now he compensates by joining with nature and her demons who are foreign to all morality. This absolute immorality of nature is admirably personified by the three dairymaids who wantonly flirt with Peer Gynt [11: 3]. Ibsen has created demons of nature here that are in no way inferior to the maenads and satyrs of Greek mythology.

His encounter with the green-clad Troll-Princess, which follows his adventures with the dairymaids, shows how his will to value is at the same level as hers. The slogan, “Great folk are known by the steeds that they ride”, fits them both. It reminds one of the way Goethe, in *Faust*, lets the *devil* say, about the extension of the Ego to the microcosm:

When I count six stallions as mine,
Mine, too, is the strength of six stallions.²⁵

Peer Gynt is through and through just such a Mr. Microcosm (as Mephisto wanted him to be). However, the illusion that he could make a noble racehorse of an old boar is not only a moral but a logical illusion; it is not only fruitless from

²³ Cf. Schopenhauer, *New Paralipomena*, §220.

²⁴ In the fourth Act, it turns out that despite the passing of years he has been faithful to this slogan.

²⁵ *Faust* I, “Faust's Study iii”. (sb)

the start to seek to elevate one's own worth through the admiration of others – the more he attends to his empirical ego, the more indifferent he is to his intelligible ego – but it is also a complete *revaluation* of reality, a wilful misinterpretation of the experience which he has in common not only with the Troll-Princess but also with the Fella in the insane asylum in Act 4. This is already preparing us for the scene in the madhouse, for *unegoistic participation in the outer world*, which is a *thirst for knowledge* that emanates from the scientific search for truth, flows from the same intelligible human essence that is so weak in Peer. That is the only way to justify seeing a fantasist as a heroic personality, and *Peer Gynt* should not be seen just as a caricature of the poet. All poetry is only a higher truth, not unlike religion, music, and philosophy. The illusions about the external world from which Peer suffers, are merely the *objective* side of his internal illusions about himself. His *inadequate sense of reality is identical* with his *inadequate love of truth*; they both flow from the identity of logic and ethics, which together culminate in the final, supreme concept of truth as the supreme good.²⁶ That is why for Kant there is only one reason, which is theoretical and practical at the same time. Animals do without it, so in the Troll-Kingdom Peer Gynt is supposed to adopt another viewpoint; an operation must be performed on his eyes before he can see things as a Troll does. Laughing and crying, rejoicing and pain, are exclusively human, not animal. That is why the Troll-King adds, in recommending the alteration from a human to an animal:

Just think how much worry and trouble
You'll be rid of with one blow.
Remember, too, that your own clear eye
Was the source of bitter, searing tears. [II: 6]

Can it be put with less emphasis or sentimentality, yet at the same time be more wonderfully expressed, that the human being, insofar as he affirms his own humanity, accepts *pain*²⁷ and renounces happiness.

Peer is so seriously blinkered, that the poet can easily put in his mouth, in answer to the Troll-King's question what distinguishes human from troll, the satirical answer: "They're exactly the same, in every way." [II: 6] That is how ready

²⁶ This thesis is elaborated in section I of Chapter 6, below. (sb)

²⁷ The true and profound words of Relling, in *The Wild Duck I* [Act V], should be recalled here: "Take the life-lie away from the average man, and you will take his happiness from him at the same time."

he is to abandon his convictions, in order to enjoy the delights of the Troll-Princess. Even so, he still retains the residue of an ego, so that even this visit to the Troll-Kingdom must pass *in time*. And so, he refuses to sell himself to the trolls forever. *Eternity is the measure in this decision*, and the flickering up of his higher self in emotion and feeling is what made it possible for him to hear the priest's bell in the valley, and to understand its peal. It is a measure of how Christian this poem is that the Trolls have to fade away at the sound of the bell.

In the third Act, however, he is again dreaming about the impression that his hoped-for palace will make on others. He had no great plans for the building on his own account; it was intended to impress others. On this point, one can compare Ibsen with Friedrich Hebbel, a man whose significance I will not question, but who is unjustly thought to rank decisively higher than Ibsen by almost everyone you would want to ask. Hebbel deals with the same problem in *Gyges and his Ring*, but how scantily, how one-sidedly limited to a single point. What shallowness, how little will or need for depth, Hebbel²⁸ displays, in this investigation of a man who cannot refrain from showing off his beautiful wife to others.

This is so finely conceived by Ibsen *that he often lets Peer Gynt think of himself in the third person*. This is particularly so in his emperor day-dreams, e.g., in the first Act [scene 2]:

There rides Peer Gynt at the head of his henchmen,
His charger gold-shod, silver-crested his harness.
Peer carries gauntlets and sabre and scabbard,
Wears a long coat with a fine silky lining.
Splendid the men in his retinue following;
But there's not one sits his charger so proudly,
Not one that glitters like him in the sunshine.
The people in groups by the wayside are gathered,
Lifting their hats as they stare up in wonder;
The women are curtsying, everyone knows

²⁸ Hebbel's significance, which is made much clearer in other writings, in *Judith* and *Genovefa* (*sic*), as well as in his aphoristic epigrams, is not being questioned, here. Nor are the many subtleties of *Gyges and his Ring* being unappreciated. Hebbel is certainly greater than Schiller, Grillparzer and Lessing together; but he remains far behind Ibsen or Wagner.

[Christian Friedrich Hebbel (1813-63), published these plays in 1841 (*Judith*), 1843 (*Genoveva*), and 1856 (*Gyges*). Born and educated in Germany, he moved to Vienna in 1845 and remained there the rest of his life.]

It is Kaiser Peer Gynt and his thousand retainers.
Sixpenny pieces and glittering shillings
Are strewn on the roadway as if they were pebbles.

This treatment of himself, this relating to himself in the third person, has very deep roots. Is Peer Gynt perhaps setting up a picture outside himself to be admired, and then later identifying himself with the picture in order to be pleased by this admiration of himself in *effigie mentali*, and to admire this picture among a series of others? One could interpret this trait as his vanity's untruthfulness; but that would be feminine, and Peer Gynt is a man. That would be a girl's dream of a nobleman who would come to hire her, to pick her ahead of all her playmates. It would be the way a woman always lies to a man, by feigning virtuousness and domesticity because his need for love or service calls for them. Peer Gynt's lack of subjectivity lies deeper than this. It comes from rejecting the freedom of the will, which amounts to the abnegation of personhood. Peer Gynt *only relates functionally to something else*; as soon as intelligible freedom has stopped working in him as a determining idea, he stands in the nexus of empirical causality. Thus he puts himself in bondage to other people; he needs them to observe and to applaud, so he is their slave precisely when he believes he is their emperor. Napoleon was a poseur in front of everyone he conquered. Perhaps he was sincere with himself as a younger general, at least at moments. Peer Gynt has up until now led a completely lying life; he never was himself, he has no *I*, and thus is third-person (a he, she or it). Now, however, he catches himself from time to time in his vices, and at the same time he suffers severely from these recurrent relapses into the basest vanity; indeed, all self-observing has a moral character. His sinful past comes up again and again, and its consequences drag him down; he does not have the strength, does not feel self-confident enough, to reject it for a better future at Solveig's side. That is why he wants to kill the past: he drives his mother in a sleigh to her death, for he must “forget what weighs him down”. His mother²⁹ always represented morality and self-examination for him; now he withdraws, as it were, from his native soil. Here too, perhaps, lies the germ of the idea that it was only in his relation to women that he was really himself.³⁰

²⁹ One of most distinguished of Ibsen's portraits of women, even if handled without particular depth.

³⁰ Here I am trying out an interpretation of the concluding scene of Act 3, which is, I feel, very daring- and I can only support it by referring to Act 5, where, in the context of this last ride, the mother appears as the accuser of the son, who has only just become conscious of his *guilt*. This scene from Act 3, however – the easiest one in the play when naïvely conceived – must also have a deeper meaning in such a thoroughly symbolical tragedy. Could it be this: that there now appears in Peer the egoism of the patient who is oblivious to the sufferings of others *because* tormented by his own? That he wishes to wreak *vengeance* on all other beings because no happiness with Solveig is allotted to him? I cannot quite believe this. Only the following interpretation seems to me to be possible. Ibsen, who by the time he produces his really outstanding plays is thoroughly masochistic (the best proof of this is *The Vikings in Helgeland* and *The Master Builder*), was in his youth not free of sadistic tendencies. (In many of the poems that he long withheld, and in *Olaf Li Ijekrans*, as well as in *The Feast at Solhaug*, there is still a trace of sadism.) Sadistic tendencies *are* encountered in the Peer Gynt of Act 2 (the abduction of Ingrid) and of Act I (where he threatens Solveig). It is possible that Ibsen wanted to take this punishment upon himself. That, however, would be thoroughly inessential to the character of Peer Gynt, and thus a flaw in the poem.

We see him, then, in Act 4 [scene 4], sunk as low as possible. The human being is living in full community with the monkeys, which the Troll pack of Act 2 finally turned out to be (Ibsen intentionally repeats the line: “The old man was bad, the young ones are beasts”). Yes, *Gyntism* has become the rallying-cry of humankind in general; Peer Gynt has become a prophet. In this capacity he does everything he can – to gain the attention of a young woman, and thereby to gain something for himself. In the end, his old dream is fulfilled: he becomes an emperor. Finally, however, he notices in horror that he is in a madhouse, and is the emperor of insane and bestialized humankind.

In this scene in the insane asylum, we find the most horrible irony, the most frightful satire, that anyone has ever conceived.

Peer Gynt is in the company of the insane, one of whom thinks he is a pen who is only used as blotting paper, never used to write; another thinks he is a sheet of paper that is never written on, an unopened book in his mother's lap that proves to be misprinted when it is opened. The absolute lack of an *ego*, and the related total lack of an *ought*; a man who no longer knows who he is, and accordingly cries out for someone else to lead him to his own destiny, which he cannot find and can no longer actively achieve; the doubt that he can ever be what one is born to be – all this is expressed in the few, wild rhythms of the dialogue with the minister Hussein. [IV: 13]

It is not my intention to produce a continuous commentary on the play, in which some details are not at all transparent to me. Such undertakings are always too pretentious, apart from being lengthy, and so can only appear tasteless.

I still want to point out a few of the play's great *beauties*, however: besides the conclusion to Act 3, which in this respect is generally celebrated, there is also

the first scene of Act 2; and the extraordinary middle [scene 6] of Act 5, where Peer Gynt is forced to remember the un-lived life of his higher ego (“threadballs”, “withered leaves”, etc.) in the night on the meadow: “We are songs, have you sung us?”; and then the very powerful, gripping story of the reindeer right at the beginning of the play; and Peer’s monologue following the debauchery with the dairy-maids [II: 3]. More terrible, however, more deeply heart-grabbing, almost comparable in this respect to the cursing of life in the third Act of *Tristan and Isolde*, is the place in Act 5 [scene 10] where Peer sees the shooting star (the symbol of the fallen angels) hurrying through space, and calls out to it:

Greetings from Peer Gynt, Brother Meteor,
Shine, fade away, and disappear through the gate
Of darkness...!

Having earlier pushed aside any thought about the sense and purpose of life – for the Strange Passenger, who suggests this thought, is *death* – he now, after this message from infinity, suddenly shudders deep within. At last the feeling of a life lost, like the meteor, fights its way through all his vanities; he achieves the premonition (if not yet the assertion) of his true self, and at the same time of his need for immortality. The wealthy industrialist, the Emperor who has the whole world in his hands, awakens from his dream worlds, and sees:

So miserably *poor* may a soul return
To the dark mists of night, and turn to naught.
Beautiful earth, forgive me for having
Mindlessly trodden thy grass in vain.
Beautiful sun, thy glorious rays
Have shone upon an empty shell.
No one’s within to get warmth and comfort
From thee, the owner’s not in his house.
Beautiful sun, beautiful earth,
For nothing you warmed and nourished my mother.
Nature’s a spendthrift, the Spirit a miser.
One’s life’s a big price to pay for one’s birth.
I’ll clamber up to the highest of mountains,
To see the sun rise once again,
And gaze till I’m tired on the promised land.

Then the snow may fall and cover me,
And on my resting-place be writ
As epitaph: “*No one* lies here”.
And – after that – well, come what may. [V: 10]

(Here I have combined the best from the two translations of Passarge and Morgenstern, and have tried to improve them in a very few places where they do not catch the original.³¹ The line, “One's life's a big price to pay for one's birth,” is the only place in Ibsen's work where *original sin* is mentioned.)

Great people are generally not considered independently of their works. We believe that their life is production, and is exhausted in production. Granted, this opinion is more unconscious than clearly articulated, and is therefore all the more difficult to overcome. Some of its factors are nevertheless easy to identify.

Very few people feel a *need* to form a clear idea of the character either of important men of action or important men of thought. They are not only used to tipping their hats at the mention of big names, but also, as if on command, to empty themselves of all thought. “Wagner” and “Goethe” are just interjections. It is true that this way of thinking contains a respect for the phenomenon that should not be underestimated, and even a deep and ancient appreciation of genius as divine revelation. Moreover, people feel much happier than they would in that other mode of thought, which prefers to show famous men in their underwear, and triumphantly to surprise them on their way to the lavatory. This eudaimonistic argument, however, cannot serve to recommend the view. Only a commitment to *verecundia* will do, of the sort that Moreau de Tours and Lombroso, e.g., clearly did not possess.³²

Nevertheless, this refusal to think about great men, this irritation over every attempt by someone else to make out some particular characteristic in their inner being, reflects a terrible *lack of dignity*, a spontaneous serfdom of the spirit, which is as blind as it is impatient about every free man. Every name becomes an “Open, Sesame”, with which all sober sight is quashed. *Hero-worship*³³, too, is *heter-*

³¹ Ludwig Passarge's translation dates from 1881, Christian Morgenstern's from the 1890s. I have translated Weininger's version, trying, to maintain the rhythm. (sb)

³² I.e., a commitment to humility, or a capacity for shame. Cesare Lombroso (1836-1909), Italian medic and anthropologist, developed a theory of the psycho-physical causes of criminality. He also wrote about two other Weininger themes, in *Genius and Insanity* (1864). (sb)

³³ Weininger uses the English expression. (sb)

onomous in Kant's sense, and this belief in authority is also immoral. Whenever someone is made into a god, no matter whether he is Buddha or Beethoven, when his name becomes a password, then all calm, deliberate reflection of one's own reason is silenced, and all spiritual development is blocked off.

Recently a new element has been added to that earlier, thoughtless obsequiousness. The light-footed, dancing-legs of the Zarathustra-ideal, the relaxed grace of the South-German waltz, the student's apathetic refrain, and the armchair raving of the arts and crafts set all had to come together in order to produce and maintain this new element against all Nordic-German seriousness. I mean by this the lie about the "stylish life" of great men that has degraded those men to circus performers, has degraded those who always took life most seriously because they felt themselves taken most seriously by life, those who have found themselves the least private and happy – to "performers" of their own lives!

The audacity with which the most significant names were formerly misused in order to lend an air of genius to lightweight minds, should not detain us here for long.

We should, however, at least reject the wide-spread view which considers the outstanding person as a receptacle out of which works of art fall one by one, as a creature designed by nature to present us with certain things, like a mechanical organ, whose purpose is exhausted by playing a number of tunes.

This view turns poets into butterflies, painters into professional photographers, and philosophers into bakers of theories, and strips them all of every greatness. The strongest impressions of *all*, to speak only of artists, are too overwhelming to lead directly to expression in a work of art.

Certainly the life of the great person is not a harmony granted by fortune, but is much more troubled and stormy than the life of others; certainly it often contains the greatest of unresolved contradictions, inclination toward the most remarkable confusions; but it also contains the greatest struggle with himself, and simply not that "*gaya scienza*" and "*serenita*"³⁴ that Nietzsche so much wanted to gain, once he had gotten to know the Riviera.

How horrible things can be within the most outstanding people, how much can be in them, how much they can suffer, and how much they can doubt, Ibsen's

³⁴ "Joyful wisdom" and "serenity". See Nietzsche's *The Gay Science*, which has also been translated by Oscar Levy as *The Joyful Wisdom* (New York: Macmillan, 1909-11). (sb)

Peer Gynt is able to teach to anyone who has got clear that one can only understand and only portray what *he, himself, has within him*.

*

People can be divided into those who love themselves and those who hate themselves. I do not mean hatred of what they consider to be immoral in themselves. Granted every man hates that in himself, at least at the moment when he says so to himself, and even more when he wants to repress this acknowledgement. But what makes this interesting distinction come to mind in the first place is one's behaviour toward morally indifferent traits in one's own person. There are people who find their entire subjectivity (not the subject, itself, naturally) hateful, and persecute it (*in abstracto*, too, as a concept) with a sad fury. The others are more inclined to find everything in themselves worthy of love; they exercise leniency with themselves, show the utmost delicacy in dealing with themselves, and if occasion arises, hold themselves up as a model for others. Given two nonsmokers, to take a deliberately trivial example of the lowest category, one will be *self-loving*, the other *self-hating*.³⁵ The former will be very pleased with himself, and consider it a very superior trait in himself, that he does not smoke. The latter will rather distrustfully conclude that his not smoking must be a defect in his disposition, and will be inclined to rank smokers above himself. *Nonetheless, every man evaluates somehow or other each of his traits*, even each of his morally indifferent character traits.³⁶ The *omen of this evaluation*, I now believe, *determines, even essentially decides, the tone of a person's inner life*. To be sure, it is only the man, not the woman, who has an inner life³⁷, and even the man has more the higher he stands. The general content of all inner life, however, if I disregard reflection on the past and dreams of the future, is discerning self-observation, and moral self-evaluation. There are only two possibilities here: either a person is a pessimist from birth and never really believes in redemption, but in eternal discord, and damnation on earth; he is the type who scolds and brutalizes people of lower standing. Or else he believes in redemption, is committed to the world as he

³⁵ Weininger here introduces terms constructed from Greek roots, "*philautisch*" and "*misautisch*" (on the model, as it were, of "philanthropic" and "misanthropic"); I have translated them as "self-loving" and "self-hating". (sb)

³⁶ One thinks, too, of those people who are pleased with their own style, and those who are always displeased. Nietzsche's stylistic practices are in part to be explained on the latter basis.

³⁷ The inner life of women always lasts at most nine months.

affirms it, at least while on earth. He is the mild, good-natured person, who is not easily or sharply critical. He is often biting, but never caustic. They behave in that fashion in the first instance towards themselves. Suppose they both catch themselves in an equally strong or weak immoral impulse. The one screws up the corners of his mouth, the other grits his teeth. The one gives a pained smile: “Yet *again!*” The other murmurs, not without rancour, about his own meanness: “*Always* happens!” The former readily pardons himself, protects his sensitivity; he goes only once in a while to confession, which always entails absolution. The other tears himself apart, silently, mercilessly, even though his vanity is thereby increased³⁸ (because the will to value becomes ever stronger from each negative evaluation of one's own person); he judges and convicts himself endlessly. On the whole, the one posits, the other negates; the self-loving person affirms, the self-hating denies himself and the world.³⁹

The self-loving person is strongly and constantly erotic. One must first love or hate oneself in order to love or to hate other people. One loves and hates only that with which one has some similarity; what is totally dissimilar one can at most *fear* (the old woman is the woman whom the man does not understand, and only fears), just as he – the other extreme – fears that with which he perfectly agrees (the doppelgänger). The self-haters, to be sure, will always say of themselves that they could only love a person who had no similarity to them at all, and assert that love is nothing but an attempt to get away from oneself – because they cannot love at all, and nevertheless have the greatest need to love. What they resemble, however, they can only hate, and so they *seek* to satisfy their need to love with those whom they do not resemble, although in the nature of things this can never be successful. To love something means to lend soul to it, to project one's own soul fully into it, to heap all *value upon* it; for that purpose it has to be indifferent or similar, but not opposite. And yet: how could the negativist conceive a *child* which directly *embodies positiveness* in love? Just as the lower sex drive affirms, posits, life, so love is the highest form of positing. It is the affirmation of the higher, eternal life, and so it appears in the *Evangelium Christi*.⁴⁰ He who loves, loves altogether; he who hates, hates altogether; he who affirms, affirms alto-

³⁸ That is why he is the genuine aphorist.

³⁹ This does not prevent the self-hating person from having the greatest need to affirm.

⁴⁰ I.e. the gospel of Christ, the first four books of the New Testament. (sb)

gether; he who denies, denies altogether. This is not to be understood as if denial were for the self-hater more than a transit point to affirmation. There are no great men who have not in the end *affirmed*. This is also the ultimate reason – the introductory remark notwithstanding – why there is no genius who is not *productive*. *Off-spring* are also produced by the love and affirmation of ideas, in which Plato and Schopenhauer most profoundly recognized the essence of genius. For the self-hating type, negation is never an end-in-itself, but just a means⁴¹ to loving that, and only that, which is truly worthy of love. But he is not able to affirm anything except the eternal. He cannot love an actual woman, and as often as he makes an attempt, i.e., to love, to confirm a passion, he always quickly falls out of it; he cannot love.

For that reason, only the self-loving man is also really, strictly speaking, a *father*. He has the need for a physical child, for he wants to *rediscover himself in the child*, with *all* of his characteristics, including his subjecthood, his outer and inner *appearances*. The extreme self-hater does not have any genuine, warm, heartfelt relation even to his intellectual creations. For fatherhood can extend itself to the intellectual. Indeed, the *teacher* is actually of the father type; like him he disseminates and promotes *sameness*, but in the intellect rather than in the purely physical. I will come back later to the idea that a man only loves himself in a woman, but even his child is only his child insofar as it is himself.⁴² Naturally, the fatherhood I have analyzed here, and whose relationship to love I have established, is one which satisfies a permanent mental need, and has to mean more than mere accidental “*paternité*”.

It is possible, however, to go a step further and deeper into this matter. Remember the role that the idea of fatherhood plays in the New Testament. God as the father of humankind. That is not how the Jews experienced their God. For them he was the Lord, and they were his servants, whom he rebuked or rewarded, each according to his service. In the gospels, the new idea stands in intimate relation to those other two Christian, un-Jewish, ideas, of love and eternal life, and with this the offered interpretation of fatherhood gets a new affirmation. “I am the bread of life”, said the godhead of the Gospel of John (6: 35). Jesus Christ, how-

⁴¹ The self-loving person loves, and the self-hating hates, his *empirical* ego; both *love* their intelligible ego. The intelligible being hates only the *criminal*.

⁴² If he loves the child because it resembles its mother, he still is loving himself, too; in general this only really happens when the mother has died early.

ever, was not one of those who love themselves and their subjectivity. In the Gospel of Luke (14: 26), it is said: “If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own self⁴³ also, he cannot be my disciple.” Surely no man has ever felt himself to be so little a *father* as the founder of Christianity; perhaps that is exactly why *as the son* he had need of divinity in the particular form of the loving father. Nor is Jesus a teacher by calling, as for instance Socrates eminently was. “Who hath ears to hear, let him hear!” “Hear the Word, who will hear” – no teacher speaks like that.⁴⁴ One sees how fatherhood, teacherhood, and self-love are always present or absent together.

He who feels like a son can only hate himself; the Son was driven to become a son, *to let himself be conceived*, to come into existence as an empirically limited subject. All this subjecthood he attributed to himself, and therefore hated himself. The son knew himself as eternally unfree, and so he gave up his own will, and looked for support when he was born into this world.

Thus the types of the self-loving man and the self-hating man encompass the ideas of father and son. That there are fathers and there are sons is in the deepest sense just an expression of the dualism in the substance of the world. As spiritual beings people are the sons of God, just as they are earthly beings as the children of parents: strictly speaking, of course, only the men. For God has no daughters, and only to that extent does the notion of being a child of God require correction. The Son can only resurrect his freedom by ascending to the Father, ceasing to be merely a son, and becoming one with the father again.

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The self-loving person can also hate; namely, he hates whatever disturbs his life ... he is the “aesthete”. The self-hating person, on the other hand, cannot love no matter what. In extreme cases, even sexual intercourse is fully impossible for him. He is thus certainly much unhappier than the other. Shakespeare and Sophocles (particularly the former) belong, in the highest degree, to the self-loving type, which gives an essentially tender form to their castigations – this is likewise a condition of writing an autobiography. Goethe is not purely self-loving – many passages in *Faust* attest to how false it would be to classify him without further

⁴³ The Greek word is “ψυχὴν” (ἐτι δὲ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν). Luther incorrectly translates this as “life”.

⁴⁴ See verses 9 and 43 in Matthew 13, as well as similar texts in other gospels. (sb)

qualifications in this type.⁴⁵ One is altogether deceived if he supposes Goethe to be a harmonious person, as he has been commonly said to be since Heine, and as is repeated *ad nauseam* today. Rather, Goethe was one of the unhappiest people there has ever been, and thus more modest and more rigorous than so many others in concealing his unhappiness. – The person who hated himself the most had to be Nietzsche. His hatred of Wagner and of asceticism, and his wish to switch allegiance to Bizet and Gottfried Keller, was merely a hatred of the Wagnerian, the ascetic and *totally non-idyllic person* that he was himself. Self-hate is certainly morally superior to self-love. Thus the insincerity is bad, with which Nietzsche pretended to have achieved the transition (the “recovery” from Wagner, from his “illness”) – this is not the only pose which Nietzsche affected in front of himself and everyone else.⁴⁶ Pascal, who certainly hated himself terribly, ranks high above Nietzsche in this – moreover, he is never as superficial as Nietzsche can sometimes be. While Pascal was able openly to declare as a fundamental principle, “*le moi est haïssable*”,⁴⁷ (*Pensées* I, 9, 24), Nietzsche even denied this, his own hatred of himself, and – he hated himself so – slandered it and disparaged it – of course only as a characteristic of Pascal. There is only one passage where Zarathustra is sincere about this: in the glorious song, which is absolutely to be understood as an ethical symbol, “Before Sunrise” (in Part III): “O, heaven above me, pure.... What I want with all my will is to *fly*, to fly up into *you*! And whom did I hate more than drifting clouds and all that stains you? And I hated even my own hatred because it stained you. I loathe the drifting clouds, those stealthy great cats which prey on what you and I have in common – the uncaring, unbounded Yes and Amen.”⁴⁸

It was precisely in Nietzsche that hatred of oneself sprang from the most intense will to affirm. That is why in him this hatred could become creative and

⁴⁵ Only haters are really great connoisseurs of women, because they are readier to make distasteful confessions in such matters. Shakespeare, Sophocles, Zola and Goethe believe in the “noble” woman, they *want* to believe in her. Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Strindberg, Hebbel, Michelangelo are different.

⁴⁶ In the *Nuova Antologia* there once appeared a report on a visit which someone made to Nietzsche's apartment and landlords in Turin. This person reported how Nietzsche, at the same time as he was writing *The Case of Wagner*, kept coming back to their daughter, a skilful pianist, and again and again demanded to hear only the *Ring of the Nibelung*.

⁴⁷ The self is hateful. (sb)

⁴⁸ *Thus Spake Zarathustra: a book for all and none*, tr. Walter Kaufmann (London: Penguin Books, 1978) III: 4, pp. 164-65. (sb)

tragic. Creative – because it called him to seek for what he missed in Schopenhauer, and it forced him to turn away from him who had not taught him Kant. Tragic – because he was not great enough to struggle independently, with his own pure strength, through to Kant, whom he had never read. That is why he never arrived at *religion*; when he affirmed life most passionately, life denied him – that is, the life which resists untruthfulness. Nietzsche's decline is to be explained by his lack of religion. A person can perish from nothing other than a lack of religion. The genius shows this most horribly, for the man of genius is the most devoted man, and when *devotion* leaves him, his genius has left him. It was not without deep reason that the “unscrupulousness of the mind” became a problem for Nietzsche; the “unscrupulousness of the mind” is the “clever” man, and the “clever” man was the fate that menaced Nietzsche, and the abyss that finally dragged him down. Would he otherwise have considered it necessary to stress explicitly when he meant something seriously, and really wanted to be taken seriously? What Nietzsche lacked was *mercy*, but without mercy, loneliness, even Zarathustra's, is not bearable. Thus logic was not a uniquely valuable good for him, but an external constraint (for he felt too weak not to scent danger everywhere). However, he who negates logic has already been abandoned by it, he is on the road to insanity.

Spinoza, otherwise the complete opposite of Nietzsche, was a hater of himself just like Nietzsche. In him, however, it was not a hate that somehow became creative or tragic. Not creative – for no one has so little understood the problem of free will, to which the superior person is led by his hatred of himself; no one has dismissed this whole problem as rudely and intolerantly as he (*Ethics*, I: 32; II: 35, 48; III: 2). Not tragic – for Spinoza's worldview was not a courageous, open faith, but a system of protective measures, which he strung around himself like barbed wire, and behind which he sheltered a cowardly need for calm.

Women appear to be quite incapable of hatred of themselves. They do not, however, love themselves; they are merely, but always, *in love with themselves*. When a child resembles *her*, the mother has nothing like the joy that a father feels in the other case.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ David Hume accepted this point, too, but ascribed it to the mother's not needing the same kind of evidence that the child was indeed *hers*. Cf. Steven Burns, “The Humean Female”, *Dialogue*, 1976. (sb)

Michelangelo and Beethoven were men who resolutely hated themselves, and who, certainly no less than Pascal and Nietzsche, lived perfectly chastely – Beethoven with an almost as great, and just as unsatisfied, need to find the woman whom he could love, as Nietzsche. On the other hand, Mozart always loved himself, as did Jean Paul⁵⁰ and Richard Wagner for the most part. A sense of humour is a sign of love, and satire a sign of hatred, of oneself and in general – for a sense of humour is itself merely a well-disguised eroticism. Of philosophers who loved themselves I shall name Socrates (the teacher) and Fechner, Leibniz a little less and Plato less again; of artists who belong to the self-hating type, Grillparzer and Rembrandt.

With a man like Kant, however, this division entirely fails, no matter how widely it may otherwise find application; surely there is no way that a person like that, who lacks all subjectivity, can be either loved or hated.

There may also be *both* in the *same* person: complaisance and forbearance, as well as envy and intolerance of one's moral indifference. This will even be the rule.

Self-haters are the greatest self-observers. All self-observation is a haters' phenomenon; their motto is: "catch you by surprise". They are the least solemn of people because they are the most ashamed; they are generally highly *perceptive* of false solemnity. Even simple speech is impossible for them, because they are perpetually *suffering* because of their whole ego, and would have to deny this suffering when they had to be solemn. As a result, the self-hating person tolerates loneliness with infinitely more difficulty than the self-loving; and yet no attempts at joining the company of others are as unlucky as his, for he suffers from the most terrible fate that a good person can meet: being unable really to *love* another person. Their essence, that is, can never flow freely, cannot overflow into another whom they wish to love, who loves them! That is how terrible their ego always is for *them*. They are like a house with the shutters eternally closed; the sunlight would like to shine on this house, too, and warm it up, but the house does not open. Seemingly gloomy, hard, repellent and bitter, it refuses the light, it is terrified by happiness. What does it look like inside the house? There is a wild and despairing activity in there, a slow and timid seeing in the dark, an endless rear-

⁵⁰ Jean Paul is the pen name of Johann Paul Friedrich Richter (1763-1825), a celebrated and prolific German humanist and man of letters. (sb)

ranging of things – within. One dare not ask them what it looks like inside the house.

A man who has written *Peer Gynt* can only be a self-hater. At first, Ibsen himself⁵¹ certainly thought of the poem as a *tragedy of vanity* (in the most general sense, cf., Solomon), and only gradually did it become clear to him that all vanity in front of others, all primary respect for others, has as a condition the giving up of one's own self and one's own self-worth.

However, the long digression from which I have now returned to *Peer Gynt*, and to whose justification in principle my opening observations about the elevated moral inner life of great men also contributed, was necessary to help us to understand one of the author's creations which I have not yet mentioned. Although it, in the whole of the much-interpreted *Peer Gynt*, has given us the most to puzzle over, none of the interpretations has even satisfied the interpreters themselves. “The great Boyg”, the most puzzling and at the same time most original figure in the work⁵², now becomes as clear as its peculiar nature will allow it to be. The “great Boyg” plays the most important role in the second and fifth Acts⁵³; it is well worth observing, that both times it is conquered through Solveig. It is the power that again and again leaves a person unfaithful to himself, and shows him to be vain. Indeed, whenever he has mercilessly stirred himself up and chastised himself it still lets him become aware of the vanity, not displaced, not disabled, but unchanged in the furthest corners of his inner self, in the same place and with the same assets:

Here and back – it's ever so wide!
Outside and inside – ever so broad!
There he is! There! Around where I'm pointing!
When I get outside, still I'm surrounded! [II: 7]

⁵¹ The most un-solemn person there has even been.

