

The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche

2

**Unfashionable
Observations**

*Translated, with an Afterword,
by Richard T. Gray*

Unfashionable Observations

Volume Two

*Based on the edition by
Giorgio Colli & Mazzino Montinari
as adapted by Ernst Behler*

Van
Friedrich
Nietzsche

Für eine und Orchester bearbeitet von Peter

Gewiss, la Esch mir Freund zum Freund,
Dass ich die ganze Welt habe
ich die Welt, die ich die Welt,
ich die Welt, die ich die Welt,
ich die Welt, die ich die Welt,
ich die Welt, die ich die Welt,
ich die Welt, die ich die Welt,
ich die Welt, die ich die Welt,

Das Wort
wird,
Denn,
mit

sein
Geben
ist
wird
in

The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche
EDITED BY BERND M...
University of California

Friedrich Nietzsche

Unfashionable Observations

*Translated, with an Afterword,
by Richard T. Gray*

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Contents

A NOTE ON THIS EDITION ix

Unfashionable Observations

<i>First Piece</i>	David Strauss the Confessor and the Writer	3
<i>Second Piece</i>	On the Utility and Liability of History for Life	83
<i>Third Piece</i>	Schopenhauer as Educator	169
<i>Fourth Piece</i>	Richard Wagner in Bayreuth	257

Reference Matter

NOTES 335

TRANSLATOR'S AFTERWORD 395

INDEX OF PERSONS 415

A Note on This Edition

This is the first English translation of all of Nietzsche's writings, including his unpublished fragments, with annotation, afterwords concerning the individual texts, and indexes, in 20 volumes. The aim of this collaborative work is to produce a critical edition for scholarly use. Volume 1 also includes an introduction to the entire edition. While the goal is to establish a readable text in contemporary English, the translation follows the original as closely as possible. All texts have been translated anew by a group of scholars, and particular attention has been given to maintaining a consistent terminology throughout the volumes. The translation is based on *Friedrich Nietzsche: Sämtliche Werke. Kritische Studienausgabe in 15 Bänden* (1980), edited by Giorgio Colli andazzino Montinari. The still-progressing *Kritische Gesamtausgabe der Werke*, which Colli and Montinari began in 1963, has also been consulted. The Colli-Montinari edition is of particular importance for the unpublished fragments, comprising more than half of Nietzsche's writings and published there for the first time in their entirety. Besides listing textual variants, the annotation to this English edition provides succinct information on the text and identifies events, names (except those in the Index of Persons), titles, quotes, and biographical facts of Nietzsche's own life. The notes do not have numbers in the text but are keyed by line and phrase. The Afterword presents the main facts about the

origin of the text, the stages of its composition, and the main events of its reception. The Index of Names includes mythological figures and lists the dates of birth and death as well as prominent personal characteristics.

ERNST BEHLER

Unfashionable Observations

David Strauss the Confessor
and the Writer

I

Public opinion in Germany appears almost to forbid one to speak of the deleterious and dangerous consequences of war, especially of a war that ends in victory; as a result, the populace at present is all the more willing to listen to those writers who know of no opinion that is more important than public opinion, and who consequently compete with one another in their zeal to exalt the war and to inquire jubilantly into the powerful phenomenon of its influence on morality, culture, and art. Despite all this, let it be said: a great victory is a great danger. It is more difficult for human nature to endure victory than to endure defeat; indeed, it even appears to be easier to achieve such a victory than to endure it in such a way that it does not result in a more serious defeat. But of all the deleterious consequences of the recently fought war with France, the worst is perhaps one widely held, even universal error: the erroneous idea harbored by public opinion and all public opinionators that in this struggle German culture also came away victorious, and that it must therefore now be adorned with laurels befitting such extraordinary events and achievements. This delusion is extremely pernicious; not simply because it is a delusion—for delusions can be of the most salutary and blessed nature—but rather because it is capable of transforming our victory into a total defeat: *into the defeat—indeed, the extirpation—of the German spirit for the sake of the “German Reich.”*