⁵² Perhaps the falcon, in the very overrated *Brand*, means something similar to the Boyg of *Peer Gynt*. [“Böyg” is now a common Norwegian term for obstacle, something one has to go around. The German homonym, *Beug*, = bend / turn. “*Die Krumme*”, as it is called in the German version used by Weininger, = curve / twist – as, e.g., curved with age. Allan Janik uses the vivid phrase, “The Great Crooked Thing” (*Wittgenstein's Vienna Revisited*, p. 190). It is also called “the Boyg” because the human, in battling it, has to move in a circle, and finds himself against his will shifted back to his starting point.]

⁵³ In Act II, scene 7. The Boyg does not reappear *as such* (i.e., as a Voice, which is how it appears in Act II), but it is invoked in IV: 11, and the Button-Molder of Act V, scenes 7-11, who blocks Peer's path again and again, and who could also be said to be conquered by Solveig, is identified with the Boyg by Peer just before he hears Solveig singing (scene 11). (sb)

As a child I heard a school teacher tell the class that I found myself in, the following story about the method by which one kills bears in Russia: a block of wood is suspended between two tree trunks; in order to pass between them the bear has to shove the beam aside. Now the beam swings back and hits him ever harder in the head, which so enrages the bear that he repeats the same thing until a powerful shove smashes his skull. Ibsen could also have used this story as a parable for what he wanted to express. The “great Boyg” is the whole force of the empirical ego, with which it raises itself again and again against the intelligible ego, although it still supposes that it has fully and definitively vanquished it; and at the same time it is the voice with which it advises the others, after constantly repeated relapses, to give up the hopeless, senseless struggle. Hence the self-confident irony with which the Boyg meets Peer Gynt's boisterous assault, tells him to walk around him, urges him to put up with him, to move on and let him be, instead of wanting to take the invincible fortress by storm. *The Boyg is the redemption-negating principle in general*; in him Ibsen tried to grasp the great negater in himself. One may call him comfort, or indolence, the tie between the soul and the body (he conquers without striking a blow, and *gradually*); in any case he is that which Ibsen *wanted* to break in himself, as he established this Peer Gynt, *his* Peer Gynt. He himself, however, felt that we will not be finished with him *before* death.

We thus find ourselves brought back once again to the sense of the whole work, to the answer that Ibsen had for his question. In this concluding scene of *Peer Gynt* one can find the two main problems of his thought and work running together. On one hand the problem: truth – lie. On the other hand, no matter how well-grounded and satisfying the meaning that I have given to the Boyg appears to me to be, he represents yet another idea. The symbols of the true artist are not allegories, to be translated back into personifications of sharply defined, unambiguous philosophical concepts bearing proper names, and in the language of a particular philosophical system, just as soon as the key to the code is discovered. What the poet immediately saw and felt in his symbols, the philosopher is only able to discover slowly and with much *forethought*. The Boyg, which Peer Gynt never broke through in his lifetime, because he never went *straight ahead* – this twist is at the same time the *lie*.

In this life, the human being cannot live in complete *truth*; Ibsen used the Boyg to indicate that something – this residue of lies, error, cowardice and impenitence – always cuts him off from it.⁵⁴ A full view of truth is possible in the other life, but in this life it can only be aspired to; the Boyg can only be conquered in death. Thus, what is expressed in this aspect of the Boyg is just another differentiation of the same idea that salvation is delayed. Here, Peer Gynt ranks incomparably higher than Hjalmar Ekdal in *The Wild Duck*, who is complacent about lying; Hjalmar actually feels the demand for truth to be a personal insult, a demand that is placed on him from the outside, and when it is forced on him only outwardly accepts it in order to continue living in the lie undisturbed. He poses as unlucky, and experiences the little nuisances of his little life as an injustice of fate towards his person, which, indeed, he blames on others. Hjalmar is the absolutely un-tragic person; Peer Gynt is not that at all. On the contrary, the whole drama is almost completely filled up with the *problem of the subject*; its hero himself is mostly concerned with this cardinal question. *Peer Gynt*, therefore, conforms more completely than any other work in world literature to the idea, *which is contained in the very concept of tragedy*, of the seeking and struggling, erring and failing individuality that attains consciousness of guilt, and struggles for salvation.

Peer Gynt wants to get away from the lying which is indissolubly connected to life – no one is so holy that he has not seen himself forced over and over again into a white lie, and the white lie is as morally inexcusable as any other – Peer Gynt wants to get away from the life-lie, and he cannot. Redemption, in spite of the Boyg, is brought about in the end by a female. And here lies Ibsen's second main problem: *the problem of redemption with respect to male and female. How does the matter of the woman, and the love for a woman, stand in regard to the problem of humanity in general?* That is the question with which Ibsen was almost constantly engaged for the last thirty years of his creative life. It is not the simple woman-question in its popular form, about having the same capacities and the same political rights, that Ibsen has at heart; he was never an advocate for the individual woman or for the collectivity of living women. The contempt for Ibsen that is becoming ever more fashionable is psychologically understandable, to be sure – one involuntarily finds that when women call attention to their alleged de-

⁵⁴ That is why the Sphinx, which is both woman and lion, and yet is neither, reminds us of the Boyg.

fender, the defender, himself, is a little compromised – but it is wholly unjustified, and evidence of drawing a parallel much too hastily.

When women claim the poet for themselves, this should not be held against them; he is through and through too masculine for them to stand in a true relation to his work, and to be able to grasp his true intention. Ibsen demanded for women not so much the same *rights* as the same *duties* – and duty is an absolutely unfeminine concept.

In *Peer Gynt* the man is drawn aloft by the woman, or rather, he lets himself rise aloft. Nothing is so ridiculous and so vulgar as the view that the mere passivity of being loved could have any influence on the moral destiny of an individual, could affect his final evaluation as good or evil. Someone who has loved much may be forgiven, but never someone just because he has been loved, no matter how much. Nevertheless, these superficialities are so current in the official Ibsen and Wagner interpretations that one unfortunately cannot pass over them in silence. They completely block the understanding of redemption through love, and the logical mystery becomes paradoxical sentimentality. It is humiliating enough not to be able to contrast the deep conception of the erotic which Ibsen reveals in *Peer Gynt*, with anything more than this current interpretation. Even though Ibsen is still uncommonly brief and obscure in *Peer Gynt*, there nevertheless shines forth even here the view that he brought out more powerfully in his later works. In *Peer Gynt*, love, and the possibility of redemption through it, consists precisely in this: that the man *projects onto the woman* his better self, *all that he wants to love and cannot love in himself because there it is contaminated – and through this division, he attains more easily a willing, striving relationship with the idea of the beautiful, and the good and the true.*⁵⁵ That is the deep psychological ground for that act of masculine egoism which puts a much higher moral demand on the woman than on the man – moral, naturally, only in external appearance, as satisfaction of the need for illusion – the deep root of the postulate of purity, of virginity, for the woman. A projection phenomenon similar to the one for love, applies to hatred; the devil is the inspired objectification of a thought that has given relief to millions of people in their struggle with the evil in their own breasts. They set the devil outside themselves, and thereby both distinguish themselves and sepa-

⁵⁵ It cannot be denied, however, that this idea that Solveig is only there for, and because of, *Peer Gynt* is not expressed with full clarity in the play.

rate themselves from him.⁵⁶ A metaphysical act of projection is accordingly the general root of all the dualism in the world: God wants to find himself in human being. Dualism must obtain, or else monism, and the striving after it, is senseless, an empty word.

In *Peer Gynt*, the only role the woman plays is the redeemer of the man; she has no independent life, other than the function bestowed on her by the man. She is *de*-souled in order to gain a soul, murdered in order to gain life. Herein lies the explanation, which so many since Novalis have sought, for why sexuality is associated with cruelty.⁵⁷ There is an element in coitus that is psychologically analogous to murder, because the begetting of life is related to its destruction. Similarly there is in each love, even the highest, a peculiar *decreation* of the person loved, in order to substitute for him or her the lover's own highest reality. Here, too, lies the root of the jealousy, in which a man always thinks that he has a right of possession over himself, even if he has localized his self in a woman.⁵⁸ That is why Constant is right when he calls love, which seems to represent the feeling of altruism itself, "*de tous les sentiments le plus égoïste*".⁵⁹ Love means: *the man wants to rediscover himself indirectly through the woman*. That is why love so often begins with castigations, self-reproaches, and self-humiliation, and enlivens the guilty conscience. The woman is thus only a means to an end, in the highest as well as the lowest eroticism.

This injustice, that the loving man perpetrates on the woman, was already felt by Ibsen in *Peer Gynt*; certainly he criticizes there the sensual form of love, in order to contrast it with the spiritual, and he is ironic above all about the soulless Peer, who still thinks he can bestow a soul on his girlfriend, Anitra.

Give me youth! I mean to rule
Like a sultan, hot and hearty –
Not the banks of Gyntiana

⁵⁶ This gives a new psychological twist to Ludwig Feuerbach's notion (in *The Essence of Christianity*, 1841) of projecting some of one's own characteristics onto another being. (sb)

⁵⁷ Novalis (Friedrich Leopold, Freiherr von Hardenberg) (1772-1801), German poet and novelist. In *Hymns to the Night*, for instance, he wrote of love cut off by early death. (sb)

⁵⁸ Women do not *suffer* from jealousy, they are just envious or vindictive, for they have no self that they might seek to affirm in someone else.

⁵⁹ The most egoistic of all the emotions. (sb)

[Benjamin Constant (1767-1830), born Swiss, became engaged in anti-Napoleonic politics and literature in Paris. His relationship with Mme. de Staël is reflected in the romantic novel, *Adolphe* (1816), which portrays the psychological complexity of love and egoism.]

With its palm trees and its vines,
 But the inner realm of thoughts
 That dwells within a maiden pure!
 Don't you now see why, my child,
 I've graciously bestowed my love
 On you, and chose your heart to be
 The place where, so to speak, I've grounded
 My own nature's Caliphate?
 I alone shall know your longings,
 I'm all powerful in my realm!
 You are mine and mine alone.
 Peer with all his mind and might
 Is more to you than gold and gems.
 If we part, then life is over –
 Life for you, at any rate!
 For all your “you” is given to me,
 Devotedly, without a will,
 To be fulfilled by my own “I”. [IV: 7]

All relationship of man to woman, however, is *expropriation*, deprivation of rights, insofar as it is erotic. That became clear to Ibsen later, the first step in this direction is taken in *A Doll's House*. People made use of Nora for the woman's right to vote, and Ibsen, who during his lifetime tried to lie to himself less about women than any other artist before or since, was branded as the typical champion of the doctrine of equality and as the creator of Hedda Gabler, the living woman whom he appraised (according to her actual qualities) just as highly as the man. *However, exactly therein lies the whole moral greatness of Ibsen, and his pure heroism.* He demanded of the man that he respect the woman as an independent human being, and honour the idea of humanity in the person of the woman as well, and not, as in every erotic relationship, merely use her as a means to an end. He demanded this *even though reality, when cleared of the steam clouds of eroticism, makes respect* for the woman – which the woman in reality certainly never asked the man for – so much more difficult.

His Nora is also not a real person, and the famous transformation from the childish, lying sweet-toothed chatterbox to the person with free will, is not a de-

ducible character trait of any actual woman; it is just the *mystery of conversion*, which appeared to Ibsen, on general moral grounds, to be necessary for women. In *Nora*, Ibsen honours the first female individuality, he shows how a woman *ought* to behave, not how she really behaves. The alteration in Nora is just a *miracle*, thoroughly incomprehensible from what went before; and no one misunderstands this play more fundamentally than the person who seeks to mediate the changeover, and to motivate it through the Nora of the first Act. The Nora-problem comes back again in *The Lady from the Sea*, who in the end is able to choose in freedom, and thereby frees herself from external, material constraints, but at the same time takes upon herself responsibility and thus duty. *Rosmersholm* marks the second peak, after *Peer Gynt*, in the development of Ibsen's thought about these problems. For a second time he returned to the problem of redemption in its relation to the problem of sexual love. Here, however, the matter is very much differently situated than in *Peer Gynt*. Above all, the rebirth is experienced by the woman, under the influence of the man. The once thoroughly immoral Rebecca, says that Rosmersholm, which is symbolically the citadel of pure moral strength, the place of moral goodness, has broken her, has subdued her wild instincts. However, she, too, had on the whole worked a refining, purifying influence on Rosmer, towards the liberation of *his* pure self, and her new guilty conscience is almost more intense than Rosmer's remorse over his unconscious encouragement of her actions against Beata. So the work ends with the question: "But first tell me this, do you go with me, or do I go with you?" And the answer that Ibsen gives is: "We will not in all eternity get to the bottom of that question."

However, Ibsen did not remain standing on this second level, either. The problem of guilt from *Rosmersholm* is taken up anew in *Little Eyolf*. The subject here, however, is not a Beata, not a former wife, as in *Rosmersholm*, but – and this is a different, deeper thought – a child who has been murdered. The whole play is to be understood as an allegory: nothing eternal can grow from sinful eroticism; murder, the murder of the child, is already contained in it. Coitus, which begets life, also begets death, into which what originates in sin necessarily sinks back. The immorality of procreating in pleasure, the interrelation between death and birth, the parents' offence against the child, whom they have casually brought into the world without first conceiving him as a person, this is the sin that hangs over the marriage of Alfred and Rita, which represents human marriage in gen-

eral. (Eyolf's crippling accident happens at the same time as his parents are enjoying the most impetuous passion.)

Rita interprets the guilty conscience to which she finally awakes, as wholly Alfred's doing; yet he, too, in the end, is kept from growing callous by her sincere repentance. They work together from then on towards the goal of production, of labour as the offspring of pure love.

The whole problem of the rebirth of man and woman, appears for the last time in the "dramatic epilogue", *When we Dead Awaken*. Ibsen called it the last word that he had to say on the question, and a man of nearly seventy-two years must have known why he called it that. We are confronted here, therefore, with the culminating point of the third phase of his thought, the definitive conclusion of the task that was his life's work. Here, too, we find the trinity of man, woman and child. However, it is now often declared that the man, in loving her, kills the woman as an independent metaphysical entity, as a soul, because the woman is just a tool of this love, with which he achieves a lighter work-load for himself. This murder, which all love commits, *has to be avenged* itself, the *loving murderer's fear* is called *jealousy*, and his regret is that puzzling, guilty conscience that each man feels toward the woman he loves. There is fear and guilt, however, only because of injustice committed independently of the person. For Rubek, the sculptor, the feeling that he has committed a murder is a dark and gloomy burden, and that is why he portrays himself in stone as a guilt-laden man, trying to cleanse himself in the fountain of sin.⁶⁰ In general, however, one negates and one murders oneself at the same time, *through* doing it to others. Rubek had blocked the source of higher life in himself through killing the soul in Irene. Now he, himself, has to awaken to higher life. The meaning of this is the same as the deeper significance (scarcely understood by its compilers) of the beautiful legend of poor Heinrich: the man can be cured of evil (of his serious leprosy) through love, but for this a woman must sacrifice herself.⁶¹ However, it is first the knight's *refusal to take* the woman's life that is the moral act which *really, uniquely*, saves him. So Rubek should no longer *want* a woman for himself (as Lyngstrand does in *The Lady from the Sea*), but *want* her as a human being, as an end-in-herself; and the woman

⁶⁰ Viz., in his masterpiece, "The Resurrection", introduced in Act I of *When we Dead Awaken* as "figured in the likeness of a young woman, awakening from the sleep of death". We learn in Act II that Rubek later enlarged the sculpture, adding other figures, including his own likeness. (sb)

⁶¹ *Armer Heinrich* is a mediaeval legend, set to verse by Hartmann von Aue (1165-1220). (sb)

should no longer want a man merely to produce children with her, the woman should no longer treat herself, as in the past, as a means to an end. A bodily child is no longer the point. That can be produced by Ulfheim and Maja, people from the lower, earthly sphere, who do not risk going up the path that leads “through night in the mountains”, and in “the stormy winds of the summits” [Act 3], to the sunrise of the higher, eternal life, because this path can cost their earthly lives. They have never felt already dead, in order to have to wake anew.

Thus, after long doubt, Ibsen believed in the end in the resurrection of the woman, in a higher life of man and woman together, removed from the lower sphere, in the sacrament of marriage as a metaphysical symbol of an *unio mystica*⁶². The woman is no longer for him a paradox of nature imposed on the man, so that he takes her with him against her own will. It is true, this was always for him the greatest danger, but still not a permanent barrier to striving after the ideal of higher humanity. To be sure, according to Ibsen, even the most sublime eroticism of the artists has *so far always* been *egoistic*; nonetheless, man and woman can both posit themselves as individuals. Thus, and *only* thus, is an ideal union of the two possible. That is the meaning of *When we Dead Awaken*.

We find a remarkable analogue of Ibsen's course of development in this question, taken by a man whose being compared to Ibsen could appear to many to require an apology, namely Richard Wagner. If one takes into consideration to begin with just the young Wagner, there is no non-Wagner work that is more Wagnerian than *Peer Gynt*, ending as it does just like *The Flying Dutchman* and *Tannhäuser*, with the mystery of redemption through a woman. In *Dutchman* and *Tannhäuser* Wagner, like the young Ibsen in *Peer Gynt*, believed in the redemption of the man through a woman, in redemption of human longing and suffering through his love for this woman.

The Nibelung saga in its Nordic and mythical form enticed both Ibsen and Wagner to interpret it in their own way (Ibsen's *The Vikings in Helgeland*, also known as *The Nordic Expedition*). Meanwhile, Hebbel, much more a seeker than Wagner and even than Ibsen, and who did not possess a very deep relationship to *nature*, preferred the *civilized* South-German version.⁶³ Wagner's *Ring of the Ni-*

⁶² Mystical union. (sb)

⁶³ On the whole, Ibsen as a character stands in the middle between Hebbel and Wagner, between Fichte and Schopenhauer. In addition, he is in many ways more like Kant than is any other historical person. [Hebbel published his tragedy trilogy, *The Nibelungs*, in 1862.]

belung corresponds, rather as *Rosmersholm* does for Ibsen, to the same middle phase in their thought. Brünnhilde is indeed *awakened* by Siegfried from a sleep that symbolizes death in a metaphysical sense; but even Siegfried, in his wedding with the “holy bride”, only celebrates in dying his union with the universe. This indicates, so to speak, the cosmic encounter of the male and female principles in the universe. That Brünnhilde also calls herself Siegfried's mother, reminds us of *Peer Gynt* and the identification at the very end of Solveig with Aase.⁶⁴ She represents the immortality of the species, with which Siegfried the individual, as “an awaker of life”, enters into union.⁶⁵ In Ibsen, too, this identification of mother and lover is not just a thoughtless, reconciliation-effect right before death, but is an indication of what mother and lover always have in common. Surely the loving young woman very often (if not always) stands in a certain motherly relationship to the man who loves her, and the man from whom she can acquire a child, is himself, in a certain sense, already her child. On the other side, the loving man himself becomes a child to this young woman, and can address her as a mother. It is precisely the spirit of the immortal species that Peer encounters in Solveig before his death. Ibsen's idea here bears a remarkable resemblance to Schopenhauer's about the indestructibility of our essential being, which is merely the species' will to live. Later, Ibsen overcame this worldview, which denies the logic of the individual human life, and never returned to it. At the end of *Peer Gynt*, however, to the detriment of the play, it shines through a little. As representatives of the eternal life of the species, that they have only to pass on, the mothers appear to be endowed with a symbolic consecration that lends a deep justification to the childlike feelings of the man towards Brünnhilde and to Solveig. With regard to this question, Wagner's Tristan, who is pessimistic and seeks not to get *through* life but to get *out* of life and *up* to a higher life, does not come into consideration.

The combining of the two functions of women, mother and lover, in one person, also calls to mind the double nature of Kundry in Wagner's *Parsifal*. This work is the result of a revision that Wagner undertook of the views of his youth and early manhood, and it is *his* final word on many things, including the same problem that Ibsen dealt with for the last time in his “epilogue”. This final word, however, is different from Ibsen's; the emendation that Wagner makes to his ear-

⁶⁴ Aase is Peer's mother. (sb)

⁶⁵ “Eternal was I, eternally in sweet, longing rapture”, etc., (*Siegfried*, Act 3).

lier work is a far more radical reversal of his earlier view than occurred with Ibsen. In *Parsifal* the woman *might* at best have been redeemed by the man. But she does not want this redemption, she resists it. Thus, for Wagner, the woman no longer has a place in the kingdom of God; Kundry dies on the threshold. The woman can no longer exist as woman, after she has seen the Grail. It is shocking to see how the same Wagner who once sang praises to Elizabeth has re-oriented himself to the woman; that could not have been accomplished without deep pain. He now negates the woman by affirming the complete chastity of the man. She is thus robbed of her function, and has become *purposeless* in the world; she must *die*. The man's transgression against the woman, which is contained in all eroticism, was much more deeply understood by Ibsen than by Wagner, and more intensely regretted. The motive of a man sinning against himself, which is contained in sexuality as his wishing, to be able to forget *himself* completely in the arms of a woman, is stressed by Wagner as early as *Tannhäuser*, while Ibsen put very little stress on it. This weak emphasis on the demand for asceticism⁶⁶ in the man, may simply be grounded in the fact that Ibsen, in life and in art, has a much less sensual nature than Wagner, and certainly all his life maintained more proper personal relations with women than Wagner did. However, the question whether the deeper erotic guilt of the male, which had distressed Ibsen more powerfully than nearly anyone before him, and which certainly no one had thought about more than he – whether this *male* guilt did not let Ibsen hope too *much* for a *female* in an imaginary future who would no longer be misused and despised, whether indeed the whole *meaning* of the woman in the *universe* (as is doubtless the intention of every actual woman), is to give the man an opportunity to become guilty, whether she may not embody the *object* in-itself in which, always and for ever, only a *subject* will be able to attain consciousness of its self, would require answers that far exceed the limits of this essay. It has already gone far beyond the impressionistic and technical criticism that is so generally common today, in order to acquire a higher point-of-view. The aim of this essay, to be sure, has always been to bring Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, his greatest and therefore least understood work,

⁶⁶ This is why asceticism, for Ibsen, is more a matter *to be taken for granted* (as the *man's* sexual continence). The usual interpretation of the “epilogue” as the pain of a man in his seventies at missing the Mount of Venus, I shall only mention and not reject.

closer to a wider circle of people.⁶⁷ It could meet with no higher honour than to be called a critique that is not unworthy of the work of art itself.

⁶⁷Unfortunately, in the course of his life Ibsen *stopped wanting the same greatness* that he did at the time he was writing *Peer Gynt*. *Emperor and Galilean* marks the stretch of his life in which he tackled one of the most tremendous problems, but with only weak remnants of the will to solve it. If Ibsen had remained the Ibsen of *Peer Gynt*, he would have become greater than Goethe; for a person *can* do everything he *wills*. The most outstanding play of the later period, *Rosmersholm*, is *weak* compared to *Peer Gynt*; and Ibsen's will sinks further after *Rosmersholm*.

*

J. J. Bachofen (in *Das Mutterrecht*, Stuttgart, 1901, p. XXVII) says about the idea of human fatherhood, in contrast to the preponderant consideration given to the bond between mother and child: "If the bond between mother and child rests on a material relationship, if it is perceivable by the senses and is a fact of nature, then biological fatherhood has a thoroughly opposite character in every respect. Since it has no visible relation to the child, it cannot even in a matrimonial relationship cast off its purely fictional nature. Since the father is related to the birth only through the mediation of the mother, he always appears as the power from afar. At the same time, fatherhood carries in its essence as the original cause an immaterial quality, in contrast to which the mother who protects and nourishes presents herself as ὕλη [matter], as χώρα [space] and δεξαμένη γενέσεως [receptacle of generation], as τιθήνη [nurse; all of these terms are found in Plato's *Timaeus*, 49 ff.]. All these characteristics of fatherhood lead to the conclusion that the freeing of the mind from the phenomena of nature is found in emphasizing paternity, that an elevation of human existence above the laws of material life is found in paternity's victorious accomplishment. If the principle of motherhood is common to all spheres of earthly creation, then the man, through the superiority that he grants to his procreative power, steps out of that bond and becomes conscious of his higher vocation. Mental existence raises itself above physical existence, and the connection with the lower spheres of creation is now confined to the latter. Motherhood belongs to the bodily side of the human being, and this will remain our only connection with the other animals; the fatherly-intellectual principle belongs to us alone.... Victorious fatherhood will be just as decisively connected to the heavenly light, as child-bearing motherhood is to the all-bearing earth."

[Bachofen's *Das Mutterrecht* first appeared in 1861, and introduced the idea that matriarchal social organization had preceded the patriarchal. An English translation by Ralph Mannheim was published in 1967 (*Myth, Religion, and Mother Right: selected writings of J.J. Bachofen*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; and Princeton: Princeton University Press). Here, I have translated the slightly altered version that Weininger cites. The passage can be found on pp. 109-10 in Mannheim's version.]

Aphoristic Remarks

**(the psychology of sadism and masochism, the psychology
of murder, remarks about ethics, original sin, etc.)**

Aphoristic Remarks

The highest expression of all morality is: *Be!*

*

A person must act in such a way that the *whole* of his individuality lies in each moment.

*

Sleep and dreams undoubtedly have something in common with our state before birth.

*

Algebra is conceptual, arithmetic intuitive.¹

*

The present is the form of eternity; judgement concerning what is actual has the same form as judgement concerning the everlasting. Connection with morality, which wants to transform all of the present into eternity, to take into the narrowness of consciousness all the breadth of the world.

*

What *also* always leads to determinism is the fact that struggle is forced upon one over and over again. In a particular case the decision may be taken quite ethically, and a person may decide in favour of the good; yet the decision is not lasting, he must struggle anew. There is freedom, one might say, only for the *moment*.

And that lies in the concept of freedom. For what kind of freedom would it be which I had brought forth, had produced for all time, through a good act at some earlier time? Human pride consists precisely in the fact that he can be free anew at every moment.

Thus for the future, as for the past, there is no freedom; man has no power over them.

That is why a person can also never understand himself; *he is himself a timeless act, an act that he performs over and over again, and there is not a single*

¹ This terminology is borrowed from Kant. (sb)

*moment in which he does not perform it, as it is needed for him to understand himself.*²

*

Ethics may be defined thus: Act in *full consciousness*, that is, act in such a way that every moment is filled with your *whole* self, with your *whole* individuality. A person experiences this individuality in the course of his life only in successive moments; that is why time is immoral and no living person is ever holy or perfect. If a person acts just once with the strongest will, so that all the universality of his self (and of the world, for he is the microcosm) is placed in the moment, then he has overcome time and become divine.

The most powerful musical motifs of the world's music are those which attempt to represent this *breaking through* time in time, this breaking forth out of time, where such a rhythmical accent falls on one note that it absorbs the remaining parts of the melody (which represents time as a whole, individual points integrated by the ego), and thereby *transcends* the melody. The end of the Grail motif in *Parsifal*, and the Siegfried motif, are such melodies.

There is, however, one act which, so to speak, absorbs the future in itself, which experiences in advance all *future* backsliding into immorality as guilt, no less than all past immorality, and *thereby grows beyond both*; it is a timeless positing of character, rebirth. It is the act through which genius arises.

It is a moral commandment that in every action the whole individuality of the person ought to become apparent, each action should be a complete overcoming of time, of the unconscious, and of the narrowness of consciousness. Most of the time, however, a person does not do what he *wills*, but what he *has willed*. Through his decisions he always gives himself only a certain *direction*, in which he then moves until the next moment of reflection. We do not will continuously, we only will intermittently, little by little. Thus we save ourselves from willing: *principle of the economy of the will*. The superior person, however, always experiences this as thoroughly immoral. The present and eternity are related; timeless, universal, logical judgements are made in the present tense (logic is fully achieved ethics). *Thus all eternity should be in each moment of the present*. We also must not *determine* ourselves from within; this last danger, too, this last deceptive appearance of autonomy, is to be shunned.

Will! that is: Will yourself entirely!

² Parsifal motif (variation), Act III, ("The hallow'd spear, I bring it back to thee").

The right thing in socialism is that just as every person should seek himself, his particular nature, and also strive to find himself, he should also strive to acquire his own *property*; and here his possibilities must not from the start be restricted *from outside*.

A man can be proud of acquired riches, and rightly look up to them as to a moral symbol of *inner* work, too.

*

Psychologism³ is the most comfortable conception of life, because according to it there are no longer any problems at all. That is why it also condemns all solutions from the outset, since it acknowledges the actual problems as little as the concept of truth.

There is no such thing as chance. Chance would be a negation of the causal law, which requires that even the temporal coinciding of two distinct causal sequences still have a cause. Chance would destroy the possibility of life; it would recall from his path the person who is on the verge of overcoming evil. Chance would make telepathy impossible, though it is nonetheless a fact. It would nullify the connectedness of things, the oneness of the universe. If there is chance, then there is no God.

*

Love brings forth beauty	}	but they all bring forth life.
Belief brings forth being		
Hope brings forth happiness		

*

Hate-hideous	Pain is the mental
Unbelief-nothing	correlate of destruction.
Fear-pain.	(Sickness and death.)

*

Pleasure is the mental correlate of *creation*. Lust is accompanied by intense pain, because in it creation and destruction are merged.

Pain: fear = being: willing

Pleasure : love = being: willing.

³ By “psychologism” Weininger means the view that logic is a description of how our thinking actually works, i.e., a kind of psychology, rather than an external ideal, like truth, to which our thinking ought to aspire. (sb)

The non-being of the criminal is thus the worst pain, and in the true sense hell.

*

Hope–fear: psychology of the gambler. Every compulsive gambler suffers greatly from fear.

*

Do plants know pleasure and pain? Orchids? Lust in copulating seems to be missing in them! Hermaphroditism of plants!

*

The narrowness of consciousness, and time, are not two different things, but one and the same fact. Opposed to this is the parallelogram of forces, in which two different movements unite in a single one, and can be performed by the same body at the same time. Alternation, as well as oscillation, are mental.

The inner life of plants, then, must be one in which the narrowness of consciousness is absent. This matches the fact that the plant cannot move itself and that it has no sense organs, for the development of motility and of sensibility are always parallel and belong to each other. The narrowness of consciousness (time) is the form of mental movement.

*

Work–creation | pain–pleasure.

Nietzsche is right, of course, that there is no such thing as murder with robbery. There is no *murder* for the sake of money. Yet robbery is not a “suggestion of the feeble reason” of the murderer, but rather is part of the murder; robbery is a complete killing. If he possessed money, the victim would still have reality; that is why he must be robbed, i.e., be completely killed.

*

Of all the problems that may in principle be solved, the most difficult is the relationship of the will to value, or, which is the same thing, of man to God. Does the will create value, or value the will? Does God create man, or does man first produce God? Does the will catch hold of the good, or the good catch hold of the will? This is the *problem of mercy*, the supreme and final problem *within* dualism, while original sin is the problem of dualism itself.

It is, I believe, to be solved this way:

Value itself becomes will, when it enters into relation with time; for the ego (God) as time *is* the will. *Creation* of the will or of value is therefore totally out of the question; here the problem shows a proximity to original sin. Will, on the other hand, becomes value (man becomes God), when it becomes completely timeless; value is a boundary condition of the will, and will is a boundary condition of value. When God becomes time, then he becomes will, i.e., as soon as being has engaged itself in a relationship with non-being. All will only wills to go back to *being* (says original sin), and is something between non-being and being. Creation is out of the question. As the eye is related to the sun, so is man to God. The sun does not exist because of the eye alone, nor the eye because of the sun.

*

Idiocy is the intellectual equivalent of crudeness.

*

Epilepsy is total helplessness, failing sickness, because the criminal has become the plaything of gravitation. The criminal does not *come forth*. The epileptic feels as though the light goes out and every outer support totally fails. Ringing in the ears with a seizure: perhaps, when *light* fails, *sound* enters. The epileptic hallucinates the colour *red*: hell, fire.

*

Perhaps no memory of our state *prior* to birth is possible because we have sunk so low through being born. We have lost consciousness, and have demanded entirely instinctively to be born, without rational decision and without knowledge, and that is why we know nothing at all of this past.

*

Murder is a self-justification of the criminal; through it he seeks to prove to himself that nothing exists.

*

People should not want to determine themselves causally in this sort of way: I will now *make* myself good through an action, and in this way *become* good once and for all, and do good by nature, because I could not then do anything else. For in this way one denies the freedom which in each moment can negate all the past and to that extent is opposed to *passive* (Heringian⁴) memory. One makes

⁴ Ewald Hering (1834-1918), German physiologist and psychologist, was a professor in Vienna, Prague and Leipzig. His main work concerned the physiology of colour perception. (sb)

himself into an object when one *establishes causality* in that way; for a morality to which I have been compelled is already not a morality.

*

Must it not be that the more lust and sensual greed there is in the relationship of a man to a woman, the lower the children stand ethically? The more of the criminal there is in the son, the more of the prostitute there is in the daughter?

*

One loves one's biological parents; this may well be an indication that one *has chosen* them.

*

The state of human *childhood* is so much more pitiable than that of the newborn animal and the newborn plant, and the human alone must be nurtured and brought up, because here the soul has so lost itself. That is why the human child is so helpless and weak and (child mortality!) so much nearer to fatal danger than the adult, and why humans suffer from *childhood illnesses*, of which animals and plants know nothing.

*

Had man not lost himself through being born, he would not have to seek and find himself again.

*

“The world is my representation”⁵ – There must be a reason why this is eternally true and cannot be refuted. All these things that I see are not the whole truth, they always conceal the highest being from my view. When I came into being, however, I required this self-deception and this appearance. When I wanted to enter this world, I renounced wanting only the truth. All things are only appearances, *i.e., they always reflect only my subjectivity back to me.*

*

As man is related to each of the smallest and most insignificant stirrings of his psyche, so is God to man. Both seek to reveal and realize themselves in them.

*

It is pleasing to the criminal when there are many criminal people around. For he seeks accomplices; he has no need for a judge; he wants to get the judge and the good out of the world, and give reality to nothingness alone. That is why

⁵ This is the opening line of Arthur Schopenhauer's, *The World as Will and Representation*. (sb)

he feels himself released and unburdened of contradiction when another person is also the way he is.

*

The criminal is the polar opposite of the man who feels guilty. For the latter takes his guilt upon himself, while the criminal gives it to another. He takes revenge upon and *punishes* the other for himself: That is how murder is explained.

*

The *honourable* person goes by himself into death, if he feels that he is becoming ultimately evil; the base person must be forced into death by the sentence of a judge. To the honourable person, the sense of his immorality is equal to a death-sentence; *he does not even recognize his right to the space he takes up*, he slinks into a corner, makes himself smaller, doubles up, would like to pass away, *to shrivel up to a point*. Morality, on the contrary, recognizes as its right eternal life and the greatest space, i.e., spacelessness or omnipresence.

*

Guilt and punishment are not two different things, but are one.

*

Every illness is guilt and punishment; all medicine must become psychiatry⁶, care-of-the-soul. It is something immoral, i.e., unconscious, that leads to illness, and each illness is cured as soon as it is inwardly recognized and understood by the sick person himself.

The old understanding is very profound, which lets the sick person and the leper ask what crime they might have committed, that God should punish them so.

That is why the man is *ashamed* of illness; the woman never.

*

We seek to understand better, in their own terms, not only the laws of ethics but the laws of logic, too, and want to learn to express them ever more correctly.

*

Imagination and adornment⁷,
Imagination and art,
Imagination and play,

⁶ Weininger hyphenates “psych-i-try”, to expose its etymological roots: “soul-care”.

⁷ Perhaps this arrangement is related to the concept of “cosmos”? (Note by the original editor, Moriz Rappaport.)

Imagination and love,
Imagination and creation,
Imagination and form,
Imagination and adornment.

*

Art creates, science destroys the sensible world; that is why the artist is erotic and sexual, the scientist asexual. Optics destroys light.

*

The discontinuity in the passage of time is what is unethical in it.

*

The relationship of teleology to causality cannot be determined without a solution to the problem of time.

Cause–effect	}	time
Means–end		the reversal of time.

Whoever makes the end into a means, and treats the effect as a cause, reverses time; *and the reversal of time is evil.*

*

Mistrust of oneself is the condition of all other mistrust.

*

Judges are people with much evil. “Judge not, that ye be not judged!”⁸ He who sits in judgement of others seldom looks within himself. There is a great deal of the hangman in the judge. He gets furious with himself in the way that he is severe with others.

*

Monarch as agent and monarch as symbol.

*

If all love is an attempt to find oneself in the other, and if all that is created is created only through love, then can the creation of man by God not be conceived as the attempt of God to find himself in man? In this way the idea of being a child of God also has a meaning. Mankind and its correlate – the world – is the love of God become visible. The moral law is this will of God to find himself in man: God's *will* as man's *command* (Fechner). And at the same time, through

⁸ Matthew 7: 1. (sb)

theoretical reason (the norms of logic) God is the *teacher* of mankind (being a teacher as the other side of being a father).

*

The murderer is frightened away from his plan, by every sign of life in the person who is supposed to become his victim, i.e., he is contradicted. That is why he likes the old woman best, because she does not contradict the inner intention of his murder; for she herself is deadeast of all.

*

The angel in a person is the immortal in him; the evil in him is only that *which perishes*.

That a person becomes insane is only possible through his own *fault*.

*

A person can inwardly perish from nothing other than a lack of *religion*.

*

Why are something and nothing always drawn toward one another? Why are people born, why does the man want a woman? The problem of love, as we see here, is the problem of the world, the problem of life, the deepest, most insoluble problem; it is the impulse of form to form matter, the impulse of the timeless into time, of the spaceless into space. We meet this problem everywhere; it is the relationship of freedom to necessity. The dualism in the world is what is incomprehensible. *The motif of original sin is the mystery: the ground and meaning and purpose of the fall from timeless being, from eternal life into non-being, into the life of the senses, into earthly temporality – the fall of the guilt-free into guilt. I am never able to comprehend why I committed the original sin, how the free could become unfree. And why?*

Because I can only recognise a sin when I am no longer committing it. Therefore I cannot comprehend life so long as I am living it, and time is the mystery because I have not yet overcome it. Only death can teach me the meaning of life. I stand in time and not above it; I still posit time, still long for non-being, still desire material life; and because I remain in this sin, I am not able to comprehend it. What I know, I already stand outside of. I cannot comprehend my sinfulness, because I am still sinful.

The criminal and the insane live discontinuously.

*

A person lives until he enters either into the absolute or into nothingness. He, himself, *determines* his future life in *freedom*: he chooses God or nothingness. He abolishes himself, or adapts himself to eternal life. For him a *double* progress is possible: one toward eternal life (to perfect wisdom and holiness, to a state fully adequate to the idea of the true and the good), and one toward eternal annihilation. However, he continually advances in one of these two directions; there is no third.

*

Because time is unidirectional, we are less interested in the state before our birth. Our birth posits something new, begins a new sequence.

*

Science is asexual because it absorbs; the artist is sexual, because he emanates.

*

Dualism lies in the fact that we do not *create* the sensations about which we think.

*

The idealism of all philosophy: “the world is my representation” shows most clearly the absorption of things through the ego of the philosopher. For the artist, the human being is instead a part of the world; he draws nearer to things and in this way does away with the difference of level between man and nature.

*

Because the mental creates the physical, the human being must die. Death finds its explanation thus: Either the person has become like the absolute, and has entered into eternal life – then he cannot exist in material form, limited in space and matter. He will, if psycho-physical parallelism obtains, receive a body that has become one with all of visible nature; he becomes the soul of nature, and nature becomes his body, just as the tree beneath which the Buddha died was said to have begun to bloom at his death – because a new life permeated the whole of nature.

The other possibility is that the person falls into nothingness; he dissolves into nothing but material atoms: the absolute criminal. The preparations for this mental disintegration have already been made by the criminal in the course of his life. Hell is the good person's fear of evil, for fire is the agent for breaking up

what has been formed, and turning it to dust. But there is no hell; the good person creates himself, the evil one destroys himself.

*

A person physically comes into existence through father and mother, mentally through the longing of the something, the absolute, for the nothing. Myth of Uranos and Gaia. To this extent we are children of God and sons of dust (matter) at the same time. A person can also spiritually take after the father or the mother: after the father, in that he becomes God, after the mother, in that mentally he goes to ruin. Thus the human comes to be through a higher sort of inheritance than the animals; he returns to the father if he denies original sin, he disappears into the seclusion of the mother's lap if he affirms it.

*

Is epilepsy not the *loneliness of the criminal*? Does he not fall because he has nothing more he can *hold on to*?

*

One can recognize from the following how much a mental phenomenon differs from a physical one. Suppose it were established that an immoral impulse was always associated with a certain bodily movement, a certain feeling in the heart, and a moral impulse always connected with another gesture, another bodily sensation; and suppose that the kind and the location of these physical accompaniments were quite precisely known by science, or by a particular person, and that he could recognize them. It would thus be altogether, in the highest degree, *immoral*, if this person wanted to use the accompanying sensations as a standard by which to judge whether his mental impulses were moral or not.

Here lies the real difference between the mental and the physical. The mental *must* be more immediately known than the physical – that is a demand of *ethics*. A person just possesses a different standard for judging and a different organ of knowledge and judgement for that which he himself does and thinks and feels than for outward phenomena. And that is why only introspection can yield true results. Philosophy and art are nothing but different modes of a deepened introspection.

*

Only from within himself can a person know the depth of the world; the interconnections of the world lie in him.

*

That we have no memory of a life before birth is so little an objection to original sin and the fall from real existence, that on the contrary it can hardly be otherwise, and a memory of a former life would immediately have to be a contradiction of the idea of the fall of man. For this memory would include time. Time, however, is not there until birth, until the fall. That there are problems, illness, i.e., guilt, proves original sin. Being and non-being may not be thought of in temporal relation, but must be thought of side-by-side.

*

Murder is committed by the criminal out of the most fearful despair. It is for him the means of filling the greatest inner void, for, as a criminal, he no longer wills, he no longer does anything; he sees that his life leads to no end, and that is why he wants to *accomplish* something. In the course of it, it is perfectly indifferent to him *whom* he murders; *the intent to murder is never directed towards a particular individual* – otherwise the desire to murder, as a psychological disposition, would not lie so deep. He just wants to murder in general, to negate.

*

Habituation (practice)	}	Increasing of guilt, function of time.
Propagation		

*

All guilt seeks to multiply itself; all the qualities of inferior life must be explained by this.

*

The vegetarians are just as wrong as their opponents. Anyone who does not wish to contribute to the killing of living things may only drink milk, for anyone who eats fruit or eggs still kills embryos. That is perhaps why milk is the healthiest food, because it is the most ethical.

*

The human being cannot even bear to look into the sun – so weak and immature is he.

*

Birth is *cowardice*, connecting with other people because one does not have the courage to be himself. That is why one seeks *refuge* in the womb.

*

Not only does the criminal not have a centred gaze⁹, but also does not have an even gait (lop-sided gait of the dog). The criminal also walks continually bent over (all degrees up to a true hump; the hunchback, the cripple, always seems to be evil).

*

Zola is a person with absolutely no humour.¹⁰

*

Smoke of the sun at its setting.

Loathing is related to fear as desire is to value.

*

The fixed stars signify the angel in man. That is why man *orients* himself by them; and that is why women have no appreciation for the starry sky; because they lack a sense of the angel in a man.

*

Does nature also have a history? Is time also set up for the events of nature as a whole (the inorganic included)? Insofar as that were the case there would be truth in the theory of evolution (palaeontology). Is there an evolution of storms, or weather (possibly corresponding to human history, and symbolic of it)?

*

The strange thing about time is that despite eternal change everything in it remains the same (“everything has happened before”, “nothing new under the sun”). Boredom = conformity to law = causality. Newness = freedom. The overcoming of time leads to the idea of the “*Eternal Youth*” (Wagner). Nature is eternally young. For here, surely, nothing changes and yet everything is always *new*. People who have little that transcends time, like the Jews, always feel world-weary and bored, because in time everything remains the same; Siegfried, on the other hand, is “eternally young”.

*

The present is as spaceless as it is timeless; and the goal of humanity can be defined as mere-presence, as omnipresence (one usually understands omnipre-

⁹ This point is attributed in the first edition to M. Rappaport. (sb)

¹⁰ Émile Zola (1840-1902), French novelist, famous for the intense naturalism of his 20-novel series, *Les Rougon-Jacquart*, and for his intervention in the Dreyfuss Affair. (sb)

sence only as freedom from space, instead of understanding it as also including the reabsorption of past and future, of everything unconscious, in the conscious present). The narrowness of consciousness should contain the universe; only then is a person “eternally young” and perfected.

*

Pleasure is then to be defined even more generally than as the feeling of creation. It can only be unequivocally defined as the *feeling of life*, as *becoming conscious of existence*, and pain as the feeling of some kind of *death* (that is why illness is painful).

We can thus note this much against eudaimonism¹¹, that the goal of the striving must not be mistaken for the feeling that sets in at the goal (which I can know from experience). When I strive for the higher life, I strive for something whose *accompanying phenomenon* is higher pleasure, but not for pleasure itself. Likewise, the man longs for the woman, the woman for the man, not directly for pleasure.

*

All words that are connected to a certain extent with the word life, have the letter “L”:

Life, love, pleasure, voluptuous, laugh, lightness, lightly, lisp, light, luxury, liberty (*lubet*, Latin), *volo* (I will = βούλομαι), bloom, lighten, lax, liven, loose, large, flux, flute, lily, lynx, limber, slippery, sleek, glide, guile, γλυχύς, μέλι, lotus, relieve, λάμπω, lux, lumen, λύχνος, lick, lambent, lappet (soft cloth), lamb, glue, because λ [lambda] is the most *frictionless* consonant and most strongly opposed to the friction of the totality and the unit.¹²

Against this, of course, can be cited:

Load, leather, learning, lame, *letum*, languish, left.

*

Distinguishing mark of all that is human: *seeking for reality*. All distinctions between people are established where reality is sought and found.

*

¹¹ The view that the highest ethical goal is happiness. (sb)

¹² This last thought is attributed in the first edition to M. Rappaport.

In this aphorism I have followed Dudaniec and Solway, and have looked for approximate translations in order to keep to words with an “l”. The connection with “life” is sometimes obscured, but it is also sometimes obscure in the original version. (sb)

What the human being experiences is in every case pieces lifted out of an infinite, temporal, spatial, material, coloured and sounding multiplicity. That is why in the first instance two things are possible: Either he seeks reality in the whole, in the totality of the universe and its infinite continuity, or every discrete, elementary point (so to speak) of the whole world becomes reality for him. It is exactly the same world, quantitatively identical, equally infinite; but for the one, a part is always just a *part*, and only real insofar as it is created collectively with everything else. The other embraces the same world, but every discrete element exists for him as real in itself, and he seeks the part with the greatest reality of all.

Applied to the religious (since both types can be *pious*): to the latter, the sun itself or an historical figure itself, or the Madonna herself, can in-and-for-itself become the divine. For the other, a discrete thing will always only become God so far as it is symbolic for the whole, and the more so, the more things hang together in it.

*

Applied to the sexual: To the one, the individual woman is *real*; he is the *sadist*. The sadist is very attractive to women because she is the greatest conceivable *reality* for him (cf. *Sex and Character*, 1st ed. pp. 397-401 [E. 297-300]). To the masochist, on the other hand, the individual woman is never real; he always seeks for something other than the woman in her. This is why he is not attractive to women.

The sadist lives discontinuously in individual moments of time, *he never understands himself*. For him, every moment already has reality in itself, that is why he makes decisions easily, while the masochist can only act on the basis of everything. The masochist is never in a position to ask himself, "How could I ever have done that? I don't understand myself!" For the sadist, this is the customary orientation to his past, which still does not in the slightest on that account lose its reality as discrete points for him. The sadist has the finest capacity for perception and the best memory for every momentary *particular*; his senses are continually engaged because everything particular has reality for him. The masochist suffers from long pauses, which he cannot fill with any reality.

The masochist *suffers* from what is *unreal* to him as from guilt. That is why *he* feels embarrassed in front of women, the sadist never. He is passive toward women, as toward every sensation, which he can only make real for himself through association that in the end leads to concept formation. The sadist does not

make associations; he is breathless in face of a sensation, ready and willing to plunge himself into it completely, to be totally absorbed in a sensation.

The masochist can, therefore, never love a picture or a statue; here there is all too little reality (activity) for him. The sadist can very well love them; he is also, of course, *gallant*, and *gallantry* is primarily the *adornment of statues*, from which one later removes the ornaments, or which one smashes, when there is no more reality to be sucked from them.

The true concept of God is incomprehensible to the sadist; in art he is an over-sensitive person, constantly focussing everything, and unjustly, on a man, on a moment, on a situation. He can *tell stories*; the masochist never (not even jokes), because nothing particular is real enough for him to be able to be lovingly absorbed in it. To the masochist, the name, Napoleon, is a starting point from which he *distances* himself in order to think, and through thinking to comprehend him; for the sadist, all the *world* lies in such a name.

The masochist is thus helplessly weak in face of the sensible world; the sadist is strong in it. The masochist seeks to *assert* himself against appearance, against change; only he understands the concept of the *absolute* (of God, of the idea, of *meaning*). The sadist does not question things about their *meaning*. For him, “*Carpe diem!*” is his ego's command; change appears real to him. What surprises him about time is not change, but rather *duration* (“*aere perennius*”).¹³

Rhythm, which *attends* precisely to every *individual* note, every *individual* syllable, is sadistic; harmony is masochistic, as with truly melodious song (in which the individual notes do not emerge as such).

The mystic (whether a theosophist like Böhme, or a rationalist like Kant) is identical with the masochist¹⁴; the non-mystical person is the sadist. The Northerners are masochists (and the Jew as well); the Southerners are sadists. Among Germans and Greeks both are found, but masochism predominates. Venetian epigrams, Hermann and Dorothea (?) are sadistic; Iphigeneia, Tasso, Werther, Faust (for the most part – the Gretchen episode creates a partial exception) are masochistic. The author of *The Odyssey* was a sadist, although Circe, of course, is the masochistic ideal (i.e., the ideal of the masochist who does not *fight against* his

¹³ *Carpe diem!* = Seize the day! *Aere perennius* = for the ages, said of an immortal work of art. (sb)

¹⁴ Philosophers with sadistic (unmystical) inclinations are Descartes, Hume, Aristippus.

masochism, *but wants to retain his passivity in face of the individual thing*). Aeschylus, Richard Wagner, Dante, but above all Beethoven and Schumann are masochists: Verdi (likewise Mascagni, and Bizet) is more sadist, likewise all anacreonic poets and the French of the 17th and 18th centuries, as well as Titian, Paolo Veronese, Rubens and Raphael. Shakespeare has much of the sadist, but nevertheless is more the masochist. Towards women, however, he is masochistic without the sharp division of sexuality and love, as Goethe, Dante, Ibsen and Richard Wagner have it. The *most complete* masochism is in the first act of *Tristan and Isolde*; it is more limited in *Tannhäuser*, *Rienzi*, and *The Flying Dutchman*.

{Geometry corresponds to harmony, arithmetic to rhythm (addition of units of time?); this as a comment on the earlier remark.}

Criminals who commit great *individual* criminal actions are sadists; *criminals in the grand style*, who actually commit no individual, separate crime, *are masochists*. Napoleon was a *masochist*, not a sadist as is superficially believed; as proof take his relationship to Josephine and his enthusiasm for Werther, his relationship to astronomy and to God. The individual woman never possessed real existence for him.

The sadist, moreover, can be a thoroughly decent and *good* person.

The sex murder is perhaps a relief for the sadist, when the reality of the individual woman becomes *too* great. (??) Perhaps it does not have to be an act of revenge, as in Zola, at all.

Englishmen are all masochists, and perhaps that is why their wives are often so stunted in their womanhood.

There is something metaphysical contained in the words of Napoleon to his soldiers: "*Du haut de ces pyramides quarante siècles vous contemplent.*"¹⁵

The masochist is initially struck by similarity, the sadist by difference.

As early as childhood, clocks and calendars are the greatest enigma for the masochist, because time is always the chief problem for him.

The masochist can never lightly disregard something that has happened earlier, which the sadist continually does when the new moment promises more reality than the old.

The masochist takes everything as fate; the sadist loves to play fate. For masochists, the *idea* of fate is always especially contained in concrete *pain*; pain

¹⁵ "Forty centuries are watching you from the top of these pyramids." (sb)

has only as much reality for him as it has a share of this idea. So the sadist is the fate of the woman; the woman the fate of the masochist. "Woman" is sadistic (anyone with a *woman's* sensibility who is active); "Wife" is masochistic.

The relationship of the sadist to the masochist is the relationship of the present to eternity. The present is the one thing over which a person has *power*; whoever feels free in it will use it, like the sadist; whoever feels that he suffers in it, because it is not real for him, seeks to awaken it to eternity. The *ethical* striving of both may also be characterized this way: one wants to transform all eternity into present, the other, every present into eternity.

The same holds for space. The sadist believes in, and hopes for, happiness on earth; he is the man of "Tusculum", of "Sans-Souci". The masochist needs a heaven.

Remorse offends the sadist, and he holds it to be a weakness (*Carpe diem!*); the masochist is penetrated by its sublimity (Carlyle).

A person who commits suicide is almost always a sadist, because only he can both want to get out of a situation, and act; the masochist must first consult all eternity about whether he may, or must, kill himself.

The sadist seeks to help people (against their will, their constant disposition) to obtain (momentary) happiness or pain; he is grateful or revengeful.

In gratefulness and revengefulness there is always a *lack of compassion*, thoughtlessness towards our (timeless) fellow man; both are, like all immorality, boundary transgressions, i.e., functional connections with our fellow man.

Mental modesty, i.e., continuity which does not easily release a single mental content from the ego (cf. *Sex and Character*, 1st ed., p. 436 [E. 323-24, but part of the passage is not translated]), is *masochistic*.

*

Contemporary health care and therapy is immoral and therefore ineffective; it seeks to work from outside to inside, instead of from inside to outside. It corresponds to the *tattooing* of the criminal; he alters his outer appearance from outside, instead of by a change in his mind.¹⁶ Thus he actually denies his outer appearance, too, and therefore does not like to look in the mirror, because he hates *himself* (the intelligible being), without feeling any need to love himself. The

¹⁶ Weininger's association of the tattoo with the criminal was later developed by Adolf Loos in his celebrated essay, "Ornament and Crime". (sb)

criminal is pleased when others are scandalized by him (as every connection whatever to others, every influence upon them, every unsettling of their person through his own is agreeable to him).

Every sickness has mental causes, and each must be cured by the person himself, by means of his will; he himself must try to acknowledge it inwardly. *All sickness*¹⁷ is only the mental become unconscious, “gone into the body”; just as it is raised into consciousness, the sickness is cured.

In general, the criminal does not get sick; his original sin is of a different kind. If I were to seek to represent this really obviously to myself, it would go something like this: the criminal falls down from heaven to earth at the moment of the original sin, by turning his back on God; he falls to a place on which he can stand, and to which he has duly paid attention. The other, the sick person (neurasthenic, madman), plunges with eyes and countenance raised suppliantly to God, and without being conscious of, or attending to, where he might come to rest. If the ultimate danger of the latter is the plant, and that of the former the animal, then this harmonizes well: the plant grows from the centre of the earth straight up toward the sky; the animal's gaze is directed toward the earth. (The plant can never serve as an *anti-moral* symbol, as so many animals can).

*

Everyone can always conceive himself merely as quality; only through comparison with others does he draw nearer to *quantitative* considerations. Number and time.

*

A good musician is one whose melodies have, above all, *long breath*.

*

History and society: people who are in a room together always form a community against newcomers.

*

Gratitude and revengefulness are one and the same; a feeling of the single moment as *real* belongs to both. The sadist is grateful and revengeful; the masochist is not.

*

¹⁷ Not only hysteria.

When a woman, surprised in an unclothed condition, cries out, that is often only to be understood as her being afraid of not looking good enough that way.

*

Disharmony is a tragic element in music. Precisely the greatest works of art in the world (*Tristan and Isolde*) have this *tragic sharpness*, and are more than beautiful.

*

The good aphorist must be able to hate.

*

Many a person believes that he has become free of the one God, because he has pledged himself to several others.

*

Nothing is so often confused as obstinacy and energy – by the obstinate.

*

The mathematician is the opposite of the psychologist; he is the simple man, simple as space.

*

If the human being were not free, then he could not conceive of causality at all, and could not form any concept of it. *Insight into lawfulness is already freedom from it*, and the need for the (inner) miracle, the need for redemption, goes hand in hand with the strongest feeling for causal connection in the empirical world. Windelband (*Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, Vol. 1, 2nd ed., p. 346)¹⁸ finds it remarkable about Hume that “the man who regarded knowledge of causal relationships as thoroughly uncertain and, at the very most, probable¹⁹, defends it in a series of brilliant investigations in the psychology of the *will*.”²⁰

On deeper inspection this apparent contradiction becomes a necessity. Mach and Avenarius are also such strong determinists that the question of free will hardly seems to exist for them, and yet both deny causality. This is explained by the fact that only the person who is permeated by empirical lawfulness feels the need to be free from it. Causality is understood, recognized, and posited by freedom. The criminal does not acknowledge causality, he wants to break through it;

¹⁸ Wilhelm Windelband (History of Modern Philosophy). The citation is found on p. 334 in the 1st edition (1878). (sb)

¹⁹ In David Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, Vol. I, “Of the Understanding”. (sb)

²⁰ I.e., in Hume, op. cit., Vol. II, “Of the Passions”. (sb)

he wants to become suddenly free from, e.g., a hump, or a limp – that is how little he acknowledges facts (for this reason his sense of reality is limited as well). I believe Paul says: “It is an evil and criminal²¹ way that longs for signs.” That is perfectly right. Only the criminal awaits a miracle from outside; the moral person would be *ashamed* of a miracle from outside, because there he would surely be passive. All *bigots* are criminals.

*

Transcendentalism is identical with the thought that there is only one soul, and that individuation is merely appearance. *Here the monadological character of Kantian ethics flatly contradicts the “Critique of Pure Reason”.*

*

The question whether there is *one* soul, or several, may not be posed, because the relations of the noumena transcend numerical expression.

*

Aesthetic and mathematical element (theory of proportion) in justice.

*

Spiritualism and materialism are *one*, and are different phases through which the same person goes one after the other. The spiritual would lose all its dignity if it were to materialize.

*

To *understand* a person completely (Kant or Fechner), is to *master* him.

*

The masochist is attractive to the hysterical woman (the woman as plant), the sadist is attractive to the non-hysterical (the woman as animal).

*

The nagging woman is not, as I believed (*Sex and Character* [E. pp. 272-3]), the opposite of the hysteric, but the opposite of the *lady*.

*

Gentleman and lady belong together, just as henpecked husband and nag.

*

The need to be loved grows with the feeling of being *pursued*, and is proportional to it.

*

²¹ Reading *verbrecherische* for *ehebrecherische* (adulterous), following the 1st edition. (sb)

Where a man *steals*, a woman is merely *envious*.

*

Double concept of the miracle: There is either *one* miracle, which man *longs for* (which promises to bring redemption – need for the miracle as the need for redemption), or *many* miracles, that are confirmations of faith, confirmations so to speak of the laws of heaven, if not also of the laws of mathematical physics.

One should separate the two.

*

It also happens that someone impresses one because he stands far below one – when one does not *understand* him.

*

Three things constitute the philosopher, three elements must come together to produce him:

A mystic, (opposite: sadist)	a scientist, (opposite : artist)	a systematiser (opposite : experimenter)
The mystic + scientist	} only yields a theologian, a dogmatist of some belief or other	
The mystic + systematiser	} yields a theosophist, who simply follows his <i>individual</i> intuition, without seeking for proof or guarantee.	
The scientist + systematiser	} yields a theoretical physicist, biologist, etc.	

The mystic can be *unequivocally* defined by the problematisation of the absolute and nothingness. Most striking is the problematisation of time.

The scientist is defined in “Science and Culture” [i.e., Ch. 6, below]; he is the *transcendental* person (Kant as non-mystic), he seeks complete acceptance for everything he says, and refutation of all counter-possibilities.

The systematiser is the opposite of the technician and experimenter; there are theoreticians and technicians in every science. Thus in mathematics:

	(Technician)	(Theoretician)
	Euler	Riemann
in linguistics:	Pott	Humboldt
in physics:	Faraday	(Bopp) Maxwell

both in high measure: Helmholtz and Darwin, among others.

*

Age is death, youth is life. The greater a person is, the less he ages, and the less his will gets weaker with age.

However, there is no one besides Jesus Christ who would not have wanted less in his old age than in his youth. That is shown in the musically weak *Parsifal* (which is intellectually a fresher, more powerful conception than its musical achievement suggests; even though its themes, the grave and flower motifs, but also the holy communion and Parsifal motifs in the variation of Act III, belong among the greatest). It is shown above all by Ibsen, whose will has two culminating points, a highest, *Peer Gynt*, and a lower, *Rosmersholm*, but who otherwise moved in a steadily descending line; it is also shown by Beethoven, whose art attained its greatest height in the “Appassionata” and especially in the “Waldenstein Sonata” (third movement, where it almost approaches God), but then however diminished; the “Ninth” is not Beethoven's greatest work.

*

The criminal (as slave) often seeks a person of great perfection (and here, as a judge of people's imperfection, the criminal is much harsher than a good man), because he so wants to obtain *trust from outside* (not through an inner change of mind). If he believes he has found such a person, he gives himself up to him in the most complete slavery, and he searches in an *importunate* manner for people whom he could serve as a slave. He also wants to live as a slave so as never to be alone.

*

If a third person then enters the circle, the criminal is perplexed; for notoriously one cannot be a servant to two masters at the same time, but the criminal is a servant to every person (whether free or unfree) with whom he is together.

*

Problem of two people,

Problem of three people.

Crowd psychology begins with four.

Phenomena of “attitude”. One writes to every person differently, and often even in different handwriting.

*

The greater the *mercy* that a man receives from God, the greater the *sacrifice* that he will bring to God for it. Mercy and sacrifice were at their greatest in Jesus.

*

Evidence can only appeal to the ultimate laws of thought. These are immediately evident; this evidence is mercy.

*

Value : power = light : fire.

*

There are no degrees of truth, no degrees of morality.

Original sin occurs *continually*; the eternal and the temporal are there *beside* each other.

*

Distinction between *genesis* and *codification of superstition*. Code: farmer's almanac. Genesis: *guilt*.

*

The difference between the amoral (woman) and anti-moral (criminal), like their kinship, is that woman wants to be degraded, while the evil man degrades *himself*.

*

A person always achieves the deepest understanding of his self and his destiny only if he has become untrue to himself, if he has transgressed against his destiny (God), through *sin*. Perhaps *that is why* life on earth is necessary, so that God may find himself – *for consciousness is only possible through opposition*.

Note

An excursus appended to the earlier revision of *Sex and Character*, attempted to uncover morphological and parallel psychological analogies between the mouth and throat, and the anal-genital regions, and in addition to ascertain something about the prototype of the vertebrate animal.

It sought to ascertain what mouth and anus have in common, and tongue and sex organ, and to discover why sticking out the tongue is experienced as similar to

the displaying of the behind; why eating in front of others was regarded as shameless among some primitive peoples (as etiquette still forbids eating on the street today); which analogies exist between the genital and eating instincts; why the tongue-kiss is so closely related to ejaculation; why the thyroid gland (which has a rudimentarily developed excretory duct that ends at the root of the tongue) stands in such a remarkable relationship to the reproductive glands, why the *voice* is especially sexually stimulating, and is so strongly sexually differentiated.