Even if we were to grant that this war represented the battle

between two cultures, the measure of value for the victorious culture would still be a very relative one, and under certain circumstances it would by no means warrant either victory celebrations or self-glorification. For it would be a matter
5 of knowing the worth of the subjugated culture: perhaps its worth is small, in which case victory, even if accompanied by the most spectacular military successes, would not provide the victorious culture with just cause for a sense of triumph. On the other hand, in the case at hand one can by no means speak
10 of a victory of German culture, if only for the simple reason that French culture subsists as it did heretofore, and because we Germans are just as dependent on it as we were heretofore. German culture played no part whatsoever in our military successes. Strict military discipline, natural courage and perseverance,
15 superiority of leadership, unity and obedience among the led—in short, qualities that have nothing at all to do with culture—brought us victory over enemies who lacked the most important of these qualities; we can only be surprised that what in Germany is called “culture” had so little power to inhibit
20 the development of these principles that have contributed to our great military success. Perhaps this is the case only because this thing that in Germany is called culture considered it more advantageous, in this instance, to demonstrate its subservience to these other principles. However, if one allows it to flourish
25 and proliferate, if one pampers it with the flattering delusion that it has been victorious, then it has the potential, as I have maintained, to extirpate the German spirit—and who knows whether once this has occurred we will still be able to accomplish anything with what remains of the German body!

30 Should it be possible for the Germans to mobilize that calm and tenacious courage, which they opposed to the pathetic and sudden impetuosity of the French, against their own inner enemy, against that extremely ambiguous and unquestionably nonnative “cultivatedness” which, in a perilous misunderstanding,
35 in present-day Germany is called culture, then all hope for a truly genuine German cultivation, the opposite of that

cultivatedness, would not be in vain, for the Germans never lacked the most clear-sighted and daring leaders and generals; these latter, however, often enough lacked Germans. But for me it becomes ever more doubtful—and since the war, more
5 improbable with each passing day—that it will be possible to channel German courageousness in this new direction, for I see how everyone is convinced that such a battle and such courage are no longer necessary. Indeed, all of us are convinced that for the moment almost everything is ordered as neatly as possible
10 and that, at any rate, everything of any consequence has long been discovered and accomplished—in short, that the finest seeds of culture have been sown, and that in some areas they are already pushing up their green shoots or even standing in full flower. In this domain there is not only complacency, but
15 even joy and delirium. I perceive this delirium and this joy in the incomparably confident behavior both of German journalists and of our fabricators of novels, tragedies, poems, and histories, for they obviously constitute a homogeneous group of people who seem to have conspired to take control of the modern
20 human being's hours of idleness and meditation—that is, of his “cultured” moments—and to drug him by means of the printed word. Ever since the war, this group of people has been rife with joy, dignity, and self-assurance; in the wake of such “successes of German culture,” they believe not only that they
25 have been confirmed and sanctioned, but even ordained almost sacrosanct; hence they speak all the more pompously, delight in addressing the German people, publish collected works in the manner of the classical authors, and actually exploit the worldwide circulation of the journals at their disposal in order
30 to proclaim certain individuals from among their own ranks as new German classical authors and model writers. Perhaps we should expect that the more circumspect and educated parts of German cultured society would have recognized the dangers inherent in this sort of *abuse of success*, or at least that they would
35 have sensed the embarrassing nature of this spectacle, for what can be more embarrassing than to watch a deformed man strut

like a rooster before a mirror and exchange admiring glances with his own reflection? But the scholarly class gladly leaves well enough alone, and it has enough to do in looking after itself, without taking on the additional burden of caring for the well-being of the German spirit. Furthermore, its representatives are absolutely convinced that their own cultivation is the ripest and finest that was ever produced by this or any other age, and they show absolutely no understanding for those who express concerns about the general state of German cultivation, for the simple reason that, always interacting only among themselves and with their innumerable equals, they believe themselves to be far beyond concerns of this sort. Yet it cannot escape the attention of the more careful observer, especially if he is a foreigner, that the only difference between what the German scholar calls his cultivation and that triumphant cultivation of the new German classical authors lies in the quantity of their knowledge; wherever it is a question not of knowledge but of capability, not of information but of artistry—in other words, wherever life is supposed to bear witness to the character of cultivation—there is now only *one* German cultivation—and this cultivation is supposed to have triumphed over France?

This assertion seems completely incomprehensible. To be sure, all impartial judges, including the French themselves, have recognized that the Germans' decisive advantage lies precisely in the more comprehensive knowledge of the German officers, in the superior training of the German troops, and in their more scientific conduct of war. But in what sense can German cultivation, if one were to subtract from it all this German learnedness, be said to have triumphed? In no sense whatsoever, for the moral qualities of stricter discipline and of silent obedience, which distinguished, for example, the Macedonian armies from the incomparably more cultivated Greek armies, have nothing at all to do with cultivation. Only a confusion makes it possible to speak of the victory of German cultivation and culture, a confusion that derives from the fact that in Germany the pure concept of culture has been lost.