The meaning of these things, their inner relatedness, is more or less conscious to the human being, to the microcosm; that is why he is ashamed of the inside of his mouth. In contrast, if the theory of evolution were correct, then the animals which are more closely related to the *Balanoglossus*²² (whose sexual parts still lie in the gill region), would have to feel more ashamed than the human.

*

There is a fear of open places²³ which is fear of light, and which is had by the person who feels himself to be guilty, who does not stand before God.

*

It is birdcalls which announce to the same person his certain fall into ruin. (*Peer Gynt*, Act 2 [scene 7]).

*

One does not find jackdaws, ravens – *black* birds – in open, well-lit places.

*

Whoever surrenders himself to the blaze of the sun *is himself the cypress*; it is plant-like passivity and “blissfulness as a gift”. (?)

²² One of the Acorn Worms (class *Enteropneusta*, phylum *Hemichordata*), soft-bodied invertebrates which vary in length from about 5cm. to nearly 2m., and which burrow into soft sand or mud. (sb)

²³ Agoraphobia. (sb)

Characterology

**(Containing: Seekers and Priests; On Friedrich Schiller;
Fragments on Richard Wagner and *Parsifal*)**

Seekers and Priests

People can be divided into *seekers* and *priests*, and there is much to be gained from this division. The seeker searches, the priest informs. The seeker searches above all *himself*, the priest reveals *himself* above all to others. The seeker searches his whole life long for himself, for his own soul; the priest's ego is given from the outset as a presupposition of everything else. The seeker is always accompanied by a feeling of imperfection; the priest is convinced of the existence of perfection.

The distinction I intend will perhaps be made clearest this way: *Only seekers are vain (and sensitive)*. For vanity arises from the need to *find*, and from the feeling that one has not yet found – not yet found oneself. The priest is not vain, he does not easily feel hurt, and has no need for external recognition, because this support is not necessary for him. On the other hand, he has a need for fame. The presupposition of the need for fame is his inner self-certainty; it is his nature to present his ego as perfect as possible to others, and thus to connect with them. *Fame* is thus related to *sacrifice*.

I will just cite four examples of seekers and of priests before I continue with my analysis.

Hebbel, Fichte¹, Brahms and Dürer were seekers. Shelley, Fechner, Handel and Böcklin were priests. What is common to seekers, as one can see, is *line without colour*; common to priests is *colour without line*.

I am thinking here of colour as a symbol of sensuousness. Sensuousness is what the priest descends to, while the seeker wants to ascend from it to spirituality. That is why the priest has a really strong relationship to *nature*; for the priest comes from the spirit and tries to bring the world in line with him. Everything should shine brightly, like the flame within himself. The seeker, on the other hand, much more than the priest, has a relationship to *society*. He socializes because he seeks himself in others. Only the seeker stands in a deep relationship to culture, to law, the state and morality. He is only really sensitive to one phenomenon in nature: to the forest, as a symbol of the *secret*.

¹ Fichte was a *preacher*. One should not confuse them with priests.

The priest has passed revelation, and daylight is within him. The seeker strives upward toward it, but he is still blind. The priest is already in *covenant* with the godhead; only he knows about mystical experience (extreme seekers, like Kant, or even better Fichte, do not know such things). The absolute, the divinity, is given to the priest as a precondition, as a *treasure* or as a pledge from on high; it is given to the seeker as a value, as a *goal*. The priest offers *himself* to the world, and proposes a covenant with it. The seeker flees the world, because he has not yet received consecration. Every seeker is by nature a *blasphemer*; the priest is the opposite of the blind, a person who *sees*, and who *blesses*. To the seeker, on the other hand, blessing is always incomprehensible.

Priests are often held to be the real *artists*, and men like Ibsen, who is close to being a seeker, and Hebbel, who is even closer, are held not to be genuine artists. This is totally wrong. We are deceived here by a false conception of the sensuous in art. Certainly Shakespeare was exclusively an artist, and yet he was surely much more seeker than priest. Of course, seeker and priest are extremes; the greatest people are both, most often seekers at first, so that they then can transform themselves into priests when they have found the source, have lived to see their self. Thus Goethe, thus Wagner. Goethe is a seeker in the original *Faust*, a priest in *Iphigenia*; Wagner is a seeker in *The Flying Dutchman* and in *Tannhäuser* (the Pilgrim Chorus gives a wonderful representation of seeking), but also in *Tristan*, particularly in the second Act – because the seeker is erotic, the priest sexual without particularly differentiating love from the sex-drive. Wagner is a priest as early as *Lohengrin* (his sense of festival and celebration is thoroughly priestly); but above all in the third Act of *Siegfried*, where the feeling for having found what you seek, the triumph of fulfilment, is so enormously great. For the priest need not be a peaceful, pastoral person; but as a fighter he only appreciates *victory*, not the exertion of the struggle, not the fear of defeat.

Nietzsche was a seeker for a long time: only as Zarathustra did he put on the priest's robe, and only then did there descend from the mountain those discourses which prove how much certainty he has gained from the transformation.² The *experiences* of the priest (as seer!) are *more intense* than those of the seeker; and that is why he is more sure of himself. He feels himself to be the chosen messen-

² Nietzsche's Zarathustra spent ten years in a cave on a mountain, seeking, before he descended to the level of humans to deliver his many discourses. (*Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Prologue.) (sb)

ger of the sun, moon and stars, and only listens in order to understand their language as fully as he feels it his duty.

It appears that Rousseau, Calderon, Sophocles and Mozart were seekers. Pindar appears to be a nearly perfect priest. Beethoven is a seeker in *Fidelio*, a priest in the *Waldstein Sonata*, whose final movement is the highest summit of Apollonian art.

Mind-body parallelism appears to be a priestly idea (for the priest comes from the spirit and wants to *absorb* nature; he acknowledges guilt before the court of nature, the seeker recognizes the court of the spirit). He is therefore a determinist as well, because for him freedom and lawfulness are one from the outset. The seeker is an indeterminist, and curses the body.

The seeker holds his tongue, he is reserved (not to be confused with being close-mouthed, i.e., the insincere and anti-social criminal). The priest is open, offers himself (not to be confused with shamelessness), because he does not seek, because he already embodies perfection and is only striving to interpret and express it completely.

*

On Friedrich Schiller

Unfortunately we put ourselves in bad company today if we touch on the reputation of this name, because the moderns³, who are childishly opposed to all the official greats in history, align themselves against him above all. Fear of this should not divert us into thinking of Schiller as a really significant person. He is no more than an extremely talented man, and the most industrious journalist the world had yet seen. This evaluation can be established in a few words; everything else can be looked up in Otto Ludwig's *Dramatischen Studien*.⁴

Schiller's one claim to greatness is that he completely destroyed tragedy. It has far from recovered. The heroes of his tragedies never show the slightest development. Only *Fiesco*, his best play (and doubtless because of that so ill-treated by the literary historians), and to a lesser extent his *The Maid of Orleans*, can

³ On Viennese "critical modernism", see Allan Janik, *Wittgenstein's Vienna Revisited*. (sb)

⁴ Otto Ludwig (1813-65), German dramatist, campaigned for Shakespeare, and against Schiller and Hebbel, in his *Dramatic Studies*. (sb)

be considered as exceptions.⁵ He, himself, is also completely without understanding for human *problems*; it so little occurs to him really seriously to make murder or love, vanity or the thirst for knowledge, ambition or the willingness to make sacrifices, the subject of a work, that on the contrary he always attributes the “greater half” of all guilt to “unlucky stars”. With that, the fate of his work is sealed, and the verdict on Schiller is delivered. The constellation of the stars is always accidental relative to human beings, and even in Schiller it can only appear in the most superficial relation to the action.

Chance is absolutely *un-tragic*, and chance is exactly what *comedy* is built on. Schiller needs all that battle-noise of his much-discussed heroes to drown out the recognition that *the most opposed things of all, fate and chance*, are being mixed up here. Is it not deplorable to let a Don Carlos be destroyed by a superior espionage system, or to let a Wallenstein be ruined by a minor and unrepeated offence (namely, that once, *all too clumsily*, he had used an ambitious soldier as a tool for his own plans)?⁶ This work is the Germans' greatest drama? Its mechanics are constructed from an exciting plot, as in all Schiller plays, and much diplomatic noise, but not from cosmic antitheses. There are no traces of *inner* struggle to be observed in Schiller's characters. They breathe a pretty suspicious objectivity, but it is not the naïveté of natural characters triply enlarged; it is rather the anaemia of flat shadows, as though they had received nothing from the life-blood of the author. *Schiller is fundamentally an epic poet and not a dramatist, or at least he lacks what the dramatist can take from the lyric poet: the subjectivity of the hero*. There is no struggle here between human grandeur and pettiness; here there is no battle between the world of the *mind* and the world of the *senses*. Basically it is the falsity and meanness of the *external world* to which the hero finally falls victim. Schiller even complains about this in his final work, *Tell*, which is simply wordy, and glorifies the vice of revengefulness: “The best cannot live in peace if it does not please the nasty neighbour.” Schiller hardly seems to have known the enemy in *one's own breast*, loneliness and its terrors, human fate. *The*

⁵ *Fiesco* (or *Fiesko*) was Schiller's second play, written in 1782. *The Maid of Orleans* is better known in English as *Joan of Arc*, e.g., in the translation by Robert David MacDonald, in *Schiller: Five Plays* (London: Absolute Classics, 1998). (sb)

⁶ *Don Carlos* (published in 1787) is perhaps best known in Giuseppe Verdi's operatic version. *Wallenstein, a Dramatic Poem* was written in 1798 and translated by Coleridge in 1800, but probably not produced in England until the Royal Shakespeare Company's production of the 1990s. (sb)

Bride from Messina badly mimicked *Oedipus Rex*. What makes the latter so great and all-surpassing is just that *chance is only the occasion of guilt*, something which the hero *spontaneously* accomplishes himself, it is the highest heroism of willing-not-to-be-exonerated, of disdaining every excuse.

By the way, do you not notice how thoroughly superficial, how un-metaphysical, Schiller's dramas are? – “But the poems!” someone will object; “are they not rather *too* philosophical?”

What is it then in the poems that so offends? It is what generally wounds us in Schiller, it is the pleasure he takes in the chorus, in the crowd; it is his modest joy in living just at the time in which he does live⁷; it is his willingness to limit himself to being contemporary, his contented pride in civilization. In fact, he actually founded the conceit of the Europeans, and the false enthusiasm of the philistines of progress – qualities whose most authentic representatives today are mostly Jews, even if they do disavow his name. What had *always* repelled profounder people from Schiller, and what always made Goethe keep his distance from him, despite Schiller's importunate advances and his desire to understand, is the *gratuitous optimism* of the man. It is not a transcendent, religious optimism, not one that yearns for a *break-out* out of *time*, nor one full of trust in God, but an *immanent, historical* optimism. It is an optimism that rejoices when humanity has become a thousand years older, and enthusiastically notes the number in his diary. It is an optimism that does not hope, but already has its hopes satisfied, because appearances are not for him a means of penetrating a symbolism, *but rather the symbols are just an aid to embellishing the appearances*. That is why Schiller is not truly yearning, but merely sentimental, when the appearance falls to match the idea.⁸

He is also the real creator of the *aestheticism* that has the most adherents among modern Jews. It flees from all depth, or else simulates depth in order to save appearances. Schiller is the eminently *unerotic* person; and no one is a poorer poet of the loner, no one so fully as he a poet of the family. Alongside the impressive technical routine of his works, it is this hypocritical gilding of philistinism that has contributed the most to his popularity; this artificially-refined con-

⁷ If it is not taken too literally, one has to agree with Hebbel: “Schiller is a by-product of the great French emperor.”

⁸ Sentimentality is rather more Jewish than womanly; it is the world-weariness of the hack journalist.

secration of everyday life (“*Die Glocke*”⁹) is the perspective from which he perceives all historical phenomena, in order to use them as background for the bourgeois idyll.

That is the only way the picture of Schiller can be completed. His philosophy is as monistic as his poems, his worldview is as untragic as his tragedies. He is a paradigm of those who believe that they have arrived at the ground of being merely because they have never discovered its abyss. Schiller's Kantianism is pure misunderstanding; he can easily make a joke of the concept of duty, and ridicule the Kantian ethic where it is most profound. The resignation of Kant's critique of reason is transformed by him into the spite of the immanent, and he shares this with the always positivistically inclined Jews. Not without reason he too was an anti-Semite.

I had good reason to call him a journalist. For he has consigned himself to journalism through his versatility, which lets him write like Goethe in *Wallensteins Lager*, a little later be romantic again, now Greek, now Shakespearean. Moreover, he modelled certain poems and much of *Tell*¹⁰ after Goethe's stories about Italy and Switzerland. That is the strongest evidence for my opinion that he did not compose out of his own experience, but lived vicariously by (cleverly and affectedly) intensifying what others had seen. However, what definitively stamps him as a journalist is the sentimentality that prattles about a tragic event when someone is run over on the road; and above all that bond with the day and the hour, that philistinism which feels itself most cosmically disposed when the turn of a century occurs. In hating Schiller, journalistic modernism only hates itself.

The thought content of Richard Wagner's works, and of his *Parsifal* in particular

Never before has an art been able so fully to captivate, and so completely to satisfy, the artistic demands of a time as Wagner's creations have. All efforts to bring about a new literature, or to found a new art, look contrived and false com-

⁹ “The Story of the Bell”, considered one of Schiller's minor poems. (sb)

¹⁰ *William Tell* (1804), was Schiller's last play. He died, at 45, in 1805. (sb)

pared to what we admire in his works. That so many people find this complete satisfaction only in Wagner, corresponds to the indubitable fact that there has never before been a person with such an enormously powerful need for *expression*. Beethoven is the one who comes closest to him in this regard, as Wagner himself always felt, and even he lags far behind. Just for that reason, however, nearly everyone finds in Wagner the closest thing to *fulfilment*; for he had the highest concept of art work that an artist has ever held, and placed the highest demands on himself that a creative person has ever dared. Thus everything he created from a certain point on (from *Lohengrin* through to *Parsifal*) breathes the same completeness, the same fulfilment; and the characteristic thing about the Wagnerian motifs is a maximum of musical *density*, if I may put it this way. They are never diluted, but always say *everything*. Wagner's motifs are characterized by the extreme succinctness, concentration and irresistibility of his melodies, by their great remoteness from any lack of oxygen, and by the opposite of any thinning of the atmosphere and absence of mass. This is especially so where he floats over mountain tops, is intoxicated by glaciers, and breathes that mountain air for which no one had a better sense than he. I understand too little of the theory of music to be able to indicate, in its terms, precisely why Wagner's melodies are so unique. Wagner's music is unique, however, precisely because it is more than mathematics, more than a language of space and time. Here the whole *physics* of the universe is *reabsorbed* in mathematics, or mathematics is made merely a means for physics. Wagner has the greatest sensitivity to nature that anyone has ever possessed; compared to his *Rhinegold*, even Goethe's "Lieder" about water fade to songs about mist, cloud and river. Beethoven, in the scherzo of the 9th Symphony (which Wagner completely misunderstood just because of this), may have revealed a deeper relationship to the stars than Wagner did in *Tannhäuser*; perhaps Schubert better understood the brook, and Weber the demonic spirit of the forest; but a feeling for nature of such intensity, of a range that commands the whole earth, everything on its surface, in its atmosphere, and in its interior, has not yet been realized in any other person to the extent that it is in Wagner.

However, I did not want to speak about why Wagnerian *music* surpasses the impressions made by all other art works, even Goethe's *Faust* and Beethoven's *Waldstein Sonata*, even Bach's *Preludes*, and even Michelangelo's "Jeremia".¹¹

¹¹ Weininger saw a full-sized copy of this painting while in Munich, in August, 1902. (sb)

What I seriously want to try to show – not because everything Wagner created appears extraordinary to me – is that Wagner's works are the world's greatest works of art because of the profundity of their conception.

The problems that he has chosen as his subject are the most enormous that any artist has chosen, more significant even than those of Aeschylus and Dante, than Goethe's, Ibsen's and Dostoyevsky's – to say nothing of the problems of Shakespeare.

*

Motifs of the Rhine-maidens:

The “Wagalaweia” motif is the playful innocence of paradise; perfectly *monistic*, before the Fall, unacquainted with dualism; it is monism without presuppositions, naive, concerned throughout only with itself, delighted with itself (Before the Fall = [before] Alberich's renunciation of love.)

Motif from *Götterdämmerung*, Act 3, beginning:¹²

Motif of absolute separation. Motif of complete detachment from the absolute, a coming to terms with loneliness as it were, and yet resignation. It is marvellous how past guilt is at the same time stated here as presence, as punishment – marvellous the relationship of time to the timeless.

Longing and will are no longer here; what has taken their place is complete reduction, complete resignation to original sin – painless and yet too-painful at the same time.

Motif at the conclusion of *Götterdämmerung*:

Acceptance of the prodigal son into the community, redemption from original sin and at the same time blissful, overflowing *amazement that the miracle is coming to pass* (the Ring returns to the Rhine-maidens, evil reverts to pleasure and the eternal smile; *for the smile may well be the strongest feeling about life (i.e., about all death) that sets in after death (i.e., in eternal life).*

*

The bass motif of the orchestra in *Tristan*, Act 3, after that terrible prostration before the beautiful, at the words: “And Kurwenal, tell me! Do you not see her?” etc., is the greatest motif of *death* that has ever been conceived. It contains the apparently active rejection of life, of freedom, which in reality is already pas-

¹² Here the whole Rhine-maiden scene is meant, in particular the passage of ascending thirds and sixths. (Note by the original editor, Moriz Rappaport.)

sive surrender and captivity; it is the will coming to terms with the instincts, capitulating to them. *It is the identification with one's own fate*, the point at which will turns into instinct, freedom turns into unfreedom, and connects itself to it, surrenders to it.

*

On *Parsifal*

The human being feels a deep guilt for all the immorality of the whole of nature and the whole of history; for world and human are reciprocal concepts. Everything bad in the world is only there through humans and with humans. This is the feeling that was liveliest in Jesus Christ, so lively that he wanted to atone for this guilt with his life, to absolve the world, and also wanted to suffer the punishment for all this guilt, his guilt. The feeling of universal responsibility was at its greatest in him, the feeling of wanting to carry the whole world: genius, will.

By redeeming the world from sin, Jesus just redeems himself, and only himself, from sin; that is the meaning of the words, “Redemption to the Redeemer”.¹³

In Bayreuth, *Parsifal* is performed *as if it were understood*; there, if you have luck with the singers, you can have a unique experience: a performance of a work of art that is not ruined by the acting.¹⁴ The after-effect of Richard Wagner is that strong, he knew how to impress so intensively on others what he wanted.

I found this production particularly magnificent in the second Act, in the scene between Kundry and Parsifal. What appealed to me so strongly about it was just the way the passion is muted, the colours are not heavy and yet are vivid, and the gestures are simpler, more sketched than mimed, without Othello-like caricature. This way the symbolic character of the whole stands out with deeper clarity.

I will be best understood, here, by someone who knows the paintings of Buonaventura Genelli (in Berlin and Munich).¹⁵ Kundry's long gown and train, the way her arms are uplifted and her body bent forward while pleading with Parsifal, remind one of those paintings. Where there could otherwise be so much room for passionate cries and movements, everything seems muffled, painted, like

¹³ These are the final words of *Parsifal*. In this section I shall sometimes add scene references to *Parsifal* in square brackets. (sb)

¹⁴ Weininger attended *Parsifal* in Bayreuth on 8 August, 1902, during his trip to Germany and Scandinavia. (sb)

¹⁵ Bonaventura Genelli (1798-1868), German painter, was known for the rhythmic grace of his human figures, and for his illustrations of the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Divine Comedy*. (sb)

a painting on a church window; the red burns and the green sparkles; and still one holds one's breath.

*

The orchestra – the purest of organs from the most blessed of heights, not from the depths.¹⁶ From where, asks the hearer, trembling? but ... where to?

*

In the morality of the man, sexual relations are experienced as sin (the wounding of Amfortas with the spear).

*

The woman has no more meaning if the man is chaste; so she fights against this. Imperceptibly, she arouses Parsifal's feeling for his mother (“then when she put her arm fiercely around you...”) [Kundry, in Act 2], and holds out to him something that Wagner formerly believed in, the possibility of the redemption of the man through love.

*

Kundry in *Parsifal* (it is “*longing*” that prevents him from approaching the Grail, i.e., the moral, the divine); that is “Kundry's curse” [end of Act 2].

*

All this sets Wagner high above Goethe, whose last word was just the one about “the eternal –feminine”, the redemption of the man through the woman.¹⁷

*

Indeed, Kundry should already have died in the second Act, because Parsifal resisted her.

*

The anointing of the feet by Mary Magdalene. Gospel of John 12: 3 ff. and 8: 3 ff.

*

Parsifal and Klingsor: the transsexual and the sexual in the man, divided between 2 persons.

*

¹⁶ One of Wagner's most notable innovations in the Bayreuth Festival Theatre was to place the orchestra almost completely *beneath* the stage. The music appears to come from anywhere *but* the pit. (sb)

¹⁷ I.e., the final sentence of *Faust*: “The eternal-feminine draws us upward.” (sb)

The woman as slave to the *sexual* in the man (Klingsor). Cf. *Sex and Character*.

*

Grail and spear are “*related*” like light and gravity, like Something and its mirror, Nothing. Nothingness is merely the *reflex* of something, and to take it for real is the original sin. This last identity, the not-being of nothingness, ultimately has to be acknowledged. The thing-in-itself is also the foundation of perception.

*

Klingsor does not want to conquer morality and claim it in battle, but to enforce it by emasculating himself (the criminal become ascetic), in order to.... He does not feel that he is prostituting the idea of morality when he wants to *possess* it, and enjoy possessing it, and then wants to go do some other pleasant thing; he does not know that morality is endless action, endless creation. The *wish* to be God is sacrilegious, but the will to become God, to be nothing but active, is uniquely good. Klingsor's wish is purely hedonistic; he wants to be God to have relief from his own temptations. Nevertheless, God is really perfect, but perfect because perfectly active, trampling down evil. Klingsor uses God as a means to an end, i.e., he brings him into time.

*

If you think of how you become most intensely conscious of yourself after sinning, you can grasp, as the meaning of original sin, that God needs the *mirror*, nothingness, in order to be conscious of himself.

Likewise, Parsifal finds the Grail (morality, conscience) at the moment when he kills (the swan).

*

“Goose-herd, seek you the goose”, [Gurnemanz, in Act 1] means *marry*, but then do not set the kingdom of God as your goal.

*

“Here time is turned to space” [Gurnemanz, in Act 1]: here we find, admittedly quite obscurely, space as symbol of perfection. For life on earth is related to life after death as time is to space.

*

The motif of the flower maidens is the *earnest prayer for existence*. The emerging of a Will-o'-the-wisp from nothingness, and its submerging.

Immoral forgetting: "What have I really forgotten, then?" [Parsifal, in Act 2]

*

Kundry's laughing is almost Jewish. *The metaphysical sin of the Jews is to smile at God.*

*

On Good Friday, the day of the absolution of the world, everything, on its own, comes together.

*

Kundry is a symbol of the merely sensual in nature, not of the moral; with her, nature is absolved: the human being as redeemer of herself is redeemer of the world.

*

All guilt as one's own; Parsifal (Christ) says [Act 3]:

"For what sin, what sacrilege,
Must guilt from eternity
Weigh down this foolish head!"

*

Fool¹⁸: Jesus' antipathy to the Jews becomes an antipathy to "cleverness", the elevation of simplicity.

*

The spear is a symbol of evil; Parsifal is not allowed to use it.

*

The world is nothing without humans; and the human is nothing without the world; there is no world in which there is no human being.

*

The faint residue of the sense of doom hanging over you (Artur Gerber's poem, "She sang"¹⁹) – that is what Kundry's cries are in Acts 1 and 2.

¹⁸ Parsifal is the "innocent fool", whose untutored virtue triumphs over the sophistication of Kundry and Klingsor. Compare the character of Siegfried in *The Ring of the Nibelung*. (sb)

¹⁹ Artur Gerber was one of Weininger's close friends. He talked him out of his suicidal depression one long night in 1902, and later deciphered and published Weininger's coded diary (*Taschenbuch*, 1921).

Here is a rough translation of his poem, which Weininger puts in a footnote. (sb)

She sang. (privately printed.)

She sang a song of the storm
Her eye glowed so darkly.
A song of the storm –
How it surged and roiled,
Grabbed hold of the oak with its talons,
Knocked her to the ground with manly might
And whirled on and blustered – and laughed!

She sang a song of the storm

This woman – the human woman, the prostitute (not the animal woman, the mother) – mildly *hates* men, but hates them nevertheless. That is why Kundry has a dull hatred for Amfortas, who complied with her wishes because he had her on his conscience.

*

Psychology of Sacrilege:

Alberich-Klingsor. –

Wotan-Amfortas.

Siegfried-Parsifal.

New interpretation of the meaning of the *Ring*: from the natural to the moral.

*

Her eye glowed so darkly.
A song of the storm –
Who in love's desire
Kissed the crag's pinnacle
Triflingly loosened her –
Knocked her into the abyss
.....
And darkly glowed her eye.

On the Unidirectionality of Time

**and its ethical significance, along with speculation
about time, space and the will in general**

Retrograde Motions

(From a non-mechanical standpoint)

(Originally conceived as an article for a journal)

People have perceived many symbols of a higher reality in geometrical forms. We may leave undecided the question whether the reason for this phenomenon simply lies in the fact that what we are rediscovering in them is an a priori function of our own intuition, and no less, therefore, than something which has the properties and the value of the a priori, as Kant taught, or whether, on the contrary, we are only discovering in their laws those of our own imagination, and thus something that is rather more suitable for stripping them of all transcendental symbolism. Neither of the two answers really settles the question simply and in general. The triangle, for example, has served for ages, and still does today, as a magical or mystical symbol in Theosophical doctrine, and often arouses an uncomfortable impression, almost fear, even in observers who do not know this tradition. The square has almost none of this quality.

Perhaps this is also connected with the remarkable role of the triad. Wundt, in his *Methodenlehre der historischen Wissenschaften*¹ (*Logik*, II/2, 2nd edition, Leipzig 1895), has compiled various theories that according to him can only be explained through their totally groundless and objectionable inclination towards trichotomy, which always betrays that reality is to be considered, and to be conquered, from the a priori standpoint of the triad. He cites the dialectical methods of Fichte and Hegel, Comte's "law" of religious, metaphysical and scientific human types², and next to them much else of very unequal significance. In an article published later ("Über naiven und kritischen Realismus"³, *Philosophische Studien*, 1897), he also mentions the vital-series theory of Avenarius, which he already recognizes by its trichotomy as a web of mythology – surely the worst thing the

¹ Wilhelm Wundt, *Doctrine of Method in the Historical Sciences*. (sb)

² "[E]ach branch of our knowledge passes successively through three different theoretical conditions: the theological, or fictitious; the metaphysical, or abstract; and the scientific, or positive." Auguste Comte, *Cours de Philosophie Positive* (1830-42), Ch. 1, as translated in *Auguste Comte and Positivism: the essential writings*, ed. Gertrud Lenzer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1975), p. 71. (sb)

³ On Naïve and Critical Realism. (sb)

non-metaphysician can encounter. There must be, despite Wundt, a deeper reason why the triad plays such a colossal role in fairy tales, myths and legends. (The 3 wishes, 3 companions, 3 verses of the mastersinger's song⁴, 3 movements in the sonata form, 3 times⁵, 3 norms, 3 fates, 3 graces, 3 rulers of the world (Zeus, Hades, Poseidon), 3 rulers of the underworld (in India, Vishnu, Indra, Shiva as the 3 gods), the trilogy form; cf., August Pott, "Zahlen von kosmischer Bedeutung"⁶, *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie*, Vol. XIV, 1883.) Seven, nine, twelve and thirteen are also treated with real distinction, and yet do not have this high degree of significance. How pitiful, on the other hand, is the equivalent feeling aroused in us by the numbers five and ten, despite their importance in the decimal system in which we continually do our calculating. How little depth we feel in these numbers – which nonetheless have been in use for thousands of years, and have had time enough to become biologically internalized in us. We can perceive them in our own extremities, the toes and fingers that we have in common with so many vertebrates, and which we likely have industriously used at least since we were apes, while there is no equivalent paradigm in empirical reality for the other numbers. It may be supposed that the deeper, unknown ground of the significance of the triad is identical with the cause of the three dimensions in space. Nevertheless, there seems to be a feeling underlying the claims of the trinity that it especially symbolizes the unity in the Absolute of opposites that are differentiated in Appearance (like love–hate, fear–faith, anxiety–hope, good–evil).

1 and 3 are related. The number three has a monistic character; through it the one, unity, is reaffirmed. That is why both are odd (not divisible by 2): because they are *unitary*.⁷

It will become clear later⁸ why I have lingered here so long. Now I want to examine more closely a related theme, which nevertheless does not appear to have been put to the question anywhere.

The *circle* has commonly been allotted an especially high dignity as the most perfect, symmetrical plane figure. The opinion that the circle is the only

⁴ E.g., in Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*, Act III. (sb)

⁵ I.e., past, present and future. (sb)

⁶ Numbers with Cosmic Significance. (sb)

⁷ The third speaker says the decisive, reconciling, final word; the third goddess who appeared to Paris is the really beautiful one, and so on.

⁸ P. 92.

form of motion worthy of noble objects, has existed for millennia, and is known to have hindered Copernicus from thinking of the movements of the planets around the sun as anything but circular. For him, as for all his predecessors, it was an axiom about which no doubt at all arose, that the planets must move in circles. This claim is obviously the basis for the exaltation of perfect, imperturbable symmetry, the feeling that is expressed in the world's most sublime verses, in the songs of the archangels in the Prologue to *Faust*. As Kepler's laws gained acceptance, people tried to refute the earlier, childish view by smiling at it.

Elliptical motion did not completely share with circular motion the solemnity of the law, the dignity of not being capricious, but on the other hand they do share the characteristic which will now be made the object of my critique.

Retrograde motion, of course, is the non-ethical motion κατ' ἐξοχήν.⁹ It is self-satisfied, it excludes striving, it continually repeats the same thing; morally considered it is worse than going backwards, which at least *always* wants to go further backwards, and at least *makes sense*. The ethical for Goethe, as for Kant, lies only in continued striving. How justified the arguments are that can be derived from this, the only free ethics, against any positive ethical evaluation of the motions of the planets, can easily be demonstrated with a few crude analogies. To go around in circles is senseless, aimless, anyone who pirouettes has a self-satisfied, ridiculously vain, vulgar nature. The dance is a female motion, and indeed is above all the movement of prostitution. One will find that the more a woman likes to dance, and the better she dances, the more of the prostitute she has in her.

Moreover, this is connected to the character of the Bavarian-Austrian tribe, particularly the Viennese. Their great inclination to dance-music is not an isolated trait, but is deeply grounded in their being. Circular motion takes up freedom and subordinates it to lawfulness; *repetition* of the same thing either looks ridiculous or feels uncomfortable (Robinson Crusoe). In ethics, the character of the Viennese is *fatalistic* ("Never mind, can't do anything about that."); fatalism translated to the intellectual is *indifferentism*; that is why the Viennese is apathetic, easy going. The *waltz* is *the* absolutely *fatalistic* music; but that is why it is, at the same time, the adequate musical expression of the orbit.

⁹ *Par excellence*. (sb)

The circle-game.¹⁰ Women always feel more attracted to it than men do. The male's aversion to the circle-game, and the peculiar anguish that it arouses in him, can assume a very high intensity. Very few men, when they are forced to return to their point of departure, will willingly go back by the same route that they followed on the way there – a phenomenon that absolutely belongs here. Only the unethically-inclined man will feel no reluctance in such a case. That is also why the thought of the wanderer strikes us so congenially; and that is why even the most superior *women* have no need to *travel*. All travel has an *indefinite longing*, a *metaphysical* motive, as its basis.

For the same reason it is anything but a satisfaction of the need for immortality to take the eternal return of the same in the way the Pythagorean and Indian teachings do (including the Cosmic Days of esoteric Buddhism¹¹), and as Nietzsche has again proclaimed. On the contrary, it is terrifying: for “the same” is a *doppelgänger*, though not in temporal co-existence, but only in *succession*. The will to (one's own) *value*, to the absolute, is indeed the source of the need for immortality. However, all striving after endless improvement is ridiculed by nothing so much as by the thought that every victory over imperfection brings us closer in time to a relapse into the greatest degree of imperfection.

This is also the reason why many people find so uncomfortable the feeling, *that a new situation is something they have already experienced before* (cf. the theory of fear). People have *absurdly* sought in this feeling the factual basis of the belief in immortality.¹² This inference is absurd for this feeling is full of fear, because in such moments we feel that we are fully *determined*, as though *bound* to a wheel (or on a cycloid). The feeling of immortality, on the contrary, *negates* exactly this determinism by whatever external cause; it posits and affirms the only thing that is *not* a function of time, namely, the thought of freedom, the conqueror of *fear*, the consciousness of immortality: *supreme self-confidence*.

No “*ens metaphysicum*”¹³ *wills* the revolving motion. The human being does not want immortality in freedom because a world process wants it; indeed, immortality is itself only, a part of freedom: *freedom from time* (not being condi-

¹⁰ In Vienna, “*Ringenspiel*” also means “carousel”, which could also be meant here. (sb)

¹¹ I have failed to find “Weltentage” in Buddhist literature, but Rudolph Steiner uses the term in this sense in his verses, “Calendar of the Soul”. See <www.steiner98.org>. (sb)

¹² Cf., *Sex and Character*. 1st ed., pp. 162, 517 [E. 128 (p. 517 is not translated)]

¹³ Metaphysical entity. (sb)

tioned by time). (Freedom, for its part, includes more; it is freedom from space, and freedom from matter.) Freedom is *negated* by a *law* of periodicity.

Fatalism, a person's refusal to set *freely* his own goals for himself, adopts the Viennese waltz as its symbol. Dance music encourages people to dismiss the ethical struggle; its effect is a feeling of being determined. That is why it is just as uncomfortable and offensive to the superior person as the discovery that he had gone around in a circle was to Robinson Crusoe.

Certainly there is also *periodicity* in a human life – not only for women but also for men.¹⁴ Here, however, it is never *exactly* the same state that returns. If we could see an ideal pendulum swinging in a vacuum, then, from the point-of-view of us, the observers, the state of furthest extension to the right of the point of equilibrium would, after one full oscillation, have recurred, in fact as *completely the same*. Indeed, we say that it is distinguished from the earlier state (only) by the period of one full oscillation. That is to say, however, that it is distinguished from the other because that one preceded it. Otherwise, what we have here is the complete doppelgänger effect of time. We have knowledge of that preceding state through our *memory*, which is the psychological instrument for the apprehension of time. Complete identity does exist, therefore; it is only the moments in time that differ. We see here that something is only suitable for *measuring time* if nothing temporal (i.e., changing through time) is attached to it. We use the fixed stars as the ultimate measure of time because we can make this assumption about them with even smaller errors than we can about any real pendulum.

Finally, circular motion is also ridiculous, in the way that everything merely empirical (i.e., *meaningless*) is – while everything *meaningful* is sublime.

This is also well connected to the fact that the circle and the ellipse, as closed figures, are not *beautiful*. The circular or elliptical *curve*, as ornamentation, can be beautiful; it does not signify, as the completed curve does, full satiation that cannot get hold of anything more, like the Midgard serpent¹⁵ that is coiled around the world. In the curve there is still something unfinished, something needing, and capable of, improvement; it still anticipates. That is why the ring is always a symbol of something immoral, or anti-moral: the magic circle enchants, it steals *freedom*; the wedding-ring confines and binds, it takes freedom and soli-

¹⁴ Cf., *Sex and Character*, 1st ed., pp. 64 f., 135 f [E. 54 f., 106 ff.].

¹⁵ Of Nordic mythology. (sb)

tude from two people and brings instead servitude and union. The ring of the Nibelung is the badge of radical evil, the will to power; and the magician's ring, once twisted around the finger, *confers* power.

Thus, because the planets move in circular paths, anyone who, with Kant, sees the ethical in progress and in struggle can only perceive in the planets something completely foreign to morality. Thus also, we do not find in them a worthy example for our existence as ethical beings. Indeed, our existence only acquires nobility when it is detached from all the particulars of visible nature. Thus, if the solar system had been specifically ethically conceived, then the path of a planet would never be allowed to turn back on itself. The moon also revolves around the earth just as the earth does around the sun, and there is certainly nothing at all ethical in this (as is proven by the moon's intimate relation to female physiology, and to the dog), And Saturn, which certainly stands in the closest relationship to humans of all the planets, plainly appears with its rings and moons as the summation of evil.

Perhaps there are heavenly bodies that do not perform any retrograde motion, which will destroy *astronomy*.¹⁶ Even if this critique of paths that turn back on themselves should be fully justified, the starred heaven that Kant set beside the moral law¹⁷ will not in any way now have to lose all its majesty in favor of the moral law. One should just not seek more in it than it really represents for us psychologically; it is the symbol of the *endlessness* of the universe, of which we only feel worthy in the moral law, and which alone is worthy of the moral law, and of the painless felicity of its light.

*

The Time Problem

All these phenomena of inclination and aversion, of affirmation and fear, find their recapitulation in the *unidirectionality of time*. This consists in the fact that the real present becomes the real past, but never becomes the real future: or, as one can also put it, that time only develops in such a way that the past grows

¹⁶ Spiral motion, however, Goethe notwithstanding, is also not an eminently ethical motion.

¹⁷ "Two matters fill me with ever renewed wonder: the starred heaven above me and the moral law within me." From the "Conclusion" of Kant's *Critique of Pure Practical Reason*, in Carl J. Friedrich's translation, *The Philosophy of Kant* (New York: Random House, 1949), xiv. (sb)

ever larger and the future ever smaller, never the other way around. Only the *ideal* present can become real future, in that when I *will* something, I *create* future.

People have thought a great deal about the unidirectionality of time, its advancing in only one sense, its non-reversibility, but so far have only brought to light nonsense.

The unidirectionality of time, together with the riddle of the world (the mystery of dualism), is the deepest problem in the universe, and it is not surprising that the world's most outstanding thinkers – Plato, Augustine, Kant, Schopenhauer – have kept completely silent about *it*, even in the places where they have dealt with time, itself. Yet Kant, above all, should not have kept silent, for if time is only an a priori form of intuition, without significance for things-in-themselves, then the mystery of a sense, a direction, of time remains more pressing than before. I can walk back and forth on a straight line; but time, though it is represented as a straight line, *lacks* this characteristic. However, the unidirectionality of time, i.e., that what is past never returns, is the ground of all those famous phenomena of opposition to retrograde and revolving forms of motion. This form of motion is, as proven, *unethical*.

Accordingly, the reason that time is unidirectional must lie in morality.

The contradiction in the Kantian system feels even more cutting; if time has a meaning, no matter how much it is a form of mere intuition (and it certainly is that), there must still be a connection between it and the intelligible, ethical basis of the world.

Many things indicate that the unidirectionality of time is an expression of the ethicality of life. *It is immoral to say the same thing twice*; at least it feels that way to the person who places the highest moral demands on himself, and knows that he is lost if he does not obey them.

Christ also felt this to be so; the most profound and at the same time the strongest moral command of the Gospels (even surpassing Kant in strength) is contained in the never-noticed words (Gospel of Matthew, 10: 19): ‘Care not what you will say when you are asked, but speak what the spirit has given to you.’ (Μὴ μεριμνήσητε πῶς ἢ τί λαλήσητε· δοθήσεται γὰρ ὑμῖν ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ τί λαλήσητε.)

For if I say what I intended to say then I erase the time that comes between the moment of reflection and the later moment of action. I perpetrate a lie against

the new moment by positing it as identical with the earlier one; and at the same time I am determined, because I have determined myself through an earlier moment, through empirical causality. I am no longer behaving *freely*, out of the totality of my ego, I am no longer seeking *anew* to find the right action; and I am, however, really a different person from the moment before, at least a *richer* one, and no longer completely identical with the earlier.

It is unethical to want to change the *past*; all *lying is falsification of history*. One falsifies one's own history first of all, and then that of others. It is unethical *not* to want to alter the *future*, not to want to make it different, better than the present, i.e., not to want to *create*. The categorical imperative could be formulated: *Will!* The phenomenon of regret connects the two (it is the real expression of the unidirectionality of time), it *affirms* past guilt, but as *past*, and *denies* it as *future*, i.e., it opposes it to the will to do better in the future.

The future is not yet true. The past is true. The lie is a *will to exert power over the past*, which can give it no freedom or existence, because the present is equally unfree, equally dead. Past and future meet one another in the present; the present is a person's *potential*. He *no longer* has power over the past, and none yet over the future. When eternity and the present have become one, then man has become God, and God is *all-powerful*.

The lie is therefore unethical; it is a *reversal* of time, in that the will to make changes extends itself to the past instead of to the future. However, all evil is a cancellation of the meaning of time, it is to renounce in despair giving a meaning to life.¹⁸

The will of a human being creates the future; he *anticipates* the future when he decides, and he takes time *back* when he regrets. In the human *will*, which is always a will to eternity, time is both *posited* and *denied at the same time*.

The unidirectionality of time is consequently identical with the fact that the human being is at bottom a being that wills. Time is the ego as will.

The fully realized ego would be God; will is the ego on the path to self-realization.

The will is something between not-being and being; its path leads from not-being to being (for all will is a will to freedom, to value, to the absolute, to being,

¹⁸ *Boredom* is an eminently unethical feeling, because it can only really be defined through its appearing to cancel the unidirectionality of time.

to the idea, to God. *Sex and Character*, 1st edition, p. 578 [E. not translated]). The reason why time is real is that *being* still is *not*, and *non-being* still is; the reason why it is unidirectional, and its deeper, more essential signification, is that *being will come to be*.

With this the questions raised have been answered.

The unidirectionality of time is consequently identical with the fact that *life* is not reversible, and the riddle of time is identical with the riddle of *life* (although not with the riddle of the world). *Life is not reversible*; there is no way back from death to birth. *The problem of the unidirectionality of time is the question of the meaning of life*.

This unidirectionality of time also contains the reason why our need for immortality only extends to the future (not back to life before we were born). Because of it, we have little interest in our state before birth, but a great deal in our state after death. If unidirectional time were not identical with the will, then the will could certainly work in reverse and alter the past. (In Nietzsche's words: "But what is the will's greatest sorrow? That it cannot impose anything on the past.") If the will *wanted* to, or *could*, alter the past, then the will would not be the will, and the law of identity would be violated, for just because it is will, there lies in it the gulf between past and future, and their eternal difference. The will is directed, and its direction is the meaning of time. The ego realizes itself as will, that is it lives and develops itself within the form of time; time is the form of inner intuition, as Kant taught.

The will wills the past as *past*, and only the criminal – who no longer wants to look to God, but sinks down – lies. i.e., *murders* the past. *The reversal of time is radical evil, and fear of this reversal is the fear of evil*.

The will posits time, and negates it. (That is why a person awakes when he wishes; a hypnotized person awakes when the hypnotist wishes.) The being of God and of nothingness, and dualism in the world, are most clearly expressed in the will. Thus the problem of the will is, and is identical with, the deepest problem of the world.

Psychologically, "time" is the time in which we live, and "the future" is the time which *we* are still to experience. Formal, transcendental time, however, does not cease with physical death, but extends beyond the individual. It is eternally posited precisely by those who have eternal life.

Why man is born only to die, why value (the ego) becomes will, why the absolute realises itself in him *in earthly life*, that is just the question *why* time is *unidirectional*; it is the question of the meaning of existence, and is to be answered not through the word but only through the deed. It is, however, identical with the question, with the meaning, of the unidirectionality of time.

“You only live once.” That applies not only to your whole life, but also to each single moment.

Because fear is the reverse of the will to value, it refers to what will happen, not to what has happened, although the reason for it is always to be sought in the past (just as with its opposite, *hope*). Fear is thus a good expression of the unidirectionality of time; the guilt from which it springs is time past; the punishment of which it is afraid is the time to come.

Faith, on the contrary, is concerned with the *timeless*. *Courage* and *faith* refer to the timeless; *hope* and *fear* refer to the unidirectionality of time (the only element of value they have, and which nevertheless is worthlessness itself).

The future is what is created through the will; only the one who wills has a future. *That is why a person lives only as long as he, in some way or other, still wills, wills* to ascend to value, as long as he is still between being and not-being. People die the moment they have fully developed. Either their will has arrived at the end, has become value, i.e., the person has become a god or an angel; or, when will (and hope) has come to the end and is thereby fully extinguished – a person who has no more will to value (and thus no more fear), dies likewise. *The perfect criminal cannot live as a human being* – for the *human* always has the possibility *to be*, so long as he lives. That is why the criminal who has become perfectly evil, *dies*; and *that is why it is also likely that he becomes an animal or a plant*, and why the Indians are right to be shy of all living things on that account.

Accordingly, this also determines the length of a person's life. Wagner had completed *Parsifal*, and no longer had the intention to create; what he really *wanted* to, he had been able to produce. Similarly, Goethe's most essential work was *Faust*, and he himself regarded as a gift the few days he lived after its completion. The anticipation of an extended future can also be called hope; *the human being lives as long as he hopes*.

The *gambler* is the person who has the most need of hope, because he suffers the most from fear. He is always a desperado.

It seems to me, on the other hand, that Rossini – I do not think that I am doing him an injustice – underwent a reverse process. Twice he made a great effort (*The Barber of Seville* and *William Tell*), but in the end, he ceased to will. As an old man, his appearance is of shameless, fleshy sensuality.

It is striking that female writers, artists, etc., do not *develop*; none strives for, and gradually comes closer to, an artistic ideal. Women do not develop because they have no will to value. This is the foundation of what I once (*Sex and Character*, 1st edition, p. 382 [E. 285]) all too sketchily maintained, *that for women time is not directed*.

If time is thus the ego as will, the question remains: what is space, the other form of appearance, and how do they both behave?

It is *motion* that provides the answer; in motion, space and time are united in a puzzling way. Time is the only manner in which space can be traversed; there is no action at a distance. It is also, however, the only form in which the ego (God in man) occurs.

Space is thus a projection of the ego (out of the realm of freedom into the realm of necessity). It contains, one beside the other, what can only be experienced temporally, one after the other. Space is symbolic of the completed ego, time of the willing ego. Therefore space appears to be sublime, time does not.

The ego, however, is the synthesis of the universe, the unity of all contradictions, and therefore – because the triad signifies synthesis and completion¹⁹ – it is the three dimensions of space.

That is why movement, the projection of the will, is a visible, bodily expression (muscle contraction), and Schopenhauer was somewhat justified to identify the two. Instinct presents only the appearance of the will in lower forms of life; thus the life of animals and plants is also still unidirectional, because they are merely symbolic for human life.

The will (the narrowness of consciousness) is the form of mental movement; the narrowness of consciousness, so long as it remains somewhat narrow, and has not reabsorbed all eternity into itself, *is* indeed the fact of time. Here I have presented as two facts, what is really one and the same.

That is why the *body* is *spatial*, and its axes correspond to the axes of space, because it is the projection, the appearance, of the ego.

¹⁹ The dialectical method. See especially p. 82 ff.

Just as in the realm of nature, so, too, in the realm of law, of *functionality*. Space, which is *qualitatively uniform throughout*, is what is traversed in time – in *motion*. Time, that is, is the *multiplicity of spatial points*. Thus, in the realm of the mind, in the realm of freedom, of no-longer-dependent-variables, the many discrete moments of an individual's life always contain the same, timeless ego. This is a person's character (only what was formerly in a more restricted consciousness is now in a more comprehensive consciousness). That the ego is thus contained in each moment of life is *identical* with the fact of freedom.

This double form of appearance of the ego as space and as time is the deepest reason why geometry can be expressed in arithmetic, and arithmetic in geometry (something that we have not yet fully understood, and which we join Zeno in wondering about); it is because space and time are just different appearances of *one and the same* thing.

Life is a kind of voyage through the space of the inner ego, naturally a voyage from a narrow homeland to the most comprehensive, free, overview of the universe. All parts of space are qualitatively indistinguishable; the whole person is (potentially) contained in every moment. Time is a multiplicity made up of many units; space is a *unity* composed of a multiplicity (symbolic of the unitary ego).

The unconscious is time, the two are *one fact*.

Melody corresponds to time (the individual notes constitute the rhythm); harmony corresponds to space (the geometrical relation of the frequencies; the harmony of the spheres). That is why the melody is represented as a line. Music is mathematics in the realm of freedom (*Sex and Character*, 1st edition, p. 326 [E. 245-6]).

Light – space (eye with *point* of focus)

Sound – time (sense of hearing without “place-markers”)

I return to my theme:

If a person were non-ethical, like circular motion, then tomorrow he could not see anything different from today, could not distinguish the new year from the old, and could not feel devalued or experience fear when he finds himself back where he was before, like Robinson Crusoe, or like a character of Tolstoy's (in his most outstanding story, “Master and Man”²⁰). No matter how much it may provoke

²⁰ First published in 1895, this story can be found in Leo Tolstoy, *Tolstoy's Short Fiction*, ed. Michael R. Katz (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1991). pp. 232-270. (sb)

a smile, when the philistine on New Year's Eve turns from the daily paper and begins to reflect on time, he at least has a certain cosmic feeling, a feeling for the past and the transitory that is contrasted with a future full of hope.

All revolving, however, is a suspension of time. It can only be recognized and assessed as a repetition through our merely *one*-directional intuition of time, which is the condition of all clarity and all *truth*. If it were otherwise, we would indeed have lost everything. While the earth that we inhabit continually revolves, the human being remains untouched by the cosmic dance. His mind is not mechanically coupled to the whole system; he looks out freely, and gives the spectacle its value, or takes it away.

*

Appendix

I still want to comment on two musical themes, which are related to this problem.

1. The melody of the shepherd in the third Act of *Tristan and Isolde* expresses *meaningless time, as though the future were not something opposed to the past*. It was Wagner's intention, too, that it designate *eternal sameness*.

2. The main motif of the *Appassionata*²¹ is the motif of the *human being* (as the being with the will to value); this is *the greatest motif between being and not-being*. The ascending section is love, the longing for value, for purity.

Its second, descending, *falling down* section expresses how every attempt to approach that value is beaten back, unsuccessful, and ill-fated – the perpetual fall back into the sensuous. All fate, everything that is unknown, everything that is before or after the present, *everything that a person has no power over*, is located in this second section.

The *triumphant* conclusion of the third movement conveys only the first section, and not the second; it conveys the successful approach to value, union with it.

That motif is the greatest motif of the unidirectionality of time.

*

²¹ Beethoven's piano sonata #23 in F minor, Op. 57. (sb)

Metaphysics

**(Containing the idea of a universal symbolism, animal psychology
{with a fairly complete psychology of the criminal} etc.)**

Metaphysics

What I want to expound here diverges from the usual notions of metaphysics. I am not going to investigate being and not-being, nor attempt to distinguish them from one another. Since Kant, it appears that that sort of investigation must be carried out not by the metaphysical method, but by the method of transcendental philosophy; through that method those investigations are guaranteed great strength, purity and reliability. Perhaps my introspective-psychological method also has a legitimate place alongside Kant's, provided that the psychologist himself is sufficiently profound; but metaphysics can no longer develop absolutely, the way a piece of music can.

What I have in mind could instead have been called *symbolism*, universal symbolism. For what is important to me is not the totality, but *the meaning of everything particular in the totality*. What I am aiming at is to uncover what the sea, what iron, what ants, what the Chinese mean, the *idea* which they represent. And to that extent this undertaking is the first of its kind. It should encompass the whole world, and try to lay bare, to clarify in the literal sense, the deeper meaning of things. That is why this metaphysics is not only metaphysics, but also metachemistry, metabiology, metamathematics, metapathology, metahistory, and so on. The undertaking is so vast, so immense, that in it an individual will be able to let all his abilities flourish without limit.

The fundamental thought and the presupposition of the book¹, the basis on which rests *all* that follows, is the theory of the human being as *microcosm*. Because the human being stands in relation to all the things in the world, so all those things surely must somehow exist in him. This thought about the microcosm is being taken seriously for the first time in this book: *according to it, the system of the world is identical with the system of humankind*. Every form of existence in nature corresponds to a characteristic in human beings, every possibility in humans corresponds to something in nature. Thus nature, everything sensible or due to the senses in nature, is *interpreted* through the *psychological* categories in humans, and is regarded only as a symbol for them.

¹ Weininger conceives the present chapter as the beginning of a book-length project. (sb)

Showing the epistemological justification of this undertaking would immediately lead to the most intricate and difficult problems; the undertaking itself will have to furnish, in the course of its development, cogent proofs of its worth and its well-foundedness. Only this much is to be noted in advance: the sense of the undertaking is entirely in harmony with the thesis of all philosophical idealism, that in the objects of the external world we only have appearances before us, and not “things in themselves”. That this sensible appearance is seen here as a symbol of mental² reality, a mental reality moreover which is *experience in humans*, that is indeed something which goes beyond the most general idealist view, and which especially runs counter to a teaching of the most complete idealist system, a teaching of Kant's. For a long time, if I may make a personal observation, I regarded the thought that mental phenomena are only appearances, just as physical phenomena are, as the greatest and most inspired thought of Kant's entire theoretical philosophy. Later, led above all by moral -theoretical considerations, I became more doubtful about this. The view which forms the basis of this book is that mental phenomena have more reality than physical phenomena, although for the time being I am unable systematically and methodically to give a complete justification or classification of this fundamental presupposition.

In what follows, the thoughts which I develop into such a *system of the world* are only few in number. However, they foreshadow at least the outline of the whole; and should I not get the chance to complete the structure myself, nevertheless I claim the credit, not only for the following details, but also for being the first to have conceived the structure.

The first thing which led me to reflection was the phenomenon of deep-sea life, about which I had heard and read a little (and which aroused in me the desire to study more about it in Naples itself).

The thought came to me (in the spring of 1902) that the *deep-sea* must stand in a relationship to *crime*, and I believe that in general I can still maintain that today. The deep-sea has no share of *light*, the greatest symbol of the highest life; and anything that chooses to stay there must also be afraid of light, i.e., be crimi-

² In this paragraph, and sometimes elsewhere, “*psychisch*” has been translated “mental” in order to preserve the philosophical sense of the mental/physical distinction. “Psychic” would have very wrong associations, although it would preserve the important connection with Weininger's “introspective-psycho logical method”. (sb)

nal. If the polyps and krakens are symbols at all, they can only be regarded as symbols of evil.

In the course of the following summer and autumn this developed ever more clearly into the plan for an undertaking of which I have so far been able to carry out only very few of the tasks which comprise it, a plan for an

Animal Psychology

understood in an entirely different sense than hitherto (Romanes³, Schneider).

The animal whose meaning became clearest to me is the *dog*. I do not know whether the dog is the *symbol of the criminal in general*, but it is the symbol of a criminal.

At this point an elucidation of the *essence of the criminal* is called for.

The criminal is the person who continually commits the original sin, and who *keeps on sinning without making any effort* to give it up. He is concerned with earthly comfort above all, and he is the only person who really does not feel unhappy – although in a deeper sense, and as his behaviour attests, he is surely the unhappiest of all.

The good person also falls, is born, but he then feels burdened with guilt for the rest of his life, and essentially has no cause for contentment or pride. He requires his whole life to struggle from unfreedom back to freedom; he gives this meaning to his life. The criminal, on the other hand, does not have this *will to value*; a continual disorganization takes place in him until his death, he falls to pieces and at the end he disintegrates into material atoms. He is the man who really *dies*. The criminal lives his entire life without real “unity of consciousness”, without a continuous, unitary ego that is always aware of whatever it is doing, and holds itself responsible for it all; the criminal *falls to pieces* (the crimes which he commits are the last means of *holding himself together*).

The criminal has no *will to value*, or what is the same thing, no *will*. He turns more and more towards nothingness, foundering in night and helplessness. The criminal *comes into existence* through an incomprehensible, spontaneous *re-*

³ George John Romanes (1848-94), biologist. Born in Canada, he was educated and worked in England. He wrote on Darwin and on theology, but was known to Weininger for his works on the evolution of intelligence in animals. We should understand that if Romanes was concerned with the psychology of *animals*, Weininger is concerned with the symbolism of animals in *human* psychology. (sb)

nunciation of individual *value*.⁴ Judgement is a phenomenon of the will; the criminal does not judge, does not care one way or another about knowledge, and he lacks an intellectual conscience, too. All judgement is evaluation. The criminal does not evaluate, he does not even evaluate himself, for he does not try to affirm an ego which would stand above his mental events; he is *not self-observing*, and *lives unconsciously*. Because he evaluates nothing, judges nothing, so too he does not evaluate himself or judge himself, he has given up the freedom of judgement. Every criminal therefore *expects* to hear his judgement, the judgement of himself, brought down *by someone else*. He accepts every external judgement, and does not mentally *revolt* even against the *death sentence*, for he has given up the higher life, and its standards for telling whether justice or injustice happens to him, or to anyone. He has an animal's fear when faced with immediate physical death, and will try to escape it, but not because he is convinced that his judge is unjust.

Because he has renounced all *willing* the criminal is always a fatalist, and the true fatalist is always a criminal (naturally often without knowing it; the criminal never *knows* that he is a criminal, he just dully feels it).

That is entirely consistent with the fact that the criminal awaits his judgement from elsewhere. It is the same thing for him to have renounced free will as to have renounced *autonomy*; he uses himself in either case as a means to an end. If he were to will, then he would not consider himself to be entirely bound by fate.

This fatalism of the criminal, however, is just a special case of the attitude described by what is from the standpoint of logic and epistemology the most general definition of evil: the constant drive towards, or subjection to, *absolute functionalism*. What is ethical is the will to freedom, and the will to freedom is free will; freedom can only be defined as independence from other variables, ceasing to be determined, the end of passivity, the beginning of activity and spontaneity. The criminal is the man who in general (and for himself *as well*) strives for and makes real the causal connection of all things. That is why he is so easily terrified by every violent noise and every glaring light. He no longer sees, no longer hears, no longer apperceives. He has no feeling for the place where he is standing, or for the time in which he finds himself; he lacks a sense for the spatio-temporal *present*, because he does not stand above it but is confined within it.

⁴ *As a result, he openly expects the death sentence*, and feels dully that he deserves it because he has willed himself to be *worthless*, i.e.. not to be an ontological entity.

As with things, so with people: he has functionally bound himself to them, *either as their “master” or as their servant*. For these are the two conceivable forms of functionalism: either you must change when I change, or I must change when you change. Just as he gives himself no *freedom*, the criminal gives no *freedom* to any other person, any other thing. (Compare the concept of “freedom of the object”, *Sex and Character*, 1st ed., pp. 248 f. [E. 192-4]; and the “free apprehension of a fellow-creature”, as against being influenced by his presence, pp. 268, 384 f. [E. 206-7, 284 f.]; on “overstepping limits” in general as the model of immorality towards others, pp. 296, 301 [E. 225, 229⁵].) The first is the model of the *despot*, the second the model of the slave. Naturally, the despot can with good reason be understood as a form of slave, and the slave as a form of despot. Indeed it must be so, for if $x = f(y)$, then $y = f(x)$ as well⁶. The presence of a fellow creature *compels* the despot to *conquer*, the slave to submit. Thus the despot is every bit as unfree as the slave; and the slave, who rushes to the man of might and forces himself upon him as a servant, is just as “mighty” as the despot.

This exit from the universal realm of freedom, this downfall into necessity, stipulates that the criminal is never *alone*, and at the same time is totally *unsocial*. The criminal continually *speaks* with others even when he seems to be *thinking to himself*.

When he is left alone, i.e., when the other person he was with leaves him, he feels weak and helpless (epilepsy). He is afraid of solitude; he avoids being alone with himself, because that would remind him of himself. He is glad when he escapes from himself, and his whole occupation is the passion to slip away from himself – which is essentially futile.

Because fear and loathing are identical, the criminal always not only fears but also *loathes himself*.

Thus the criminal either defends everything he does before others, or he accuses himself before them (the slave), or else he convicts them in thought, accuses them, defeats them (the power-hungry). However, he is never alone; he is always functionally connected to things and to people. But on that account he is also never part of a couple or a group, because he neither can nor will *comprehend* or

⁵ What appears to be the key passage, however, is omitted in the translation. (sb)

⁶ Of course these cannot be the same function in both cases. Weininger means that if x is a function of y , then y is also a function of x . In mathematical terms this is not true in general, but is true only of 'bijections', or one-one functions. I am grateful to Robert Bright for this clarification. (sb)

understand other minds, but is dependent on them. That is also why he always lies (for one never deceives *oneself*, but always *others*).

The criminal has taken on these dependencies. His whole inner life is a dissimulation before others, and higher life has died in him. He does not really feel guilty about this turning away from the highest life, from freedom, for he knows no real remorse, but is hardened and impenitent; insight and pity are inaccessible to him. Giving up his free self is expressed in him as hatred of everything which is still free. He would like to see eternal life and the Christ slain or expelled everywhere, just as he has slain or expelled them from himself. Thus he hates all representations of morality, innocence, goodness, saintliness, wisdom, perfection, soul, self-communion, conversion, remorse, life, indeed the mere *names* of them. Every criminal venture has his instinctive sympathy; even in fiction the criminal's hopes and fears lie with the scoundrel, with the murderer, with the conqueror. He welcomes every report of death and destruction and injury and disease, as well as all sensuality (including as a *special case* all coitus; with him, even pandering is subordinated to something higher, more universal; although womanliness makes up a constant part of the criminal, it does not exhaust him.⁷). On the other hand, the thought of Christ, and most of all the thought of God and the word God is repugnant to him. Even his desire for knowledge is not pure, hopeful, yearning, it is never directed against madness, never an inner necessity for self-preservation; but he wants to *compel* things, and that is why he also wants to know them. The idea that something should be impossible for him contradicts his spirit of absolute functionalism, which wants to link him to all things, and them to him. That is why he cannot tolerate the idea of barriers, of limits (including limits to knowledge). Here the crime grows into an enormity. His insights never emerge from the whole, nor are they syntheses from within, but always from without, for his psychic life itself is discontinuous and broken to pieces. Nevertheless he wants to comprehend the world, but he seeks to *replace God* by knowledge, rather than to approach him. He does not have immediate intuition, because he really does not live within the idea of the whole, but has turned away from precisely this. However, he wants to *fabricate* the genius which he lacks; mentally as well he wants

⁷ This is a reference to the central thesis of *Sex and Character*. The implication here is that were the criminal type more 'female', he would tend to pursue sensuality for its own sake; instead, he pursues it as a kind of destruction. (sb)

to conquer the world piece by piece (that is the model of the conqueror in science, the type: Bacon⁸).

The criminal *hates* it when this absolute functionalism is not yet established, as he hates (i.e., disavows) his own intelligible essence. Hate is the first step towards murder, as love is the begetter of life. Thus the *criminal hates* with a *passion* the thought of *immortality*, for immortality is a special case of *freedom*, namely freedom from *time*. (Two of the three Kantian ideas are identical, namely God and freedom; the third, immortality, is already contained in them.) The criminal's aspiration is *to leave nothing free*, neither himself nor anything else (crime is just as supra-individual, transcendental, as the law). And that is why he becomes a temple-violator, that is why he commits sacrilege. The meanest, commonest form of the need for connection (unfreedom) is the passion physically to soil things, and in this way to join oneself to them. The higher forms rise to destruction and demolition, *because all existence is still somehow or another free*. The last, desperate ambition of the criminal is finally what Ibsen has Emperor Julian cry out just before his death, “Maximos, *I want to destroy the world!*” For whatever still *is*, is a *refutation* of the criminal and his ambitions, a refutation of the criminal who *is* no more. I have defined crime very dryly as the impulse toward functionalism. I can express it more vividly: *it is the need to kill God*; it is supreme, universal *negation*.

The forms which crime adopts follow easily from this. From hatred comes murder, from negation comes destruction, as soon as the disposition is activated. Theft and robbery are demonstrations against the particularity of the owner and his right to property. *In the final analysis, killing is the hatred of immortality turned into action*. Murder is the last thing the criminal can do, his last means of affirming himself as a criminal. He kills God most when he kills a human being. But there are also other kinds of murder, which are in fact psychologically completely identical with the killing of humans: *e.g.*, the impulse to destroy a great, precious, celebrated *work of art*. That is exactly the same act of desperation as murder, the passion to disavow, to refute being, to justify non-being. When the criminal no longer knows up from down, then he tries to help himself through a final means, through murder. Murder is the act of the *weakest* of men.