Above all else, culture is a unity of artistic style that manifests itself throughout all the vital self-expressions of a people. However, vast knowledge and pedantic learning are neither a requisite means to, nor a symptom of, culture; indeed, these
5 generally prove themselves most compatible with the opposite of culture, with barbarism—that is, with absence of style, or with the chaotic hodgepodge of all styles.

The German of today lives in this chaotic hodgepodge of all styles, and we face the serious problem of understanding how,
10 with all his learnedness, he not only fails to recognize this, but is even able to celebrate heartily what he deems his present state of “cultivation.” Everything in his world should apprise him of this chaos: every glance at his clothes, his room, and his house; every walk through the streets of his cities; every
15 visit he pays to the shops of the fashion mongers; amid this sociable intercourse he should become aware of the origin of his manners and gestures; amid our artistic institutions, in his joy at the concert halls, theaters, and museums, he should become aware of the grotesque juxtaposition and jumbling of
20 all possible styles. The German amasses around himself all the forms, colors, products, and curiosities of all ages and climes and thereby produces that modern carnival motley which his scholars then can explore and define as “the modern as such,” while he calmly remains seated amid the stylistic tumult. With
25 this type of “culture”—which, if the truth be known, is nothing but a phlegmatic insensitivity to culture—one can vanquish no enemies, least of all those who, like the French, have a genuine, productive culture—regardless of its relative worth—and from whom we Germans have hitherto copied everything,
30 albeit for the most part without skill.

Even if we had actually ceased to imitate the French, that would still not imply that we had triumphed over them, but only that we had liberated ourselves from our subordination to them: only if we had imposed upon the French an original
35 German culture would we legitimately be able to speak of a triumph of German culture. Meanwhile, we can scarcely help

but note that we—necessarily—remain dependent upon Paris in all matters of form, for up to the present day there has never been an original German culture.

All of us Germans should know this about ourselves, especially since it was publicly divulged by one of the few among us who had the right to express it in a tone of reproach. "We Germans are of yesterday," Goethe once said to Eckermann; "it is true that we have been actively cultivating ourselves for a century, but another couple of centuries may have to pass before our countrymen will have absorbed sufficient spirit and higher culture for one to be able to say of them: it has been a long time *since they were barbarians.*"

2

But if it is so evident that our public and private lives do not bear the stamp of a productive and stylistically coherent culture; if, in addition, our great artists have gravely and emphatically acknowledged and continue to acknowledge with the honesty that is peculiar to greatness this appalling and, for a talented people, profoundly humiliating fact, then how is it yet possible that among cultivated Germans the greatest contentment nonetheless prevails, a contentment that, since the last war, has even repeatedly shown itself ready to break out in arrogant jubilation and to wax triumphant? We live, at any rate, under the illusion of having a genuine culture; only the rare few seem even to notice the appalling incongruity between this contented, indeed, triumphant faith and the blatant defect it conceals. For all those who opine with public opinion have bound their eyes and plugged their ears—this incongruity simply ought not to exist. How is this possible? What force is so powerful that it can dictate such an "ought not"? What species of human being must have risen to power in Germany that they are able to forbid, or at least prevent the expression of, such strong and simple feelings? Let me call this power, this species of human being, by its name—they are the *cultivated philistines.*