⁸ Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam (1561-1626), English philosopher whose *The New Organon* Weininger will cite in chapter 6. (sb)

A surrogate for murder is coitus, and the murderer is only separated by a thin line from the *Don Juan*. The latter is inwardly just as *empty* and *despairing* as the murderer, and requires as support conquest through coitus. Copulating is all that certain men have to *fill up time* (by the way, these men exist perhaps only as possibilities in the genius). They thus displace God. *Although* they have lowered themselves, *nevertheless* they live and experience *pleasure*. As the murderer circles around the site of the crime because he *needs* the deed (he has long since lost the self-certain memory which could tell him that he is the one who did it), so must the Don Juan constantly have women in order not to become aware of *himself*. From Don Juan to murderer is, as I said, only a step. That the Don Juan seduces, that the murderer murders, is their only means of filling time (which has no more meaning for them, because they are no longer burdened with any past, and no longer want anything from the future). Thus by themselves they *manufacture* a present, they posit negation as affirmation. *Both* are surely in a certain sense directed against *boredom*.

The epileptic seizure, I conjecture, is linked to the momentary loss of the capacity for apperception. And if that means that crimes are often committed in an epileptic fit, then it doubtless ought to be expressed the other way around: the crimes are committed *against* the epileptic seizure whose threatening proximity is perceived. The seizures of the epileptic increase in the course of his life, becoming more and more terrible, and eventually he dies in a last, ghastly paroxysm. The most frightful helplessness is expressed in epilepsy, and the victim takes refuge from it in murder – and also often in cant and bigotry.

Otherwise: the criminal is thoroughly without inner *life*, he is as if *dead*. One murders himself first, before he murders another. That is also why he really knows neither *pleasure* nor *pain*.

I now turn at last to the theme:

The Dog

The eye of the dog irresistibly evokes the impression that the dog has *lost* something. It expresses (as does the dog's whole bearing) a certain puzzling relation to the *past*. What he has lost is the ego, self-worth, freedom.

The dog has a remarkably deep relation to *death*. Months before the dog became problematic for me, I was sitting at five o'clock one afternoon in a room of

the hotel in Munich where I was staying, and reflecting on various things. Suddenly I heard a dog *barking* in a most peculiar and piercing way that was new to me, and simultaneously I had the irresistible feeling that exactly at that moment someone *was dying*.

Months later, on the most dreadful night of my life. although I was not ill I was literally wrestling with death – for there is no spiritual death without physical death for great men, because life and death are for them the possibilities which confront one another most powerfully and intensively. Just as I was thinking of succumbing, I heard a dog bark three times in the same way as that time in Munich. This dog barked the whole night, but these three times were different. I noticed that at this moment I bit into the bed sheet with my teeth, like a dying man.

Other people must have had similar experiences. In the last verse of Heine's most important and beautiful poem, "The Pilgrimage to Kevlaar", as the mother of God, who releases us from life, approaches the sickbed, he writes:

"The hounds were baying so loudly."

I do not know whether Heine's idea was original or drawn from a folk-tale. If I am not mistaken, the dog plays a similar role somewhere in Maeterlinck, too.

For a short time before the night in question, I repeatedly had the same vision which (as one gathers from Faust) Goethe must have had several times, when I saw a *black* dog; a glare of fire seemed to accompany it.⁹

However, the dog's *barking* is decisive; it is the absolutely *negative* expressive movement. It proves that the dog is the symbol of the criminal. Although perhaps it did not become perfectly clear to him, Goethe felt this very distinctly. He has the devil choose the body of a hound. *While Faust is reading aloud from the Gospels, the hound barks more and more violently: hatred for Christ, for the good and true.*¹⁰

I should mention that I am not at all influenced by Goethe. The intensity of those impressions, emotions and thoughts was so great that I was reminded of *Faust*, searched out those passages, and now *fully understand* them for the first time (perhaps I am the first who ever has).

I now adduce further details:

⁹ In *Faust*, in the discussion with "Wagner" (Part I, "Outside the City Gate"), Faust points out a black dog, circling them, followed by an "eddy of fire". (sb)

¹⁰ *Faust*, Part I, "Faust's Study ii, Easter Night". (sb)

The dog behaves as though it felt its own worthlessness. It lets people beat it, and then right away *presses up* to them again, the way the evil person continually does to the good. The dog's importunity, its jumping up on people, is the functionalism of the slave. As a matter of fact, people who seek quick advantage for themselves, yet protect themselves against attack, people whom one cannot shake off, have dogs' faces and dogs' eyes. I mention here for the first time this important confirmation of my system of thought. There are few people who do not have one or more *animal faces*, and those animals which they look like, also resemble them in behaviour.

Fear of dogs is a problem; why is there no fear of the horse or the dove? It is fear of the criminal. The glare of fire which follows the black dog (perhaps the most ill-natured of all) is the fire, the destruction, the punishment, the fate of those who are evil.

The dog's tail-wagging signifies that it recognizes every other thing as more valuable than itself.

The dog's faithfulness, which is so praised and which allows many to consider the dog a moral animal, can justly be conceived only as a symbol of baseness: the *slave mentality* (there is no merit in coming back after a beating).

It is interesting whom the dog *barks at*. In general it barks at *good* people, not at mean, canine characters. I have observed of myself that the less psychic similarity I had with dogs the more they barked at me. The only remarkable thing is that it is precisely the criminal that the watch-dog is called upon to guard against.

Rabies is a very noteworthy phenomenon, perhaps related to *epilepsy*, in which humans also foam at the mouth. Both are promoted by heat.

When the dog does not wag its tail, but holds it rigid, then there is danger that it will bite. That is the criminal *act*; everything else, even the barking, is just a sign of evil disposition.

Dogs among the characters in literature include “old Ekdal” in Ibsen's *The Wild Duck*, and, the greatest, Minutte in Knut Hamsun's novel, *Mysteries*: Many of the so-called “old masters” portray the dog-type among human criminals.

But the *snake* and the *pig* demonstrate that there are still other criminals.

The *sniffing* of the dog is also very significant. It indicates an incapacity for apperception. Just like the dog's, the criminal's attention, too, is quite passively

attracted by individual objects, without his knowing why he approaches them or touches them; he simply has no freedom left.

The dog breeds with any bitch whatever, and this randomness also expresses that he has altogether given up choice. This indiscriminate mingling is above all eminently plebeian, and the dog is the *most plebeian* criminal: the slave.

I reiterate once again: it is *blindness* to view the dog as an ethical symbol. Even R. Wagner is said to have loved a dog (on this point Goethe seems to have been more profound). Darwin explained the dog's tail-wagging as "overflow of excitement" ("expression of emotion"). It is, of course, the expression of the worst meanness, of a devotion so servile that it is resigned to every kick, and just begs for more of everything.

The Horse

Even before I began to think as an animal psychologist about the horse, the horse's *head* had made a remarkable impression on me; it was an impression of unfreedom. At the same time I understood that this horse's head could have a *strange* effect. The horse's constant *nodding* is extremely puzzling. Without the same certainty I had about the dog, but nevertheless as an enlightening thought, the idea suddenly came to me that the horse represents *insanity*.

The alogical behaviour of the horse speaks in favour of this. Its nervousness and neurasthenia, which horse breeders complain and wonder about so much, are related to insanity.

Insanity, however, is the opposite of logic and epistemology (perhaps only of the latter?) Anyone who tries to find his way about in these disciplines is constantly at risk of insanity. Logical thought is problematic for him, and this is the direction in which *his* original sin is mainly to be sought. That is why the insane person has nothing of the criminal in him. People who live in fear of insanity do not know fear of the devil, and *vice versa*. The criminal or saint (as the criminal in reverse) has a moderately secure, shrewd ability to orient himself in thought, and does not have to undergo any struggles of "*intellectual conscience*".

Genius is either the *reverse* of perfect insanity, or the reverse of perfect criminality. Each genius lives in fear of one or the other. He must hold his own, at every moment of his life and most vigorously at the greatest moments, against one

of these two forms of nothingness; he must *set* himself against it. The ego, genius, *is* an *action* (“eternally young”), a perpetual *yes*!

People for whom the ethical is problematic, either fear the *lie*, or are given to lying; people for whom logic is problematic hate and fear *insanity*, or succumb to it. Now insanity always produces a strange look, and so the horse's skull looks strange, too.

I have also found a morphological approximation of the horse's head in various people who have a fear of insanity.

The dog *barks at the horse*, because the evil barks at the good.

The horse is also in other respects the opposite of the dog: it is *aristocratic* and very selective in the choice of sexual partners.

The existence of the nag, though, constitutes an objection to my hypothesis, just as the aristocratic dogs (St. Bernards, certain *Doggen*¹¹) seem to do.

Crime is directed against the sense of time; logic is timeless. Perhaps that is why the horse has no relation (not even the relation of loss) to past and future.

The aristocratic genius is strongly related to insanity (Nietzsche, even more Lenau); the plebeian genius has a strong relationship to crime (Beethoven, Knut Hamsun, Kleist).

A few general remarks

The men who created language were presented with impressions similar to those on the basis of which I am speaking here. People are called pigs, camels, apes, oxen, asses and dogs – and this shows that there exists the recognition that certain people *embody* special animal *possibilities*. On the other hand, animal fables endow each animal with a distinct character, but they assign no such character to humans. It is further significant that the characterological nomenclature uses all the animal names as insulting nicknames; it attributes to certain people mental similarity to animals.

These are anticipations, prehistoric anticipations, of my theory. An historical anticipation is found in the Platonic Forms, and in Plato's doctrine of the fate of humans after death: one takes on the body of a bird, another the body of something else, and so on. This doctrine has a great deal to be said for it. (As I developed these thoughts, however, the respective passages from Plato were still un-

¹¹ The breed which includes the Newfoundland, Great Dane, Mastiff and Bulldog. (sb)

known to me.) For people with an inclination to immorality take on these animal physiognomies more and more as they get older, the more they yield to this inclination.

According to language, then, each species of animal has a *single* human character common to all its members, but which among humans is possessed only by a certain few. (Leaving aside, though, the dogs. Pug and poodle, cur and whippet, are entirely distinct. Moreover, dogs present remarkable imitations of many other animals, of the lion, the bear, the badger, even the snake.)

In contrast to the animals, language does not attribute any character to plants. This is doubtless with reason, inasmuch as plants appear to have no *distinct drives and inclinations*. This is consistent with their immobility, for movement is the physical side of a drive.¹²

What prospects are opened by this animal psychology is most securely indicated by its remarkable agreement (which I did not at all seek out) with taxonomy. The dog, as criminal, is related to the wolf (the wolf is a symbol of *greed*, but perhaps also of something else), and the wolf is surely criminal. The horse is a symbol of insanity, the donkey of stupidity. (The donkey is above all wilful, obstinate and *self-satisfied* stupidity. It is the *caricature of piety*. Accordingly, this image, like piety, is also missing from the Jews. There is no Jewish donkey.)

Here, too, is a (non-evolutionary) explanation of the fact that monkeys and humans are similar to one another. Namely, the monkey is the *caricature of the microcosm*; it is the animal that imitates everything, and is necessarily like humans. *It shows the way in which a person can be everything*.

The extinct animals are like the extinct peoples, the giants, and the dwarves.

There are three cases, then, in which taxonomical relatedness also corresponds to psychological similarity and contiguity. The taxonomy of psychology (as characterology) is accordingly *identical* with the taxonomy of zoology.

The relationship of domestic animals to their wild forebears is noteworthy. E.g., dog : wolf = fly : gnat = pig : wild boar = cat : tiger.

I have found no solution to the question of what the distinction between domestic animals and wild forebears indicates. *But here a deep problem lies hidden*.

Many distinctions among women seem to be determinable according to birds:

¹² Indeed, plants also have no presentiment of death, do not fear and do not resist dying.

The goose, the dove, the hen, the parrot, the magpie, the crow, the duck – one finds them all represented, physiologically and characterologically, among human females. The males of these birds are henpecked husbands (with the exception of the rooster: parrot?).

On the other hand, cow, bitch, doe, gazelle, and cat are *mammals* whose types correspond more to human women.

Ox and sheep are again doubly related.

The way the snake *sheds its skin* is very strange and profoundly anti-moral. There is also a connection between the snake and the circle.

The relationship of dog and hare is connected to the relationship of dog and cat, in accordance with the similarity between cat and hare.

Hound and hare: the coward chases the coward.

Tomcats are frequently found among men, even with a predilection for cats among women (“*mon chat*”).

The *worm* and the *snake* are both related to the *hunch-backed* criminal. Piercing eyes of certain criminals: belong to the reptiles.

The bird is the envy of the tortoise (as of the introverted person who is converting into an extrovert but has not yet taken wing).

*

Plants

Here just the conjecture: if all the animals among humans are criminals, are there *plants* among humans, and what do they represent?

There are certainly plants among women: rose, tulip, lily, forget-me-not, not to forget the violet. But among men? *Does vegetative existence not correspond to neurasthenia?* Perhaps that would explain the neurasthenic's lack of *mobility*. The neurasthenic is *anaemic*, lack of centralization in the plant (no proper nervous system). Finally, the plant has no sense organs (lack of attentiveness in the neurasthenic).

*

Inorganic Nature

The light of the stars is a light that no longer *burns*.

The relationship to the starry heavens is thus *asexual* (Kant *vis-à-vis* Wagner), because the star is the angel, and the angel is without sexuality.

Flowers are doubtless all female. Trees are male. Accordingly, it is only in the *animal kingdom* that the females are less beautiful than the males (criminal's taste ... ??).

Light is the symbol of *consciousness*. Night (sleep) corresponds to the unconscious. There is a great deal of criminality in dreams.

Light does not *smoke*; all fire smokes (black, anti-moral; absolute nothingness; coal; diamond as antithesis, representative of the Something, perfectly transparent; transparency as moral symbol; significance of antithesis in psychology: coal–diamond).

Red is the colour of the lower life and its pleasure. (In plants, *green*, the colour of *static pleasure*, corresponds to red, the dynamic pleasure of animals; neurasthenics are anaemic, criminals polyaemic.) *Blue* is the colour of the joy and bliss of the highest life.

The red of hell is the antithesis of the blue of heaven.

It is deeply significant that *smoke hurts* the eye.

It is also deeply significant that blood contains *iron*. Life and murder: ὁ πρόσαξ ἰάσεται¹³ (Euripides, Telephos). “Only the spear that opened the wound can close it.” (Parsifal.)

The mountain is the symbol of the *giant*.

The river is the ego as time.

The sea is the ego as space.

The spring is birth, the sea a symbol for death as well as for life. The end of individuation can signify death, but first it can really signify life.

Apollonian : Dionysian = river : sea.

Rain *impregnates* (procreation), the *spring is the birth*.

Light is symbolic of *cognition*. *Light and sound are affirmations*; that is why both are always sure of having a *share* in *value*. On the other hand, darkness, like silence, leads to *fear*. The criminal who becomes afraid in the dark will be reminded without knowing it of the darkness which is in *him* (of the death of his soul). Consequently, at this moment, he is afraid of himself.

For the same reason, light at night-time (*fire is the night's light*) gives a different, more glaring, more sinister illumination than by day, and water gurgles differently, more noisily, more horribly in the night than in the quietest daytime.

¹³ He who has inflicted the wound will heal it. (sb)

(Being drowned in a flood is the correlate of the other, more usual, representation of the torment of hell: death by fire.)

And the tranquillity of midday, when all sounds grow fainter, is the uncanniness of (apparent) perfection, the desirelessness of (apparent) fulfilment. What corresponds to the hauntedness of midday (Pan) is perhaps the fear of complete mental clarity, of the solving of all problems (fear of the end of life: fear of the *atheistic solution*).

Fear of *white* (shroud) is also deep; this is likewise a false appearance of perfection.

*

Gravitation is the symbol of that which is without grace. No matter how high a man flings himself, without grace he will be pulled back down. (The fall of a star is the *fall* of man.)

Light is the symbol of *grace*. It is to the eye as God is to the believer. You cannot tell what *vision* should be credited to, whether it is due to light, or due to the eye.

Flying is not a complete, vertical conquest of gravitation.

Diseases are perhaps all just *poisonings*. The soul lacks the *courage* to lift the poison into the consciousness, and to struggle there to render it harmless. Therefore it goes on working in the body.

Gout is certainly that sort of poisoning. It may always be traced back to immoral sexuality.

Lameness, I daresay, is a cramp that has become permanent.

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Culture

and its Relation to Belief, Fear and Knowledge

Science and Culture

*Woe unto you lawyers! for ye have
taken away the key of knowledge; ye
entered not in yourselves, and them
that were entering in ye hindered*

Gospel of Luke 11:52.¹

The question to be investigated here is: where among the purposes of culture in general is the proper place of scientific knowledge? What is science, what can it be, and what should it be?

This task divides naturally into three parts: the first must be to try to investigate the essence of all science, the second the essence of all culture, and the third what is essential in their relationship.

I *The Essence of Science*

Science comes from knowledge.² The concept of knowledge, applied to the world, immediately yields the question: how much can mankind know?

The scientific enterprise contains the thought that mankind can know everything. It can, because it wants to. All or nothing, is a demand that may be impetuous and naive or uncompromising and methodical, made with childish daring or manly defiance; nevertheless, this demand is contained in the idea of science, as well as in all historical attempts to realize it in practice. That is also how Goethe posed the problem for Faust as an individual: to be able to know all, or nothing.

Science does not examine the concept of knowledge, and does not test it. It is science's presupposition, its precondition, which it must leave unquestioned. Science only inquires in order to affirm knowledge, not to put it in question. Socrates and Kant are not its men, for they have already paused at the question, what is knowledge? Science rushes ahead and its goal is already given, for it has an enemy, which is belief, taken in the broadest sense.

¹ Weininger quotes both the Greek text and Martin Luther's German translation. I have used the Authorized (King James) Version. (sb)

² *Wissenschaft* comes from *Wissen*. (sb)

A matter of fact can be affirmed in two ways, either through knowledge or through belief. If I make an affirmative judgement in the form of knowledge, I regard its content as independent of me. I place in nature, so to speak, a text that everyone ought to read in the same way. I posit a fact as something that is not conditional on my existence; I objectify something to which I, like others, will in future always have to defer, but which has no further need of us. On the other hand, when I *believe* something, I put my *personality* in the place of that objectivity, of that universally valid existence; through a free act I give my agreement to a possibility, I vouch for a problematic judgement. The certainty of something known is independent of my knowledge; the certainty of something believed is based on the fact that *I believe it*. A belief is nothing without the community that believes it. The certainty of my being healed through touching a relic exists because of my belief in this possibility. A man entirely stands and falls with his belief, depending on how much of *himself* he has invested in it. If he has put his whole self into it, then it is a matter of life and death.

Belief (πίστις) and conjecture (δόξα) are thus sharply distinguished. The *conjecture* of a man of science that something in his field will behave in a certain way, an *hypothesis*, does not absolutely dispense with proof. The clarification of the concept of belief is held up again and again, because conjecture is confused with belief, and clothed with the same name. Scientific probability has logical structure, belief is fully alogical, but the former is very often simply reduced to their common aspect – both are *not-knowledge* – and put on the same level as the latter. We ought only to be speaking about *the* belief as such which has nothing to do with probability, and not about something entirely different which is called by the same name. Belief proper does not require logic, *whereas at very bottom logic cannot dispense with belief*. The ultimate propositions of logic, the law of non-contradiction and the law of identity, cannot be *known*, but must be *believed*. Just as ethics presupposes a subject that *wills*, so too pure, formal logic, whose principles seem enthroned, proudly sublime and self-contained, above the heads of individuals, requires a subject that *believes*. We will be more inclined to agree that ethics must be chosen, that the moral maxim addresses itself to the will, that ethical value only makes its appearance with the demand for the will's *creation*, than that the theoretical principles of logic must be tied to the assent of the individual. Nevertheless that is the case. Logic is addressed to the autonomous individual as a

second categorical imperative which demands unconditional obedience, and whose source is just as much to be sought in our intelligible essence as is that of the other imperative, which Kant erroneously considered to be unique – doubtless because at bottom both are one. It gives the appearance of not being so. This appearance arises because ethics desires a practical embodiment *in time*, while logic, so to speak, is *before all time*. Ethics says what ought to be, logic says what is, *that something is*, that certain propositions have validity. Thus ethics gives to human birth a meaning relative to death; logic relieves human death³ of its meaninglessness in that from birth on it denies that *everything* will be forfeit to it.

If, rather than acknowledging the proposition $A = A$, I wanted to attempt to refute it, in so doing I would have to make use of logic, i.e., of exactly this proposition. If at some point I did not comply with it, that would mean that my deduction was false. The proposition itself is thus the criterion of truth and falsity, and from the start it is the measure of my deduction, the standard which I work from as soon as I begin to deduce. Therefore, I can at most reject all inferences, and abstain from judgement. Whether I undertook to refute the proposition, or to prove it, in both cases it would already be *presupposed* in the argumentation, in both cases I would have obtained the result *by fraud*. The proposition thus remains a *thesis* that can neither be proven nor disproven. I can trouble myself about it, but am not *logically* obliged to, for logic culminates precisely in the content of this proposition (and its other two forms of expression, the laws of non-contradiction and excluded middle⁴, the relative advantages of which, greater or lesser, will not be gone into here). That I cannot escape from this proposition may be of interest to pathological psychology, but it is of no significance for the explanation of the proposition; I cannot escape from various other things, either, e.g., from myself. *Thus logic cannot be proven, cannot be derived from something else: Q.E.D.*

Accordingly, I can acknowledge logic only out of free will, since I *posit* thereby the absolute standard. The proposition $A = A$ is *the* ultimate thesis. The fact of the standard, i.e., that there *is* a standard, is *my free act*. If the law of identity were deduced from a higher proposition, then the same would hold for it, and

³ Reading “*Sterben*” with the Matthes & Seitz edition, where the original editions have “*Streben*” (striving). (sb)

⁴ I.e., “not both A and not-A” and “either A or not-A”, respectively. (sb)

so on. It is really not in any other way compatible with the *freedom* of the subject as noumenon; logic *cannot* give the subject any rules by which he *must* be bound. He is able to acknowledge logic, because independently, in an act of supreme spontaneity, he makes it the standard of his own thinking; but logic cannot compel him to do so. Whether I *posit* logic, and make it the arbiter of all my future thinking, or renounce it, in both cases I act *freely*. He who renounces logic, renounces thinking. He who renounces thinking, surrenders of his own free will to arbitrariness. Logic, too, he posits of his own free will, but the person *binds* himself *freely* to logic. The logical standard is a “law of freedom” no less than a moral duty which, as Kant conceived it, is among the laws, “which say *what ought to happen* – although perhaps it never does happen – therein differing from *laws of nature*, which relate only to *that which happens*. These laws are therefore to be entitled practical laws.” (*Critique of Pure Reason*, Canon of Pure Reason, first section.)⁵

That shows that logic, too, addresses itself to a *free* being, with the claim that he make it a binding maxim of his thinking, just as Kant's categorical imperative demands to be made the sole, unconditioned maxim of action. This demonstration that logic is a spontaneous commitment of the intelligible subject is offered as a completion of the Kantian philosophy.

One should, therefore, not misunderstand the intention of this investigation. Nothing is further from it than to raise even the slightest doubt about the absolute logicity of the universe. It is just as much permeated by its logicity as it is by its absolute ethicality. What I want to stress is that neither can be *known*, but only *believed*.⁶ The situations of logic and ethics are exactly the same. It cannot be *proven* that people *ought* to do the good, for if that could be deduced, then the idea of the good would be the consequence of a cause, and thus could become the means to an end. If it ought to be done, then in order to be done for its own sake the good must be identical to that which absolutely cannot be the consequence of a cause, or the means to an end. But equally, I cannot prove why the true is to be chosen before the false; truth cannot justify its claim against falsity, against insanity and deceit, any more than Kant was able to make the good more plausible in

⁵ A802/B830. I have quoted the Norman Kemp-Smith translation, (London: Macmillan, 1964), p. 634. (sb)

⁶ Kant used the word conviction for this sense of belief. “The subjective sufficiency is termed *conviction* (for myself), the objective sufficiency is termed *certainty* (for everyone).” (Ibid., p. 646.)

the chapter of his philosophy of religion that deals with “The Legal Claim of the Good Principle over the Evil”.⁷ One does not argue against the devil. One stands firm against him, or one forfeits to him.

The profound justification of the profoundest Christian idea, the idea of *grace*, is located here. The person who does *not* posit logic or posit ethics, to whom it is not as clear as day that good is to be chosen before evil, who does not at this point single-mindedly choose, and absolutely unequivocally make up his mind, who does not *want* to stand firm against the devil, and doubts whether one *ought* to, that person does not partake of one thing: *grace*. The dove has not descended upon him; he is not filled with that holy spirit which *seizes* the good and true.

Perhaps we also now understand that oft-quoted line of Spinoza's: “*Sane sicut lux se ipsam et tenebras manifestat, sic veritas norma sui et falsi est.*”⁸ (*Ethics*, Part II, prop. 43, cor.) If I give up the idea of truth, I also give up the measure by which I can determine that something is false; where there no longer is law, there is nothing but arbitrariness. Neither can the idea of truth be demonstrated; for if it were to be demonstrated, then I might have wanted the truth for the sake of something else. Likewise my own existence, the “I”, if it is to have *value*, *cannot* be proven; and likewise the “you”, when it is not the consequence of a reason and is not to be used as the means to an end, cannot be demonstrated. *The refutability of solipsism* is no more *compatible* with *ethics*, than is the possibility of *proving* the existence of one's own ego. It is therefore contained in the idea of the self that neither one's own self nor that of another can be demonstrated. If it were deducible, it would not be ultimate. Refutations of the thesis of solipsism are constantly being sought; not one year of the last twenty has passed without bringing at least one attempt at its refutation. Obviously people do not understand at all the pathos that underlies the sentence, “The world is *my* representation.” It means, *something will be altered when I do not exist. I become substance*, and “*duae ejusdem naturae substantiae non dantur*”.⁹ (Spinoza, *Ethics* II, 10, cor.) To recoil

⁷ Weininger misquotes the title of Book II, Section i: “Concerning the Legal Claim of the Good Principle to Sovereignty over Man”. See Kant's *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*, translated by, T. H. Greene and H. H. Hudson (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court Publishing, 1934). (sb)

⁸ Just as light reveals both itself and the darkness, so truth is the standard of itself and of the false. (In fact the line is in the Note, not in a Corollary) (sb)

⁹ There are not two substances of the same nature. (In fact this phrase is in the Note, not the Corollary.) (sb)

from solipsism is to be incapable of independently giving value to existence, to be incapable of rich solitude, it is to need to hide in the crowd, to *disappear* into a throng, to *perish*. It is craven.

Logic and ethics *both* lead to the idea of the ultimate end of ends and the ultimate reason of reasons, to the idea of the absolute or the godhead, and it was one-sided of Plato and Kant to base the idea of God solely on ethics, to infer it solely from the *moral* region of religious conceptions. The idea of that which is not determined through another thing, i.e., which is free, and thus which also cannot be the means to another end, i.e., which is itself the supreme end and the absolute cause, simultaneously constitutes the idea of a supreme being, the idea of the subject raised to the highest power, the idea of the one in whom value and reality fully coincide, in which ontological and phenomenal reality have become one. The idea of God is the idea of the thing-in-itself, but it is also the idea of a *world-soul*. A refutation of the proof of God's existence, however ingenious, is superfluous, for it is part of the idea of a supreme being that it cannot be further demonstrated. And the admonition of the religions not to tempt God, however profound, is contradictory in itself, for he who tempts God, i.e., uses him as a means to an end, cannot partake of that which, according to its definition, cannot become a means to an end. If he knows God, then he will not tempt him; and he who tempts him, knows him not.

Someone who demands a miracle before he will believe, demands something contradictory in itself: reasons for the ultimate reason. He is foolish and blind, but he is also evil, for he tempts God, he uses him as a means to the end of believing in him. Goethe *intentionally* said about that, not, "Faith is the miracle's favourite child," but, "The miracle is faith's favourite child". A miracle can only be the result of *faith*; faith works miracles *every time*, but miracles never produce faith (except in women). The miracle demanded by the unbeliever in order that he believe, is his ultimate immorality, for he thus demands to be *forced* into belief from the outside; this is the crudest mockery of the idea of grace, and a misunderstanding that is often met with (especially in Jews). Gifts from God are not gifts that make humans passive, unfree; it is a matter of the gift of freedom itself.

We have quickly climbed up the highest conceivable peak that it was possible for our investigation to ascend. If we return with cleansed perception to our starting point, then we will discover that the most important result of our investi-

gation is this: all *knowledge* rests on *belief*. This is by no means just to warm up again the shallow cliché, as trivial as it is radically false and groundless, that *truth* is merely a high degree of *probability*. Rather, the understanding we have gained is that *knowledge* rests on the application of logic to concrete contents, but that logic itself can only be *believed*. *Religion can dispense with knowledge, but knowledge cannot dispense with belief, with religion*. One cannot, by means of the dialectical method, deduce the whole world from the thesis $A = A$, as Fichte wanted to (in a unique undertaking of such *apparent* abstraction that it is tremendously daring); but the principle $A = A$ is posited in the *first* principle, in the metaphysical *positing* that *something is*, in the human's free positing (in the act that is called *religion*) of an existing perfection, a supreme good. *Religion is the renewal of the world through the deed*, since it is through religion that the world is first considered from the standpoint of an absolute value and goal, and thus is stripped of "approximateness", religion is the repeated renewal and highest affirmation of the world through the individual's free choice, which *gives* a meaning to the whole by virtue of supreme spontaneity; religion is the decision of a human being to have a purpose and to fulfil this purpose. *God is the purpose of the human being, and religion is the will of man to be God*. Religion is the free positing of the realm of freedom, of the absolute; it is the re-creation of the universe, the positing of *something* to oppose nothingness. Thus the right of belief is safeguarded *vis-à-vis* knowledge, as whose presupposition it has revealed itself to us. While belief always leads to the absolute something, unbelief always leads to nothingness. Unbelief affirms no $\text{o}\nu\tau\omega\varsigma\ \text{o}\nu$, no supreme value as a metaphysical entity, and therefore in theory becomes *nihilism* (relativism, or scepticism, which today, in a remarkably and significantly businesslike inversion, is usually called positivism), and in practice becomes *indifferentism*. These are differentiated according to whether they oppose belief in logic or belief in ethics. Without the idea of truth, one arrives theoretically at *agnosticism* or *phenomenalism* which have no place for the concept of truth – and in practice at *illusionism*, which approaches reality as unselectively as a sleeper approaches the dream images that pass before his merely passive mind. Without the idea of goodness, there remains in theory only *determinism*, which no longer lets the individual value anything because it no longer attributes goodness to anything: and in practice *fatalism*, which has renounced every desire because it has given up the object of every desire.

In view of the indescribably low level of today's controversy about “science without presuppositions”, let me repeat: there is only *free belief in logic*, as there is only *free will in ethics*. Religion is the ultimate in both cases. The only *prerequisite* of knowledge is *logic*, and the only prerequisite of the *will to know* is the idea of *truth*; but in these I can only *have faith*. *Belief* is the constant presupposition of science, whether conscious or unconscious; it is immanent from the very outset in every scientific undertaking. The desire to demonstrate the idea of the good-and-the-true, the existence of a supremely essential value and a supremely perfect being, the existence of God, is practically a *contradictio in adjecto*.¹⁰ It lies in the very concept of God that it cannot be proven, but only believed. Thus there is no higher tribunal before which logic and ethics have to stand and defend themselves; I can give no further foundation for these two laws. Consider Pascal's desperate claim (*Pensées* 2, 17, 107), that one must accept an absolute standard even if one does not know whether it exists, because this is the only way one can be sure not to be wrong *if* it does exist. To this argument from terrible doubt I would like to oppose a different one: *If I am to have value, then God must exist*. If God does not exist, then the problem of value has no more relevance for my life, for then I am nothing, and I do not even have a reason for humility, for that, too, then just presents me with my worthlessness *in the face of* value. *God* must exist for me to *be*; I *am* only insofar as I *am God*.

The most profound minds have always recognized that the essence of the concept of God, and its meaning for humans, is that God is the perfected human being, and the perfected human, like Jesus Christ, is God, and that belief in God is just the highest form of belief in oneself. Lesser minds, to be sure, have never quite grasped this. It is, however, the greatest conceivable misunderstanding of the idea of God, and applicable only to the Jewish concept of God, to say with Schopenhauer (*New Paralipomena*, § 395): “As soon as God is posited, I am nothing”, or with Nietzsche (*Thus Spake Zarathustra*: “But friends, to tell you what I really think: if there were a God, how could I bear not being one? *Therefore* there is no God.” The ego is not diminished but enhanced through any true faith. – –

Accordingly, the belief which science aims to eliminate proves to be its very foundation. Granted, every extremely scientific age has produced people who

¹⁰ Contradiction in terms. (sb)

have sought to deny the idea of truth itself. The *exaggeration* of the demands of *knowledge* leads to its *negation*, while logic, its *prerequisite*, is cast into doubt as being unknowable.

What corresponds to belief is *doubt* (in practical terms, *despair*); the correlate of the idea of knowledge is the *question*. Doubt, which is just as individual as belief, has, so far as concrete content is concerned, no place in science. The *belief found in science* is the belief in *formal* logic.

Distinguishing between belief (πίστις) and knowledge (γνώσις), the battle about whether a judgement can be known and not merely believed, has played a famous role in the history of philosophy (Hume-Kant), and even today occupies a very big place in the many controversies about the theory of judgement. If scientific conjecture and mathematical probability are, in accordance with their psychological character, excluded from the sphere of belief, then the following seems to me certain: In belief, provability and deducibility are renounced, and so is making the object generally evident or plausible; all demonstrability is renounced. Belief involves a gift on my part; I give the judgement in which I believe something of me, I give *myself* to it.¹¹ The object of belief stands outside of logic, which itself can only be believed. That is why I can believe what is “absurd”, but cannot know it. The *knower* lets himself as subject face an object, and yet completely detaches the former from the latter, which belongs to the world of reality that exists independently of himself and every other subject. *The believer, at bottom, can only believe in himself*. Kant's transcendental method consists in looking in the individual for the universal conditions which constitute *science* as such. He revived the question concerning the concept of truth, but in a new way. However, a person can only *believe* in the idea of truth itself, and subordinate himself to it through his individual striving towards it. Fichte had recognized that the principle of identity, which is formally coextensive with the concept of truth, is the same as the proposition: *I am*. Thus, in the final analysis, belief in logic is belief in oneself, and the well-known verse by Angelus Silesius in which he says that God could not exist without *him*, now indicates to us that the fundamental thought of mysticism is identical with the deepest truth of logic, and can be reached by way of logic.

¹¹ Idea of *sacrifice*; giving in to an idea. *Sacrifice is the answer to mercy*.

Science, in virtue of this opposition between individuality and universal validity, is interested in eliminating belief. Moreover, no matter how little science takes her arguments from ethics, in this case she has always loved to exploit the moral condemnation which *superstition* rightly suffers, and to reduce belief *to a special case of superstition*, to analyze all belief as superstition. What is superstition? Superstition is an affirmation of the alogical, which does not presuppose the self-affirmation of the ego, and is not the result of a value-giving ego. It posits an unknown correlation, so is not a free activity but a passive compulsion. In superstition (according to its psychogenesis), the subject, having lost its freedom, submits to any contents whatever. That is also why superstition and fear go so closely together. There is no superstition that does not invoke fear, and no fear that is not superstitious. Fear, however, is always fear of losing one's individuality, of losing the connection with the absolute that is guaranteed only through the logical and ethical in his personality (through Kantian "reason"). With a little effort, one can derive from this general schema of fear, the fear of death, fear of the doppelgänger, fear of women (which is merely the feeling that a woman has no metaphysical reality, no existence), and fear of sin and insanity. The will to value, to the absolute, either to get to it or to hold on to it, is the final, most universal human characteristic. *Fear is just, so to speak the reverse of the will to value, the manner in which it reveals itself when threatened with negation.* The most terrible fear, fear of oneself, is also explained this way: it is fear of the empirical ego. Fear that the timeless personality will be reduced to an elementary point in time arises at every instant at which one becomes conscious of the present merely as a moment in time, instead of being somehow fulfilled by thinking of the future or the past, i.e., by behaving as a willing or thinking being.¹² The objective side of fear of oneself appears in the eeriness of pure phenomenalism, which holds that only experience is real, and that I cannot be assured of the continued existence of a wall which I have just been looking at, when I turn my back to it. Insofar as it has been put in question whether the wall will still be there when I turn around, the existence of the world of the "transcendental object", as earlier the existence of

¹² This reduction of the ego to a temporal atom, its *being alone in time* (instead of being *connected to all eternity*), is what is symbolized with perfect ingenuity by the unicorn in Böcklin's "Silence in the Forest". [Arnold Böcklin (1849-1901), Swiss symbolist painter.]

[The first edition has "reaction" for "reduction" in this footnote. It was corrected in the second edition.]

the “transcendental subject”, seems to have been reduced to a sign and thus made unreal, *valueless*. The continuity of the ego, to which the continuity of the world objectively corresponds, is threatened with dissolution. The criminal, who has prostituted or abandoned his continuous ego, no longer possesses anything *that he can oppose to discontinuities in the external world*. That is why he is so easily terrified, *for one is terrified only of discontinuity*.

That is why all forgetting makes us uncomfortable, as does the phrase, “That is no longer true,” for it consigns a part of myself, one of my memories, to destruction.

Fear is thus the will to value, as it reveals itself when in danger of being negated. The negation of value, however, is only possible *through* value and *for* value. That also explains the fear of God's *punishment*, fear of illness and poverty so far as these are seen as punishment, and fear of hell. Christ taught, “No one is good”, and that is why, on the one hand, no one is free from fear. However, despite all “moral insanity”¹³ the other proposition is also valid: “No one is evil.”¹⁴ The perfect criminal, it is true, would be just as fearless as the perfect saint, but because there is no one who is totally evil, this offers no injunction against the universality of fear – although some approach fearlessness. The criminal's fear has grown out of the dull consciousness of his crime, it is fear of being unable to exist in the face of the idea of a supreme value which determines a person's destiny, fear of being discarded by it as worthless. That is why fear is only to be conquered through secure confidence in one's own value. A person creates his own value in *freedom*, or he throws it away and gives up *creating* (which is always the creating of value). In fear, the affirming, creating person withdraws, and thus achieves the negation of the deed. That is why there is, briefly put, fear only of *passivity*. Fear of the unknown is fear of the *unconscious*, for only in relation to what he is conscious of is a person *free* (because it still stands outside, or above him). A person would not be afraid of death, either, if he had certain knowledge about it. However, because no one knows how much of him will live, whether he is simply an angel (for only the angel in him continues to live), or also a devil (for every one is guilty), each person is afraid of death.

¹³ Weininger uses the English expression. (sb)

¹⁴ That is why it can be just as eerie when another person perceives or thinks *exactly the same* as I do (is my mental doppelgänger), as if he *totally failed* to perceive and understand what I perceive and think. The former negates me, the latter negates the world.

Let me summarize the data from which this theory of fear has resulted. There is fear only of not-being, of nothingness; i.e., there is fear only of evil, insanity, forgetting, discontinuity, of women, of doppelgängers, of death, of guilt–punishment (= past–future), of pain, of passivity, of the unknown (fate), of illness, or of crime. All that, however, is one thing. It is fear of death.

Here I refer to the theory of the twofold *life* (*Sex and Character*, 1st ed., pp. 377-381, cf., pp. 274, 399, 440 [E. 279-83, cf., 208, 298, 327]). *Fear is the reverse of the will to life, the reaction of all life to its enemies*. That is why there is ordinary fear and profound fear, according to whether it applies to earthly or to eternal life: fear of earthly, material death, or fear of metaphysical, spiritual death. The former is known by animals as well, the latter only by humans (who know the former, too, of course). This is because all life results from love, the lower life from love of matter (food and sexual intercourse), the higher life from love of God (spiritual food; love of God can be called love of the true, the good, or the beautiful). Thus *fear is the total opposite of all sexuality and everything erotic*.¹⁵ That is why people embrace when they are about to be killed, and why men and women copulate when an earthquake threatens to annihilate them. That is why people always seek contact with others when they are afraid (and not just for the sake of the physical outcome); two people sleep *together* in order to master a fear more easily. *The fear of loneliness is the other side of the will to totality*, and all fear increases the further away it is from the spatio-temporal totality. However, that is also why the physical image of fear in lower life is *difficulty in breathing* (because breath, the principle of *life*, establishes the *connection* with the universe. *Sex and Character*, p. 380, note 1 [E. 283, but the note is omitted in the English translation]), and difficulty in breathing is so closely related to anxiety that the word anxiety comes from the same root as *tightness*¹⁶, *angustiae*, and angina (choking off the windpipe).

Fear is thus a feeling of lifelessness; and there is fear only of death.

Both fear and love have their imagination: fear a passive one and love (in the broader sense in which intellectual production is also a product of love) always an active one. The visions of Hamlet, who continually sees one and the

¹⁵ In the first epistle of John, 4: 18, it also says: “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” [King James Version. Weininger cites only the Greek.]

¹⁶ “Tightness” in German is “Enge”, in Latin it is “*angustiae*”. (sb)

same thing being transformed, are passive imaginings and expressions of fear: *here the principle of identity is no longer posited* (and not for the object, either; cf., *Sex and Character*, p. 201 f., 246 [E. 156 f., 192]). The criminal also suffers frightening hallucinations, because he is mostly passive, he continually hears voices when he is alone, just like the insane.

Courage is *the self-confidence of the higher life*. Whoever is fully courageous, like Siegfried, is pure and guiltless. That is why courage is associated with the heart; it corresponds to the power of the heartbeat, just as breath corresponds to “connectedness” (Rappaport), and the quantity of courage that a man has is the surest indicator of his greatness, purity and genius.

Fear, however, is mistrust of life, because it still has edges and one can fall into an abyss. Belief in oneself creates courage and *hope* (that is the ego on the way to being realized).

The belief that posits eternal life by affirming it in will and thought is the opposite of *the feeling of lifelessness; it is the conqueror of fear*.

The more superstition a belief contains, however, the more fear there is in it. There is, to be sure, no special, individual belief that is completely free of superstition. In contrast to belief, however, superstition *destroys* the autonomous personality; it sacrifices it to every accidental, spatio-temporal coincidence of two independent series of events, i.e., *sacrifices* it to chance. In superstition, a person connects himself *functionally* to others, negates his own freedom for all time to come, and declares his will and duty to be bound by fate.

All superstition therefore *demand*s signs and miracles, because it is the *abdication* of independent thought and action. The superstitious commander who makes his decisions by reading entrails or eclipses (and thereby merely betrays his fear – like Nicias, or Ibsen's Emperor Julian), has renounced being active, and thus has also renounced success, from the very start.

In belief a person freely, boldly and with courage in the face of death affirms himself, his inner, divine essence, in superstition he *nods* in fear at each twist of fate, he gives up his *freedom* of thought and action by *binding* himself to something. That is why superstition is always pusillanimous and cowardly, while belief is magnanimous and brave. Thus, a person suffers more from his superstition the more he is capable of belief.

The problem of fear is second to none for depth and impenetrability. I do not intend to explain these bare suggestions in every detail here, but the problem of fear helps us to explain further the problem of knowledge, by means of a contrast.

A person who hears the wall in his room cracking, or suddenly hears a noise in the still of the night, can react in two ways: either be *frightened*, or *go have a look*. *Curiosity* and *fear* are the two contrasting ways the soul can behave. *The scientist is curious*, he researches, he wants to understand the *causes* of phenomena. People have often looked for the opposite of the researcher in the artist, the metaphysician or the mystic, but he is really first of all a *believer in demons*. Fear *creates* demons. The person who *bravely* gets up to go pull off the hood that covers a ghost's everyday face is a *dis-coverer*. An extremely fearful person will never make an intellectual discovery. *The same* forces of nature that the scientist pursues with levers and screws, and tries to represent with differential equations, appear to the person who suffers from fear as *demons of nature*. It is foolish to think that belief in demons has died out, that it is an ancient, now-defeated way of viewing the world, whose place has gradually been taken, over the course of history, by the scientific way of viewing the world. In fact, the two are polar opposites, and constant dispositions of the human character, as ancient and as permanent as humanity itself. There have always been researchers as well as believers in demons, just as there are today; and just as in the eras researched by pre-historians and ethnologists there are believers in demons today, isolated but in undiminished numbers, alongside the scientific establishment. Demons *are the laws of nature* for those who suffer from fear; science and demonology are the two ways in which people can respond to natural events. Poe and Schopenhauer, Bürger and Knut Hamsun, are certainly no less acquainted with nature than Newton and Kaspar Friedrich Wolff, or Bacon and Lagrange, but they conceive it differently. A person can be both a believer in demons and a scientist, when he is universally talented enough: Goethe was both on a great scale.

Science brings light, and drives away the demons of the night. It is sad but unalterable that scientists never understand demons, or the fear of them; they always make fun of those who believe in them, and usually persecute them. That should neither hinder nor divert anyone from cherishing science morally and culturally as the great torch of the intellect against fear. For fear is a moral and intel-

lectual weakness, it makes a person small, makes him shrivel up. Ghosts can be driven away by reason, and only by reason.

II *The Concept of Culture*

Nothing is more difficult than getting from a catchword to a concept, and the word culture is the emblem under which *everyone* these days fights and claims victory. This makes the attempt to reclaim the pure significance of the sign much harder. On the other hand, it is precisely a belief in the generally compelling power of the word that encourages such an undertaking. This seems to indicate that the word describes something that is related to universal value, that is valid for the individual, and yet which never helps one individual to harm another.

Nature and culture are concepts that are often contrasted with one another, in particular by that promenader, Schiller, who always identified culture with civilization, and thus held up for a long time the clarification of the concept of culture. It must be admitted that no one even remotely deserves to be described as “cultivated” just because of his relation to nature, no matter how intimate it may be. Nevertheless, the effect of untamed nature on humans is no more anti-cultural than it is cultural, and that is why the contrast is misleading.

Another, better contrast between *nature* and *history*, which can take us further here, has recently been explained in fine studies by Windelband and Rickert. Obviously, what we understand by culture is intimately connected with the history of humankind. Indeed, insofar as it is objectified in the works that remain from previous generations, and coincides with Hegel's concept of “objective mind”, culture is, very generally, directly identified with what is left over from the life of a people, with the sum of the projections of their existence on earth. Each particular culture is evaluated according to how many of these projections outlast the individuals and nations. In this sense, the actions of a politician, insofar as he is a conqueror and revolutionary or a destroyer and power-seeker, and not a lawgiver and statesman, are transitory and thus contrasted with the creations of culture.

Recently, however – under the influence of the two men who have taken the problem of culture most seriously in recent decades, Richard Wagner and Nietzsche – we are in many ways already approaching the more correct view that when the question of culture is posed it must concern mental qualities, and not the mate-

rial objects left over from earlier times in which these qualities have perhaps been revealed. In the older view it is natural to judge the degree of a person's or an era's mental culture according to the greater or lesser intimacy of their relationship to the history of earlier times. According to this view, the really cultured person is the historian, in the broad sense. That is what the eager quest for culture that is still fashionable today really aims at, in contrast to proper education. It is directed more at positive knowledge, at becoming familiar with the history of literature and art, and is oriented toward the great men of the past and personal connection with their creations. According to this view, culture would be defined in opposition to barbarism, the total lack of concern for the creations of other people or earlier times. It is evident, however, that this criterion also has nothing at all to do with a person's inner and spiritual culture. If it really did, then the most cultivated person would be the one who had read the most books, heard the most concerts, and visited the most museums. Of course it has never occurred to anyone to maintain this, but cultural snobbism can be traced back to this false idea. Indeed, if this were the case, the quantity of the collective past, a person's living at a later time, would also determine the extent of his culture. The culture with which we are concerned here, however, does not increase ("one grain of sand after another") in the course of human history. Belief in progress means belief in the moral idea of progress; culture always remains an ideal, and we just want to get closer to it. The fear that the human race will die out also has its origin only in the fact that we do not see any representative of the moral idea left behind in the world, on whom we all can happily pin that hope which, because of our own imperfection, we cannot have in ourselves. Similarly, the notion of development is not, among profound people, founded on an overview of the past and its comparison with the present; it is only the expression of a postulate that they bring to humanity as a temporal whole, although everything in particular that has taken place always stays the same, and sooner or later the same battle is always undertaken in the same way, on the same battlefield. *There is no development; what moves a person most deeply is simply the desire for development.* There is indeed a *need* to be able to attribute a real meaning, outside of time, to the totality of temporal events. *History does not happen, it is willed.* Here, the human will to make history can be shown to originate from the same deep source from which the human need for immortality flows; it is identical with the need for redemption.

There is, therefore, no history of the human being, neither of the individual (for character remains constant, even when individual traits *seem* to have disappeared for a long time), nor when I compare him with the others who lived thousands of years before him.

There is only a history of the construction in which the accomplishments of individuals are combined; there is only “cultural history”. Everything else, war, for example, is not measured against the idea of the perfection of this structure; it is epic, it does not create value.

Empirical history, taking place *in time*, cannot be *real* and is not able to satisfy any human need, and *it forever remains the most agonizing of human suffering to have no history, and to be always yearning to experience history at last*. That is why culture cannot be located in the intellectual back-referencing by which one period believes itself to be more closely linked to another. The historical renaissances of older cultures have never created a new culture, and that person is badly mistaken who ascribes to contact with past cultural circles the magical power to originate new life. Culture remains an ideal, and only an individual, questing person can approach an ideal, not a whole company in march-step or quickstep. The culture of an individual must precede the culture of a nation; that is why apprehensions like those which speak of a people being culturally outstripped because another exhibits greater mass-production are derisory. Culture is not something for which two people can combine, on which they could collaborate.

We have to consider, as the *essential* in all culture, a feeling that has two aspects. *A feeling for problems* is the condition of all culture, and, purely intellectually, is identical with it. However, that is why all culture is founded on *individuality*, because there are problems only for *individualities*. This determination immediately accounts for the intimate relationship between the concept of culture and the concept of intellectual history.

For all art and philosophy, as long as there are human beings, have dealt with the same eternal problems, the great problems of humanity and of existence. The great themes of world literature remain the same, the motif of the requiem is renewed for every musician, and the problems of philosophy are the same from the oldest myths and sayings of the Babylonians and Indians to the present day. Consider the variations on the motifs of Don Juan, Faust and Prometheus in folk-

literatures, consider Hamlet's return as Skule¹⁷, the figure of Siegfried (= Feramors–Achilles), or the metamorphoses of the perfect villain as Hagen, Richard III, Franz Moor, Golo, and Bishop Nikolas. The theory that time is ideal was taught before Kant, in the *Upanishads*, Anaximander's ethics says almost the same thing as Schopenhauer's, and we encounter the Christian theocracy again in the knighthood of the Grail in the Parsifal myth, and in Kant's conception of a *corpus mysticum* [mystical body]. In the final analysis, the problems of the artists and those of the philosophers are the same, too; only their treatment is different. For question and thought are common to both the great artist and the great philosopher. A thought, however, is demonstrable, and so art requires logic no less than science. *Intuition* is what is individual in philosophy and art; in the former it is *non-sensuous*, in the latter *sensuous*, leading in the one to a *concept*, in the other to a *symbol*. In contrast to modern art, which is characterized by a total lack of thought, and has raised this lack to a principle in that it does not want to hear of thought in art, it ought to be emphasized that each true art is an art of thought, and each great artist is a great thinker even if he thinks differently from the philosopher. All great art, therefore, is *profound*; *there is only symbolic art* (which, of course, is not to be confused with “symbolist” art,¹⁸ i.e., with present day “sentimental art”). *Because it is constitutive of the person of genius that he stands in a conscious relation to the universe, so the pulse of the thing-in-itself, the breath of the world as a whole, will also have to be detectable in works of genius.* We thus recognize, from insight into the essence of great artists themselves, too, that depth of thought is absolutely required for a *work of art* to be great. This measure first of all, and only later that of form, has to be applied to every work of art; and the reason why all art criticism is still groping in the dark is simply that it does not measure its object at the ideal intellectual depth. Of course, if one started to apply such a measure seriously, the number of great names in world literature would shrink considerably, and very many names would fall from the pedestal of fame to which most of them were raised by people who expect from art only emotion or excitement, sentiment or pathos. They would have to climb down, one after the other, Wieland and Uhland, Horaz and Lope de Vega, Schiller and Otto Ludwig,

¹⁷ The Earl of Skule, the protagonist of Ibsen's, *The Pretenders*. (sb)

¹⁸ During the 19th century, “symbolist” artists opposed the dominant view of art as rationalist, realist or naturalist, challenged the validity of universal principles, and espoused the irrational. (sb)

Grillparzer and Maupassant, Gottfried Keller and Lessing, Storm and Thackeray, Grabbe and Anzengruber, Racine and Walter Scott, Byron and Dickens, Molière and Walther von der Vogelweide. So, too, would other artists, for instance Botticelli and Segantini, Murillo and Thorwaldsen, Gounod and Johann Strauss – none, none of them, could live up to this eternal standard.¹⁹ Such a strong distinction would certainly be greeted by the laughter and the indignation of all the contemporary critics, even if one had been careful, for good reasons, not to take the living to task. In spite of this, one would have to attack the famous so strongly as to doubt even the greatness of the “divine Homer”, although here one could only defer, against the unanimous judgement of everyone else, to one individual, indeed *the singular individual*, namely Plato.

Insofar as the great problems have long since been posed, culture really hangs together with the history of civilization, but the problems must always be posed afresh. Whether one begins this with or without reference to earlier attempts at solutions makes no difference, and cannot really be decisive for success, either.

The sense for problems is strongest in the outstanding person, for the problems *are* livelier in him than in others. He feels them to be his problems, he does not merely come to them from outside, they have not come to him from tradition or education, but he is led back to them over and over again through his individuality and the problematical within him.²⁰ Thus *objective* culture, in its foundation, is composed of the sacrifices which the great people of all times have made on the altar of the riddle of the world. Subjective mental *culture* is always, in formally the same way, an inner *ritual*; its objective realization is an offering of one's own child in the supreme veneration of an impersonal, supreme being.²¹

Nevertheless, culture is also something social; the altar on which sacrifice is made lies free and open for all to see. The public character of cultural work, has always been vaguely understood; and religion, the most individual thing there is, the question of the meaning and the mission of one's own life, has never been seen as belonging to culture, even though this ultimate problem, perhaps often

¹⁹ Of the French, only Zola and Baudelaire would survive; no painter, no sculptor!

²⁰ Descartes among philosophers, and perhaps Gerhardt Hauptmann among poets, are examples of how gifted men can hit upon problems quite externally, and not from the depths of their nature.

²¹ Here I venture to give a meaning to Abraham's sacrifice that it possibly did not have. Cf. Kant's *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*. p. 92 (Reclam).

unconsciously, will appear in all the other problems. Just as every superior person figures out his inner moral life for himself, and feels public confession to be a source of ethical weakness, so piety, which in the end is identical with morality, is strictly reserved for the private life of the individual. This restriction recommends itself from the other side, the side of the deed, too. Piety does not produce any lasting good deeds. Hence religion already lies beyond culture, because its content, the ultimate reason for the existence of the individual and for the world in general, cannot itself become a particular problem.

Nothing is more individual than religion; a person can, as we saw, only believe in himself insofar as he strives after the absolute, or God, as the idea of the good and the true, and aspires to become like it. Culture is individual, not in the sense of uniqueness, however, but because it is a consequence of that *problematic* individuality which has been *posited* and been renewed (born-again) through religion. Culture is *transcendental* (as this concept has been developed by Kant); all transcendental functions lead in the end to the idea of the absolute as their ultimate concept, although it cannot be logically deduced from them. First of all, *the transcendental creates culture. The transcendental is a condition of all sociality, because it is the essence of evaluation that goes beyond the single individual in its validity, and yet is only accomplished by the individual himself.* It makes culture into something social again, makes it a value that must be independently and freely verified by each individual, and that will be acknowledged by him in formally the same way, again and again. For example, legal statutes have cultural significance insofar, and only insofar, as legal arrangements are not merely handled according to the letter of the law, but help to problematize the laws under the guiding idea of justice and injustice, as generally deciding factors in their consideration and application. Nor is it the most extended and most continuous use of the greatest number of technical inventions which confers on the individual or the collectivity a claim to culture. The *results* of science have equally little cultural significance. Neither the universal scholar nor the universal sportsman can represent the person of culture.

That every man carries a watch in his vest-pocket has not an atom of cultural value, unless time, its measurement and moral evaluation, have become objects of consideration for each individual. Thus, culture as a sense for problems is also an ideal. No person satisfies this ideal; even the most cultivated will often be

alarmed at how many things he has not yet thought about. *No one has culture, but everyone should want culture.*

For culture is also a *task*, not just a problem. The culture question has, like every other question of real difficulty, its practical and its theoretical sides. And so, culture is mentally differentiated on the practical side as a *sense for tasks*. The sense for problems must want to translate itself into action, and it will always do so if the person is serious about the problems. Problems without tasks are pointless; tasks without problems are groundless. Play as such is pointless, for it poses problems that cannot become tasks.²² Sport as such is groundless, for it imposes tasks that were never problems. Both are therefore far from being part of culture until each of the conditions is fulfilled in a person.

The outward freedom of the individual is therefore an unavoidable prerequisite of all culture. Freedom is the foundation without which culture cannot be willed, and this really makes clear for the first time what is meant by the idea that spare time, or leisure, in contrast to work, is a condition of culture. It is not possible, however, to maintain this definition. To begin with, leisure is used more for the *cultivation* than for the *culture* of an individual, and then in the principle of *work* there lies an often misunderstood and yet very important element of culture.²³ Work is neither good nor evil in itself, it is in itself morally indifferent. Although the working person, as experience shows, is seen to stand morally above the idle person, nonetheless it always depends on the goal that the work pursues. *Only work that rejects work on oneself can be culturally valuable.* When it has cultural value, it will also benefit others, because then it is *founded* on the *transcendental character of cultural values* (on the ideas of truth, beauty, the law, and so on). Work that merely concerns the preparation of bread for one's own or someone else's family will never have cultural value. Social servitude, even when it ultimately *produces* results that are culturally valuable, is thus essentially anticultural, just as the phenomena of poverty or illness are from the outset thoroughly anti-cultural. A sense of this has led to the high cultural evaluation of all the activities in which an individual is not subject to external pressure. That is

²² *That is why everything merely aesthetic is of no cultural value.*

²³ Diogenes, who peered out of his barrel “θεωρίης ἐνεχεν”, is not in any way the incarnation of the idea of culture.

[Diogenes, the Cynic (died c. 323 B.C.E.), was said to have lived in a barrel, and is known to have rejected abstract thought and logic.]

how sport and play have attained their, admittedly unjustified, reputation as symptoms of culture.

Both play and sport, however, completely lack that stable mutual relationship with the universal cultural goods. Yet, exactly this makes for the gravity and the greatness of the idea of culture: culture must emanate from individuality, and hold its own in the universal forum of value that is beyond the personal. The *ens transcendentalis* [transcendental being], the “*animal metaphysicum*” [metaphysical animal], is therefore nothing other than the ζῷον πολιτικόν²⁴: the human being. Thus the celebrated question of all sociology is answered: Which came first, the individual or society? *Both are there at the same time, together from the beginning.* This, I dare say, explains “the most miraculous fact, that of all the beings we know, the human being is at once the most fit for the autonomous development of the individual, and the most conditioned by the social connectedness of the species” (Windelband, *Die Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, 2nd ed., 1899, Vol. II, p. 227).²⁵

The sign *under* which individuals come together as a society, and *looking up to which* they make decisions as a society, is called culture. As an *idea*, culture in its *logical* aspect is *a problem that goes beyond the individual*, and in its *ethical* aspect it is *a task that goes beyond the individual*. Culture as the *relation of the individual to the idea* is manifest in the *sense* for the theoretical problem of *thought*, and in the *sense* for the practical *task* in action. *Thus, at the same time culture is beyond the individual as an idea, and is individual as an ideal.*

III Science Viewed from the Perspective of Culture

Nothing is more keenly debated today than culture. Nothing is so diligently studied as the history of civilization, and scarcely anything else is as eagerly promoted, and pursued with such interest. Young and old, rich and poor, have no higher ambition today than culture. We have already encountered the culture-snob, who has sublimated his need for a new necktie into an antiquarian interest in generally unknown artists and artworks. Close by, the voice of the culture-wolf howling for popularized natural science, presses very audibly on the listener's ear.

²⁴ “Political animal” is the common rendering, but “polis-dwelling animal” gives a better sense of Aristotle's intent. (*Politics*, I: 1.) (sb)

²⁵ Wilhelm Windelband, “History of Modern Philosophy”. (sb)

Snob and mob, however, need and supplement one another. The former was an isolated, strange, and yet not wholly unsympathetic phenomenon. The latter, less given to lying, but more selfish, supports its desire as the former does, with only one argument: the cry, "Culture"! Indeed, speaking very generally, culture today is no longer identical with intellectual history; the elements that seem mainly to constitute the spirit of the age are science and technology.

Let us observe the remarkable spectacle. Alongside all the other crisis-ridden processes, nothing keeps moving so securely in its machinelike march as that giant creature, stretched across the world: science. Nothing raises the same demands as it does, nothing enjoys the same solicitude. The patrons have changed their protégés. If once the artists and philosophers were worth their trouble (Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Grotius, Spinoza, Leibniz, Voltaire), today it is the goals of science. To be sure – it is no longer the aristocrat who controls the money. The decision rests with the big capitalist, and he opts for science.

It is the sublime *ideal* of science to which the scientist owes his reputation. This ideal alone should be his pride; consciously to work in its name, to live as the mere servant of its idea, should be his honour. The deep disdain which every scientist (in the broadest sense) harbours for every technician as such (in the broadest sense – which also includes the lawyer and the doctor), originates from that ideal.

However, respect for the idea of pure science has now been appropriated by the official guild of its disciples. Its prestige has increased, especially in the past century and especially in Germany. Taken as a whole this is unjustified, but in particular cases just as much justice as injustice may have occurred, and the history of science will itself have to examine this very critically. I am referring to the intellectually dominating position that university professors have acquired in the last hundred years. A university professor speaks, and the world listens. That is in itself a gratifying sign. However, many of them often talk down from above; the university professors, and the chancellor's office speech-givers, are very much inclined to talk down to the culture. Only rarely do they set the goals higher instead, in order to spur on the sluggish flight of others; for the most part they confidently believe that they come from the source itself, that they scoop up handfuls of culture from it, and serve it to the world. This end is served by the reinterpretation of the concept of *alma mater*, from an independent place of study to a sacred

grove where one can be exonerated and made sacrosanct by the fiction that one drinks here from a unique fountain.

With this, however, there gradually begins to develop an idea of science in which the thirst for knowledge and system is scarcely recognisable. Science now is a watchword and a goal, and is becoming so no longer as knowledge but as the greatest possible sum of “positive” bits of knowledge.

Thus the working method of science is being mechanized, and confined to established routines.

Because a few likenesses are not yet on display in the series of wax impressions,²⁶ it is worth acquiring them, too, not as though real progress were expected from them, but “for science”.

Because the relationship between sounds that are barely perceivable, and ones too loud to be clearly distinguished, has not yet been researched, this must be done as soon as possible. What for? For science. The work itself is read by no one; it enters the libraries and bibliographies, and one has the reassurance that “it has been produced”. *Produce*: that is the word for the knowledge factories of today, in which the managers of the great laboratories and seminars admirably perform the functions of the capitalist barons of industry. “Sources”, it is called in historical research. “Experiments”, in the exact sciences. The number, the statistic, the method of falsification, and precise gravimetrical analysis rule like despots. It is not without justification that this science has proclaimed that all of its determinations are *equally important*. The Academies of Science are the mighty elders of this commonwealth, the terrible grandmothers of European culture;²⁷ and they protect and increase the inheritance. Woe to him who dares to doubt the science that they represent, that *this* science is the end of ends! He who dares to question the right of science to the use of hospital patients for experimenting with new vaccines is an obscurantist and an anti-Semite. He who deplores that animals are constantly and unnecessarily tortured alive is hated as a sentimental and ridiculous disturber of the peace. It is still not openly said that the smallest micro-

²⁶ A system of making wax moulds of medical abnormalities (tumours, diseased organs, and so on) was developed in the 19th century at the Vienna General Hospital. Examples can be seen at the Museum of Pathological Anatomy in the *Narrenturm* of the *Altes Allgemeines Krankenhaus*. (sb)

²⁷ As it would an adopted child, European culture loves Miss Ellen Key.