The word "philistine," as is well known, is drawn from the

vocabulary of university students and signifies in its wider but wholly popular sense the opposite of the son of the muses, the artist, the genuinely cultured person. However, the cultivated philistine—whose type it is today our disagreeable duty
5 to study, and whose confessions, if he offers them, we must listen to—is distinguished from the general idea of the species “philistine” on the basis of a single superstition: he fancies himself to be a son of the muses and a cultured person, an incomprehensible delusion that makes evident he does not even
10 know the difference between the philistine and its opposite, and this is the reason why we will not be surprised to find that he usually denies solemnly that he is a philistine. Due to this total lack of self-knowledge, he feels firmly convinced that his “cultivation” is precisely that satiated expression of proper German
15 culture, and since he everywhere encounters cultured people of this same type, and since all public institutions, all institutes of schooling, education, and art, are organized along the lines of his cultivatedness and according to his needs, he thus carries around with him wherever he goes the triumphant feel-
20 ing of being the worthy representative of present-day German culture, making his demands and laying his claims accordingly. If, however, true culture presupposes at the very least stylistic unity, and if even a bad and degenerate culture cannot be conceived other than as diversity brought together in the harmony
25 of a single style, then the confusion that reigns in the deluded mind of the cultural philistine probably derives from the fact that, discovering everywhere people cast from the same mold as himself, he infers from this uniformity of all “cultivated persons” the stylistic unity of German cultivation—in short,
30 a culture. He perceives around himself nothing but identical needs and similar views; wherever he goes he is immediately embraced by the bond of a silent convention about many things, especially with regard to matters of religion and art: this impressive uniformity, this *tutti unisono* that, though unsummoned, nevertheless breaks out immediately, seduces him into
35 believing that a culture holds sway here. But the fact alone that

this systematic and ruling philistinism has a system does not suffice to make it a culture — not even a bad culture; instead, it is always only the opposite of culture, namely, barbarism built to last. For that entire unity of character which so monotonously strikes us about every cultivated person in present-day Germany becomes unity only on the basis of the conscious or unconscious exclusion and negation of all the artistically productive forms and demands of a true style. An unfortunate warping must have occurred in the mind of the cultivated philistine: he mistakes for culture precisely that which culture negates, and since he proceeds with consistency, he eventually obtains a coherent group of such negations, a system of nonculture to which one might actually be able to concede a certain “stylistic unity” — assuming that it makes any sense at all to speak of stylized barbarism. If he is allowed to choose freely between an action in accordance with style and its opposite, then he always opts for the latter, and because of this choice all his actions bear a negatively uniform stamp. It is precisely in this that he recognizes the character of the “German culture” he has patented: whatever fails to conform with this he views as hostile to him and counter to his aims. In such cases the cultivated philistine only wards off, negates, withdraws, plugs his ears, looks away; he is a negative being even in his hate and his enmity. But he hates no one more than those who treat him like a philistine and who tell him what he is: an impediment to all who are powerful and creative, a labyrinth to all who are circumspect and lost, a morass to all who are weary, leg irons to all those pursuing higher aims, a poisonous cloud to all fresh seeds, a parching desert to the German spirit seeking and thirsting for new life. For it does indeed *seek*, this German spirit! And you philistines hate it precisely because it seeks and because it refuses to believe that you have already found what it seeks. How is it possible that a type such as the cultivated philistine could have emerged at all and, once he had emerged, could ascend to the seat of supreme judge over all German cultural problems; how is this possible after a series of great heroic figures passed

before us who in all their movements, in all their facial expressions, their questioning voice, their blazing eye, betrayed only one single thing: *that they were seekers*, and that they fervently and with earnest perseverance sought precisely what the cultivated philistine deludes himself into believing he possesses: a genuine originary German culture. Is there a soil, they seem to have asked, that is so pure, so pristine, of such virginal sanctity that the German spirit might erect its house upon it and upon no other? Thus asking, they passed through the wilderness and the undergrowth of wretched times and cramped conditions, and as seekers they disappeared from our view, so that one of them, speaking for all, could say after reaching a ripe old age: “For half a century I have endured hardship and granted myself no rest, but instead have continually striven and investigated and done as well and as much as I could.”

But what kind of judgment does our philistine cultivation pass on these seekers? It takes them simply to be finders and seems to forget that they thought of themselves only as seekers. We do indeed have a culture, they then claim, for after all, we have our “classical authors”; not only is the foundation there, but the entire edifice already stands erected upon it—we ourselves are this edifice. Saying this, the philistine lays his hand on his own brow.

But in order to be able to pass such an erroneous judgment on our classical authors and honor them with such aspersions it is necessary that one not be acquainted with them in the least, and this is a general fact. For otherwise they would have to know that there is only one way of honoring them, namely by continuing to seek in their spirit and with their courage, without ever tiring. Merely to attach to them the provocative appellation “classical,” by contrast, and to feel “edified” from time to time by their works—that is, to abandon oneself to those jaded and egoistic sensations that await each paying visitor at our concert halls and theaters, and to dedicate statues and initiate festivals and societies in their names—all this is only a small payment with which the cultivated philistine settles ac-

counts with the classical authors so that in all the rest he no longer need know them, and above all so that he need not follow them and seek further. For the watchword of the philistine is: "We should seek no further."

5 At one time this watchword made a certain sense: in the first decade of this century in Germany when so much confused seeking, experimenting, destroying, promising, surmising, hoping began and got so muddled that the intellectual middle class was justified in fearing for itself. At that time
10 it was justified in rejecting with a shrug of its shoulders that brew of fantastic and language-perverting philosophies, that fanatical-purposive view of history, that carnival of all gods and myths that the Romantics put together, as well as those poetic fashions and insanities born out of intoxication; it was
15 justified because the philistine is not even justified in indulging in debauchery. However, with that cunning characteristic of lower creatures, he exploited the opportunity to throw suspicion on the act of seeking as such and to promote instead the comfort of finding. The joys of philistinism unfolded be-
20 fore his very eyes: he fled from all that wild experimentation into the idyllic, and opposed to that unsettlingly creative drive of the artist a certain contentedness, a contentedness with his own narrowness, his own untroubledness, indeed, even with his own limited intelligence. Without any idle modesty his extended
25 finger pointed at all the hidden and secret crannies of his life, at the many moving and naive joys that grew in the most paltry depths of this uncultivated existence, as modest flowers, so to speak, in the mire of his philistine existence.

A few people with a gift for painting were at hand, and
30 with graceful strokes they portrayed the bliss, the coziness, the triviality, the peasantlike healthfulness and all that contentedness that the rooms of children, scholars, and peasants exude. Armed with such picture books of reality, these contented ones now sought once and for all to reach a compromise
35 agreement with the troublesome classical authors who expressed the demand that they continue seeking; they invented

the concept of the age of epigones just so that they might have some peace and so that they would be prepared to pass the impugning verdict "the work of an epigone" upon everything that was disquietingly modern. For similar reasons these very
5 same contented ones took control over the discipline of history in order to guarantee that they would have peace, and they sought to transform all those fields of study from which disruptions of their contentedness might yet be expected—especially philosophy and classical philology—into historical disci-
10 plines. They rescued themselves from fanaticism by means of historical consciousness—for history was no longer supposed to produce fanaticism, although Goethe was still able to believe this possible. On the contrary, numbing is now the aim of these unphilosophical admirers of the *nil admirari* when they
15 seek to understand everything historically. While pretending to hate fanaticism and intolerance in every form, what they really hated was domineering genius and the tyranny of true cultural demands, and therefore they expended all their energy crippling, numbing, or dissolving wherever freshness and power-
20 ful movements could be expected to arise. A philosophy that coyly cloaked the philistine confession of its author behind florid embellishments went beyond this by inventing a formula for the apotheosis of the trivial: it spoke of the rationality of all that is real and thereby carried favor with the cultivated philistine, who also loves florid embellishments, but who above all
25 conceives of only himself as real and treats his own reality as the measure of reason in the world. He then made it permissible for anyone, himself included, to reflect a little, to do research, to wax aesthetic, and above all to compose literature and music,
30 as well as to paint pictures and even create entire philosophies, but all this with the proviso that for heaven's sake everything had yet to remain as it was; at all costs, whatever is "rational," whatever is "real"—that is, whatever is philistine—was to remain unassailed. To be sure, from time to time the philistine enjoys abandoning himself to the delightful and daring excesses
35 of art and to a skeptical historiography, and he ascribes no

small value to the appeal of such distracting and entertaining objects, but he strictly segregates the "serious things in life" — that is, profession and business, together with wife and child — from amusement, and to the latter belongs just about every-
5 thing that has to do with culture. Therefore, woe be to any art that begins to be serious and that makes demands that threaten his livelihood, his business, and his habits — that threatens, in other words, his philistine seriousness; he averts his eyes from such art, as if he were looking at something obscene, and with
10 the expression of a guardian of chastity he admonishes every unprotected virtue to look away.