[Ellen Key (1849-1926) was a Swedish feminist and educator who developed a radical, “child-centred” paedagogy. She was famous for *The Century of the Child* (1900).]

chemical discovery is of more real value for humanity than the greatest poem; perhaps this is only because this science is a democracy, without a president who has the authority to speak in its behalf. Real scientists find art, religion and philosophy superfluous; any disciple of science who concerns himself with them, makes himself suspect to his colleagues – these subjects are full of hot air. This Moloch of inventory-science completely monopolizes a person, he has to be and do everything for it; only then will he be deemed up to standard. And if someone were to set out to destroy this idol, he would find himself in the predicament of Don Quixote.

For he finds no visible enemy, only an empty word, a structure of air holding this community together, which will not coldly knock him down, but will meet his attacks with an even colder silence. To put briefly what today's science is and what it is not, we can say that this science enjoys results, and sets itself tasks, but has no more problems. Problems exist only for people who think for themselves and about themselves, and not for an idol, even if that idol is named science.

While science so outwardly became the *supreme* end – science, of course, that merely adds bit by bit to the present state of knowledge, and homogenizes all our experiences – an apparently opposite transformation took place in the understanding of science and its place in human intellectual life. The scientist has, very correctly, always justified his infinite contempt for technology by the fact that for it all knowledge is just a means to an end, while for him knowledge is an end-in-itself.

It was reserved for our generation for science to proclaim itself to be really a means to an end. The “philosophy” of this view²⁸ resulted from the general economic conception of what had earlier claimed a place of higher value. Just as historical materialism destroyed the entire value of humanity's past by attributing no further meaning to history than the struggle for forage and foraging places, so did

²⁸ Mach, *Die Geschichte und Wurzel des Satzes von der Erhaltung der Arbeit* (Prague, 1872), as well as “Die Gestalten der Flüssigkeiten” and “Die ökonomische Natur der physikalischen Forschung”.

[Ernst Mach's *Geschichte* (“The History and Origin of the Law of Conservation of Labour”) is a 58-page lecture delivered to the Karl Böhm Society of the Sciences in Prague. I have not found an English translation. The two shorter lectures, “The Forms of Liquids” (1868) and “On the Economical Nature of Physical Enquiry” (1882), can be found in Mach, *Popular Scientific Lectures*, 4th ed., translated by Thos. J. McCormack (Chicago: Open Court, 1910).]

the conception of science as comfort degrade the human thirst for knowledge to something more monstrous than it had ever been before in history. It was ingeniously reported, to be sure, and through the gentle magic of its representation it certainly drew more than one person under its spell who was not destined to be able to stick with it for more than a short while. Science also did not lack today's usual biological splendour, either. The biological mode of viewing things, however, as it is understood today, is nothing other than a utilitarian one; it extends the utilitarian social principles of famous English blockheads to those of the plant and animal realms. In doing this it has never denied its origin in the suggestion which Darwin credited to Malthus, even if a distancing from Darwin occurred later. Even the slogan, "the economics of science", originated with a political economist. It was not for nothing that I compared the practical conduct of today's science with that of a big industrial establishment. Confirmation that it also behaves this way in theory comes to us from the theorists. The idea that science is a business would do credit to any commercial people, and it has, as a matter of fact, found the greatest approval among the Americans and the Jews.²⁹

I do not intend, nor is it possible, to criticize here the economic conception of science and to prove its psychological untenability; for the time being it should only be evaluated. It is the nature of this view to be alien to all true culture, and characteristic that the denial of all problems goes hand-in-hand with it. This denial is also quite logical from the standpoint of a sensation-monism, which of course can take any posing of a problem only relativistically. After all, one will not lightly want to accept that those who deny all problems are themselves going to have very problematical natures. It was likewise necessary to deny the knowing subject, who faces a knowable object³⁰. While this person no longer wanted to know, and yet then had to be even more a slave to an alien object, slowly but surely there silently ensued the construction of a social ideal of science – for which the individual *would have to* work. The cry: "for science" is thus mostly just a *component* of the shout: "for the species", "for society". The Moloch of science is merely a little god from the realm of the idols of social ethics, another one of its loveable features, one more instruction to the individual that first of all he

²⁹ Admittedly because of still another feature, the impulse toward sexual selection (which explains art through the courtship of the mountain cock).

³⁰ I.e., for this kind of scientist there is just objective knowledge, and there is not a problem about the transcendental subject of the knowing. (sb)

has taxes to pay to the collectivity. Wisdom itself became a means as this science became an end, and one will now understand that this means could not remain high in price.

We nevertheless appreciate once again the undivided wretchedness of the spectacle. The daring explorer is transformed by the civilizing influence of economy into a worried stay-at-home. The impetuosity of his youth becomes a stale joke; he has the superior smile of the uncomprehending, in place of the grandeur of the thirst for knowledge. The enormous debt of the forms of intuition and thought with which the knowledge of the greatest knower is burdened, no longer weighs him down, no longer weighs on his “wretched contentment”! He no longer seeks, and no longer questions; he gathers and gathers, arranges and re-arranges. The colossal tragedy of knowing³¹ takes its leave of him with the buffoon's comment: What's the excitement about? We only want to economize!

Let us leave the doctrine that views science as a means to an end, and turn to the one for which science is an end-in-itself. Here, too, however, we still cannot give an unconditionally positive evaluation. Science can also be an end-in-itself in two ways: *A person can want knowledge as power, and he can want it as value.*

Knowledge can be wanted or kept as *power*. Knowledge as power is wanted by the person who does not acknowledge nature, who *denies* existence altogether, by the *evil* person. He *sees* the problems, *sees* that people suffer with them, but he wants to *refute* them, and in this way demonstrate his contempt for those people. He does not like questions, is not acquainted with them, at most for him the question is a means of *forcing* an answer, and he does not give answers, because inner clarification is not a moral need for him. Rather, the fundamental form of his answer is triumphant irony *about the question*. He is not Faust, who looks the Earth Spirit³², the symbol of everything that happens in time, in the eye, who urgently approaches the problem, *wants to get to* the problem, and ardently pulls himself up to the idea. No, he strives to pull the problem down to him, *he wants to refute being through knowing*, he wants to put down knowledge by the fact *that he is knowing*, in the way he has put down himself. That is why Wagner, in *Parsifal*, equips Klingsor – who has castrated himself, used himself as a means to an end – with tools of magic and devices of necromancy. For what I have in view here is

³¹ Namely, that it inevitably separates the knower from “noumena”, things as they really are. (sb)

³² The “*Erdegeist*” of *Faust*, Part I, “Night”. (sb)

the *great idea of the magician*, which even today still has its deep meaning, as long as one acknowledges it rightly as the hypostatizing of a precise mode of thought. The famous person in history who comes closest to this is Bacon, Lord Verulam. We now grasp the inner connection of the teaching of this man, who announced that “knowledge is power”, “*tantum possumus quantum scimus*”³³, who was the first to point out discoveries and inventions full of arrogance (*Novum Organum*, 1, 129)³⁴, and who, with his dishonourable career, was the great-grandfather of today's philistines of progress.

This is also the place to say something about technology, insofar as this is more than a method of rationally solving practical problems under the guidance of knowledge, i.e., of making theories useful for singular, concrete ends (construction) – and more than a means for visibly proving the connections suspected by a thinker (experiment).³⁵ This “more” is the *spirit of invention* when it oversteps the limits of intellectual play or practical utility. It cannot be denied that mentally there can be a great deal of evil in invention, a great deal of will to power. Indeed, one articulates it this way: the ultimate objective is the domination of nature – and one boasts of such successes. In this tearing down of all the walls, however, there is not only lewdness, exhibitionism, and joy in shaming the exposed (this would, for him, perfectly coincide with *knowledge* sought for anti-moral reasons). Rather, inventions are precisely those miracles “that the devil performs”, and it is understandable why the locomotive was felt to be diabolical. The will to power also denies the laws of nature, for it wants to overcome them. We have before us, in the miracle performed by Satan, the polar opposite of the miracle performed by the deity. It is not the overcoming of the lawfulness of nature through the thought of the moral subject's *freedom* from natural laws (the mystery of the resurrection), but rather its overcoming for the reason that *nothing may remain free*, everything must be enslaved. Will to power is will to unfreedom in general, to one's own as to everyone else's. The will to power, which in truth ought to be called wilfulness, not will, deals with people as though the law of identity were invalid; every day the ruler demands of his subjects something different from, and contrary to, what he demanded the previous day. The wilfulness of the person who wants power

³³ Literally: “We can [do] as much as we know” This sentiment is expressed, though in different words, in the third Aphorism of Book I of *The New Organon*. (sb)

³⁴ See Francis Bacon, *The New Organon*, Book I, Aphorism 129. (sb)

³⁵ Insofar as it is merely a business, it is amoral, but not yet anti-moral.

over nature does not care about the lawfulness of nature, but wants to overthrow it and break it up. There is an infinitely deeper thrust in all the devil myths: that he offers to the person who submits to him, the possibility of moving *instantaneously*, from one spot in the world to any other, lets him acquire riches without labour, gold out of nothing, all without continuity, without causality (the evil tendency in people wants it that way, of course). That is to say, causality is only perceived through freedom, but it is also acknowledged, posited, through freedom (in order to have an object in contrast to which it can assert itself as freedom, according to the Kantian conception of the world). The evil person also acknowledges no causality, he gives an object no freedom because he, himself, plunges ever deeper into unfreedom; he wilfully treats the facts without ceremony, and thus provides empirical proof that causality is only posited by freedom. The idea of the *magician* who has power over the demons of nature is therefore at the very bottom of this functional, arbitrary power over the freedom of natural laws. It is he who *scorns the object*, which he does not behold and revere in its great and solemn majesty, but wants to master and enslave.

I do not want to overestimate the inventors: they are certainly not often so grandly, diabolically talented, and their striving seldom reaches greater intensities. We know from experience that they are not powerful fiends, but often very ordinary creatures who unknowingly embody something of the idea of the magician. That is also why we experience so much of technology as magical, as uncanny.

Many will certainly find these theoretical-psychological views reactionary, too – deliverances of the darkest superstition and fear of ghosts. Nevertheless, I am not here evaluating the *invention*, and calling it the devil's work. However, the *inventors* are too often morally highly dubious individuals, and it is only their intentions that interest me. There is nothing in the world, as Kant begins his *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, that can be called good or evil, except the *will*.

Knowledge as business was morally indifferent, and the theory of this view acknowledged no ethical element in the thirst for knowledge. Knowledge as will to power was anti-moral; it had the sure instinct of the temple-desecrator about the morality of knowledge, and wanted to devalue it by possessing it. *Knowledge as value* is the disposition that will forever guarantee moral respect for knowledge. Knowledge for the sake of value is to knowledge for the sake of power, as

love is to coitus, as restoring life is to death. The thirst for knowledge is thus, thirdly, will to value; knowledge, for this pure impulse, is willed value, a guarded jewel. Its irony restrains itself, and does not exult. It knows the seriousness of the question, and the pain of the unsatisfactory answer. It struggles through all the anxieties and terrors of doubt, to the foundation of truly firm, unshakeable certainty. That is why it places the highest and purest demands on knowledge. The two deepest thinkers in human history, Plato and Kant, who both conceived the problem of value as the ultimate problem of the world and of humanity, have in common, along with many others, the greatest respect for *mathematics*; it appears to embody the ideal of knowledge best of all, and therefore they place it ahead of all other sciences as an unattainable example.

Nevertheless, both Plato and Kant rightly denied the possibility of attaining a worldview solely through science. A person has a worldview insofar as he is an artist or a philosopher, but not merely as a man of science. Science always seeks only *truths*, *not truth*.³⁶ Positive science has in and for itself neither depth nor surface; but it should not, on that account, be aggressively against depth, nor want to forbid depth, as the epistemologists of positive science from Democritus to Mach have again and again tried to do, in one form or another (materialism, monism, positivism, empirio-criticism). “You do not enter, and hinder those who want to enter.”

It is grounded in their temperament, that philosophers find inflammatory, aggressive behaviour more difficult than other people do. Otherwise, the contemptuous and insolent treatment that the scientists so gladly bestow on them, the impertinent shrug over their “unfruitful” work, would have long ago given rise to a rebuttal. Let it thus be declared: Even the (original) philosopher of the sixth or seventh rank, Hegel, Schleiermacher, Krause, Maine de Biran, Carlyle, Nietzsche, still stands much higher than the greatest and most original mere-scientist, than a Newton, Gauss, Galileo, Maxwell, Darwin, Berzelius, Helmholtz, Jacob Grimm – higher, that is, in genius, in the qualities which constitute a person

³⁶ Scientists do not of themselves have a worldview that is the measure of things for them, but rather have only a few things that are the measure of the whole world for them. That is why the same processes always repeat themselves: if any phenomenon appears that cannot be fitted in to their narrow system by the scientists, it will be abruptly denied, and anyone whose freer view lets him admit the possibility will be derided for his timid imagination, his foolish and blind faith. That is how it was with hypnotic phenomena, with the “*double personnalité*”, with many symptoms of “*grande hystérie*”, and so it is now with telepathy, [the effect on the foetus of] fright during pregnancy, the influence of the stars on humans, and so it will always be.

of *significance*. Granted, if one thinks only of the reliability of the findings, only of the fitness of his results for immediate admission to anthologies and textbooks, then one must certainly prefer the scientist to the artist or the philosopher. *That, however, is not what matters*. Every scientific discovery is made by two or more at the same time, and whoever makes one, never has the feeling that no one else could have done it.³⁷ The great philosophers, on the other hand, are, like the great artists, individuals – none is replaceable by another.

For positive science, with its always merely relative puzzles in theory, and its constantly shifting goals in practice, there are at bottom no real problems, no absolute duty for a human being or for humanity. Indeed, it aims at letting everything in experience appear *self-evident*. If it were successful at this, however – if it could ever be successful at it – then all *impulse toward perfection* would also have disappeared in practice. It is the measure of a superior person, as of a superior epoch, that for them everything becomes a *minor matter* in face of the metaphysical problem and ethical task. It was not without reason that Goethe contrasted a Wagner to Faust, and had the latter be horrified by the former:

How can a person still have any hopes
Who is addicted to what's superficial,
Who grubs with greedy hand for treasures
And then is happy to discover earthworms!³⁸

“To what splendid heights we have attained at last!”³⁹: this joy of Wagner's is the melody of all the history of the positive sciences. Uttered seriously, it signifies the end, Ragnarök,⁴⁰ the twilight of the gods. For then, consciousness of the most important thing would have been lost: and in the most important thing everything remains the same from the Vedic hymns to the present day.

³⁷ How would this be possible, too, considering that a scientist would not at all do what he does if science were not already at this point, and that he would think very differently scientifically if he were born at a different time. The man of science *only adds pieces*. It follows from this that when a man of science has also composed just one poem in his life, however bad, he inwardly will love this more than all that he has ever achieved scientifically. For he himself is in the poem. I do not intend by this, that even more people should now compose poems – but science should be pursued differently.

³⁸ Faust, in *Faust*, “Night”. (sb)

³⁹ “Wagner”, *ibid*. He begins: “We see how wise men thought before our time, and....” (sb)

⁴⁰ In the Norse *Eddas*, the myth of the world's ending. (sb)

There are no new philosophical thoughts, just as there are no new artistic themes. The reason for this, however, is that the philosopher and the artist, as individuals, are timeless, not to be comprehended through their time, and not to be excused because of it. There is eternity in the philosopher and in the artist; in the mere man of science as a mere member of the species, there is only the immortality of the enfeoffment in trust that is faithfully protected and increased.⁴¹ The philosopher is thus superior to the scientist. Bound up with science there is necessarily some “shop-talk”, for there is only science of specialities. Philosophy is just as all-embracing as art. The great philosopher, like the great artist, has *the whole world in him*; they are the conscious microcosm. In ordinary people, and in the mere-scientist as well, the microcosm is likewise present, but unconsciously. This is the reason why artist and philosopher always speak about the same, eternal problems, and we stand before the paradoxical and yet indubitable fact that it is precisely the true genius who never finds something wholly new or unprecedented, while the great scientist always discovers something really new. It must be admitted that his brand-new as such is also ultimately always uninteresting (“earthworms”). The individuality of the genius guarantees that the question of the relation of the ego to the universe is always differently posed, but always in formally the same way. Positive science is generically moderate and social, and can therefore have a history all right, but it knows no heroism and no tragedy, no pleasure and no pain. Positive science eliminates individuality; so it cannot be culture. It knows neither absolute problems nor absolute duties; to that extent it negates culture.

Science should no longer just “produce”; it should no longer devote itself to a mere word, the word science. The human soul, its individuality, is *timeless*, even compared to the passing of time over millennia; individuality is not a function of time. Nevertheless, that is what it makes of itself in science. A person should only do science about what concerns him; the sick person ought to study medicine. Up until now, individual *guilt* has not been the basis for the problems of the scientist, the way it has been for philosophers and artists. Every real, eternal problem, however, is an equally real, eternal guilt; every answer is an atonement, every understanding a recovery.

⁴¹ In mediaeval law, a serf is made a fief by a gift of freehold land. The point here is that the scientist receives science from others, at best adds a little to it, and then passes it on. (sb)

If what I here express as a wish were to be the case, then the clumsy, the crude and the insolent would disappear from the operation of science. The scientist would know that it is *his* case that is tried, and then he would not grasp his subject-matter with fire tongs, would not run over it with a blackboard eraser, would not handle it as with a meat-cleaver.

Philosophy at present is also science, not as regards its *object*, but doubtless as regards its *method*. Just *three* elements constitute the philosopher, and indeed necessarily all philosophers, no matter how many differences there still remain among them: first the *mystical* element (identical with the need and the demand for the *absolute*); second the *systematic* or *theoretical* element (the need for architectonic). These two qualities are not sufficient, because a theological dogma that calls for belief likewise meets such conditions. The third to be added is the element of *knowledge*, the postulate of deducibility, demonstrability. That there is a “history of philosophy” rests only on this claim of knowledge to go beyond the individual, and on the influence of the scientific method (philosophy has no method of its own); there is no *history of mysticism*. A history of art is likewise (for the same reasons) really an absurdity; there is only a *history of technique* (of the *social* element in art).

The philosopher ought to know, and has to prove. Only because of that does philosophy have a universal, cultural and positive value. The individual relief achieved by the mere-mystic should not be doubted, but it has no significance for culture. Philosophy is of cultural value because it is science, and because science is transcendental. Science itself, however, is only culturally valuable insofar as it is philosophical, i.e., does not set out from the start to prove theorems of a distinct philosophical system, but rather, in the spirit of the researcher himself, intentionally stands in a continuous and inextricable, devoted relation to the riddle of the world.

Final Aphorisms

Illness and loneliness are related. The slightest illness leaves one feeling more alone than before.

*

Everything that is reflected is *vain*, thus vanity is also the sin of all light. That is why light can never be the symbol of grace (to say nothing of ethics). The stars symbolize people who have conquered everything but vanity. The good has no symbol but the beautiful: the whole of nature.

There are many stars, for the problem of vanity is the problem of individuality. Kant, who was extremely vain, epistemologically overcame individuality through transcendentalism; ethically he did not, for he had not overcome the “intelligible ego” (vanity connects him with Rousseau).

The “intelligible ego”, however, is mere vanity, i.e., making value the product of persons, positing the real as the not real. At the same time it is identical with the problem of time, for the temporal is vain.

There is no ego, there is no soul.¹ Only *the good*, which encloses all *particulars* within itself, is of the *highest, most perfect reality*.

Individuality originates in vanity, because we need observers and want to be seen. A vain person is interested in other people, and is a good judge of human nature. *Moreover, since evil is the same in everybody* (“misery loves company”), the person I stare at looks back at me; he does want to be seen by me. *My* curiosity is *his* shamelessness.

*

To the devil, *everything* including his power is merely *on loan*. He knows this (that is why he regards God as his provider, why he revenges himself on God; all evil is *annihilation* of the *believer*; the criminal wants to kill God), and knows it not, or knows otherwise (that is why he is mocked on the Day of Judgement). Also, that he knows this and does not know it, is his *lie*.

*

¹ Nothing here takes away from what was said about the ego and the soul (as the expression of the intelligible in the empirical world). This is just a remark about ontological reality. (Note by the original editor, Moriz Rappaport.)

The devil, of course, is the man who *has everything*, and yet is not *good*, while totality only flows from good and only *exists* through good. The devil knows the whole of heaven, and wants to use God as a means to an end (he is thus essentially a *hypocrite*); and of course he is used as a means to the same degree.

*

The master of the hounds is the one who has nothing hound-like in him; the dog seeks him. The master keeps a dog just the way evil is contained in God: he keeps it in consciousness.

*

Dogs come in all animal forms (snake, lion, etc.); the dog itself, however, is the slave.

*

Even *individual* immortality is vanity, or glory-egoism.

*

The swamp is a false completion of the river, and a merely apparent triumph over itself. It arises through the adulteration of water with earth (the masculine seeps through the pores of the feminine).

The lake is a *stopping place* of the river, its *contemplative hour*. It, too, is a false completion.

*

The old man is a *false eternity*: age. The good (and the true and the beautiful) is *eternally young*. That was also what Wagner knew as his own incompleteness; he was Wotan. Siegfried and Parsifal have not yet appeared. The completely good man (Jesus) has to die young.²

*

The stars no longer *laugh*; they are no longer related to desire, only to bliss and delight. But they twinkle, they are vain. So they can fall. The sun's transgression is pleasure-pain, instead of worth-worthlessness; it *does laugh* (but it *pierces*, *glows*, burns, dazzles, smokes like a fire).

Individuality is the fall of man, and its symbol is the falling star.

² There is a deliberate ambiguity here between characters and operas. Early in his career, Wagner sketched a libretto, *Jesus of Nazareth*, but never completed it. He had written the libretto for the Wotan story (of his failure, his aging and death) before he realized that *Götterdämmerung* could not stand alone. It required *Siegfried*, the story of the innocent hero, and other preliminaries to precede it. *Parsifal*, the story of another innocent hero, was Wagner's final opera. (sb)

*

Lava is the earth's excrement.

*

As the sun darkened, Christ's spirit ebbed; then he said, "God, why hast thou forsaken me."³

*

The profound thing in *The Master Builder* is the *unity* of evil through space and time. My evil desire is matched by an evil (and a fear) somewhere else. He who fears the murderer, posits him; he who intends to murder, posits him who fears the murderer.

*

The athlete has strength as *an end in itself* without an ethical goal. The athlete has to fail within himself, as the Valhalla motif dies within itself.

*

Michelangelo was guilty of pessimism (paranoia).

*

Compassion must become judicious *inner sorrow* (with acknowledgement of *justice*), and may not remain a desire for pleasure. For only then does one really love people.

*

The simpleton smiles slyly when questioned, the Jew smiles slyly when guilty. Both take nothing seriously.

*

Crime means *wanting to place blame* on others; murder means *wanting to place blame* on God.

*

The dog, the snake, etc., seek to refute others to justify themselves (barking, hissing).

*

The bird has a false lightness; it flies because its bones are hollow.

*

The criminal conquers fear through hate rather than through love.

³ Cf., Matthew 27: 45-6; Mark 15: 33-4; Luke 23: 45. (sb)

The Jew does not burden himself with any guilt (nor *thus* with any *problem*); that is why he is unproductive. His guilt is that he has never *posited* time, has not willed the final goal and the process of the world, has willed neither good nor evil. He thus opposes the will of God, who wills evil as well as good.

*

Appendix

(Letters to Friends)

There are many more aphorisms by Otto Weininger which have not been published in English translation. They include the 47 which were among the “Final Aphorisms” in the first edition of *Über die letzten Dinge*, but excluded from the second and subsequent editions which I have translated here. Moriz Rappaport explained in his preface to the second edition, that many of the final aphorisms “were composed in a sort of secret language, which could only be understood by someone initiated through long personal connection. All such passages are therefore omitted from the second edition, so that the ‘Final Aphorisms’ are reduced to a third of their earlier volume.” (xix)

Another set of aphorisms, numbering 187, was written in shorthand in a pocket notebook, and was sent to Rappaport at the same time as the MS. of *Über die letzten Dinge*. These aphorisms were eventually deciphered by Artur Gerber (with help from Oskar Ewald). They were published in 1921 as *Taschenbuch und Briefe an einem Freund* (*Diary, and Letters to a Friend*), together with a useful selection from the letters that Gerber received from Weininger. Preparing an English translation of these aphorisms and letters would constitute a separate project. (In fact, a translation of them has been prepared by Martin Dudaniec and Kevin Solway, and can be accessed on the website noted in my Acknowledgements.)

There are, however, a few more remarks and aphorisms which appear in the forewords that Rappaport wrote for the first and the second editions of *Über die letzten Dinge*. They all date from Weininger's 1903 trip to Italy. Some of them are taken from letters written to Gerber. Most of these letters are reprinted in the *Taschenbuch*, but two of them are not. Accordingly, I have translated those two (which Weininger sent from Syracuse, on 3 and 19 August). The other remarks are from letters to Rappaport.

Although these letters were written before the "Final Aphorisms", Rappaport clearly thought that they bring a certain closure to Weininger's work, anticipating as they do his suicide. He placed them at the very end of his Foreword (pp. xix-xxiv), and I think it appropriate to append them here.

*

Letters to Artur Gerber:

Syracuse, 3 August, 1903

– – Instead of waiting for a long time in Ancona for a ship, I have travelled here via Rome, Naples, Messina, Taormina (one of the most beautiful places on earth), and Catania (Etna).

In Rome I heard *Il Trovatore*, which contains the most splendid representation of heart-beats, and I am more than ever of the opinion that Verdi was a genius. Two evenings ago, in a magical place on the beach by the moonlit, womanly sea, between the papyrus-grove of the Arethus fountain and the sailing ships of the harbour, I heard the Corso military band play *Cavaleria Rusticana*.

At the time he wrote that, Mascagni was *great*. I have now seen the area in which it takes place, went to Francofonte not far away, and was very pleased by how accurately I had pictured it: the *blondest grain (la cirasa)*. It is the most fertile area of Europe. I have sought and found a wealth of information about the Sicilian peasant duels, and after a fashion even enjoyed instruction from a goatherd, who really and truly played, on pan-pipes that he had whittled himself – and indeed, very badly, a melody from *The Barber of Seville*, which did not suit the locale at all. – Do not envy me too much, however, even if what I have written you should fill you with longing.

Syracuse is the most singular place in the world. Here I could only be born or die – not live.

On Etna, it was the imposing shamelessness of the crater that gave me the most to think about. A crater is reminiscent of a mandrill's behind.

I advise you very strongly to get busy with Beethoven. He is the absolute opposite of Shakespeare, and Shakespeare, or being like Shakespeare, as I see ever more clearly, is something that every great person must, and does, overcome. With Shakespeare the world has no centre, with Beethoven it has one. – – –

Syracuse, 19 August, 1903

The enclosures, apart from the usual postcard¹, are:

2 blossoms from a papyrus bush,
1 little piece of bast from its stem,

which you have to attribute to the fact that a plant was cut down against my express desire, and without my knowledge. This was done by the skipper of the rowboat in which I ascended the river Anapo, which is bordered with papyrus, to its source at the famous Cyane. (I unconditionally recommend this to you {and indeed by boat, too}, if you come to Syracuse.)

The other post-card is even made from the papyrus that grows here, and offers a very poor view of the ruins of the ancient Greek theatre, which is the place, among all the spots I know, where I can best endure to watch the sun set.

Letters to Moriz Rappaport:

Casamicciola, Isola d'Ischia

Things are much worse than I, myself, thought just two days ago – nearly hopeless.²

¹ You must think of the houses as all yellow (like Schönbrunn), the sea as perfectly blue, and the sky as absolutely cloudless.

² At the time of the completion of ULD in Syracuse. (Note by Rappaport.)

[This letter was written on 21 August, and mailed along with the MS. of *Über die letzten Dinge* (and the *Taschenbuch*) to Rappaport, who writes: “in Syracuse he wrote most of this book. Then he stopped in Calabria, visited Casamicciola on the Island of Ischia, and also went to see Rome and Florence.... In the last days of September he returned to Vienna.” (xviii) By this time, Weininger's mental health was steadily deteriorating, but he was nonetheless able to write down the “Final Aphorisms”. By 4 October he was dead.

As his admirers often note, there was a partial eclipse of the moon at the time of his funeral.]

Sorrento

The snake is the symbol of the lie (forked tongue, shedding of the skin, its slithering the opposite of birds' flight – the snake as the (internal) enemy of the bird).... For the Greeks there was, in the narrower sense, no solitude, and no time problem. There is similarity between the Greeks and Beethoven, in that for both the world had a centre; Shakespeare was the complete opposite. With the former there is polarized light, with the latter unpolarized. With Shakespeare, the opposite of compassion is not cruelty but apathy....

Naples

The lamb is the most pious animal, although it is also sinful – namely, tired and cowardly; sloth and cowardice are related, as are industriousness and courage....

*

Is the earthquake not related to the convulsions of the epileptic?

*

The expression: "You will be afraid once again of your godlikeness," indicates that Goethe also once aspired to be God, and later grew more moderate.

*

Are the horsefly (which has a certain sadistic beauty, by the way), and the flea and the bedbug also made by God? One will not and cannot accept that. They are symbols for something from which God has turned away, and mirror to the human being certain things within him, just as the ocean mirrors the sky. However, if skunks and sulphur are not made by God, then the principle reflection about birds and trees is also cancelled; these, too, are only symbols of the human, all too human. Otherwise, there would be perfection and fulfilment everywhere, instead of mere appearance. God cannot be in any of these particulars, for God is the good – and God creates only himself, and nothing else.

*

The Russians are the least Greek of all peoples.

*

The coiling of the snake is symbolic for the twisting flexibility of the liar.

*

All illness is ugly. That is why it must be a sin.

*

The small dog that barks and then recoils again, is the frightful person who commits a small sin, and immediately turns back and whimpers for mercy – and who is never in despair, like the murderer.

*

The discontinuity in the passage of time is the immoral in it; that is why there is no holiness between one fall and the next.

*

All morality is creative; that is why the criminal is not industrious and not productive (he has no will to value). If women were genuinely moral, then they would have to be creative.

*

Suicide is not a sign of courage, but of cowardice, even if it is the least of the cowardly acts.

*

Fear is the reverse of *all* will. Forward something, backwards nothing. That is why, when you are walking along a path, it is uncomfortable to turn around suddenly and catch sight of the route you have covered (unidirectionality of time).

Thus I still believe that fear is closely related to immortality; the more the feeling for chaos grows, the more one wants to be cosmos. The nothing is the border of the something, and if a person becomes everything, becomes God, then he has no borders, and no more fear. But probably just before that, he has the last, greatest fear to conquer....

WITH HIS SUICIDE IN 1903, AT THE AGE OF TWENTY THREE, OTTO WEININGER BECAME A CENTRAL FIGURE IN THE MYTHOLOGY OF *FIN-DE- SIECLE* VIENNA. HIS BOOK, *SEX AND CHARACTER*, INFLUENCED TWO GENERATIONS OF ARTISTS AND WRITERS, PSYCHOLOGISTS AND PHILOSOPHERS, BEFORE BEING BANNED BY NAZI CENSORS. *ON LAST THINGS* IS A VOLUME OF ESSAYS WHICH WEININGER LEFT HIS LITERARY EXECUTOR. IT WAS PUBLISHED IN 1904 AND REPRINTED MANY TIMES. IT HAS NOT APPEARED BEFORE IN ENGLISH.



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- Edwin Mellen -