Seeing that he musters such eloquence in the art of dissuasion, the philistine is grateful to artists who heed him and let themselves be dissuaded; he lets such artists know that he
15 wishes to go easier on them and that from those who share his convictions he expects no sublime masterworks, but rather only two things: either imitation of reality to the point of apishly reproducing it in idylls or gently humoristic satires, or free imitations of the most recognized and famous works of the clas-
20 sical authors, while still leaving room for modest concessions to present-day taste. For if the only thing he values is epigone-like imitation or iconically true portraiture of the present, then he knows that the latter exalts the philistine himself and increases his contentedness with the "real," while the former at
25 least does him no harm and is even beneficial to his reputation as a classical judge of taste — one who, moreover, must expend no new effort because he has already settled accounts with the classical authors once and for all. Finally, he invents for his ha-
30 bituations, for his manner of viewing things, for his dislikes and likes, the universally effective formula "healthiness," and he eliminates every disruptive troublemaker with the insinuation of being sick and eccentric. Thus, David Strauss, a true *satisfait* with the state of our cultivation and a typical philistine, speaks at one point in a characteristic turn of phrase of "Arthur
35 Schopenhauer's admittedly wholly intelligent, but yet in many respects unhealthy and unprofitable philosophizing." It is, of

course, a cruel fact that "intelligence" tends to be especially fond of settling down on whatever is "unhealthy and unprofitable," and that even the philistine, if he for once is *honest* with himself, experiences in the philosophemes that those of his own ilk bring to the world and to market something that is in many respects an unintelligent, but nonetheless still thoroughly healthy and profitable philosophizing.

Now and again the philistines, provided they are among themselves, indulge in wine and recollect the great deeds of the war, honest, garrulous, and naïve; at such times much comes to light that otherwise is anxiously concealed, and on occasion one of them will even blab the fundamental secrets of the entire confraternity. Just recently a well-known aesthete of the Hegelian school of rationality did just that. The occasion, to be sure, was itself unusual enough; in noisy philistine circles the memory of a true and genuine nonphilistine was celebrated, someone, moreover, who in the strictest sense of the word foundered on the philistines: the memory of magnificent Hölderlin. And on this occasion this well-known aesthete was hence justified in speaking of tragic souls who founder on "reality" — provided the word "reality," at least, is understood in the sense described above to refer to philistine reason. But "reality" has become something different; we might pose the question whether Hölderlin would manage well in the present great time. "I don't know," says Friedrich Vischer, "whether his delicate soul would have endured that degree of roughness inherent in every war, whether it would have endured all the rottenness that we see progressing in diverse fields since the war. Perhaps he would have sunk back once more into despair. He was one of those vulnerable souls, he was the Werther of Greece, one hopelessly in love; he led a life full of gentleness and longing, but there was also strength and substance in his will, as well as greatness, fullness, and vitality in his style, which here and there reminds one of Aeschylus. However, his spirit had too few calluses; he lacked the weapon of humor; *he could not bear the thought that one could be a philistine and still not be a*

barbarian.” It is this final confession, not the eulogizer’s saccharine display of sympathy, that concerns us. Yes, one can admit to being a philistine, but to being a barbarian!? Never. Poor Hölderlin was unfortunately not able to make such fine distinctions. Of course, if when hearing the word “barbarism” one thinks of the opposite of civilization and perhaps even of piracy and cannibalism, then the distinction is correct. But obviously the aesthete wants to say to us: it is possible to be a philistine and still be a cultured person — herein lies the humor that poor Hölderlin lacked and, for lack of which he foundered.

On this occasion a second confession escaped the speaker: “It is not always will power, *but rather weakness* that transports us beyond that desire for the beautiful so profoundly felt by tragic souls” — so runs the confession, made in the name of the “we” who are gathered together, that is, in the name of those “transported beyond,” those “transported beyond” by weakness! Let’s be satisfied with these confessions! Now, at least, we know two things directly from the mouth of one of the initiated: first, that these “we” have truly gotten over the longing for beauty, indeed, have moved beyond it; and second, that this was accomplished through weakness! It is precisely this weakness that, in less indiscreet moments, otherwise bore a finer name: it was the famous “healthiness” of the cultivated philistine. But after being so instructed, we are perhaps well advised no longer to speak of them as the “healthy ones,” but rather as the *weakly ones*, or even stronger, as the *weaklings*. If only these weaklings did not hold the reins of power! Why need it concern them what they are called! For they are our rulers, and no true ruler is incapable of enduring derision. Yes, if one only has power, then one perhaps even learns to deride oneself. There is not much to lose by leaving oneself exposed, for what does the scarlet robe, what does the cloak of triumph not cover! The strength of the cultivated philistine comes to light when he admits his weakness, and the more often and more cynically he admits it, the more clearly he betrays his sense of self-importance and superiority. This is the age of cynical philistine

confessions. Much in the same way that Friedrich Vischer made his confessions in a word, David Strauss has made his confessions in a book, and this book of confessions is every bit as cynical as that word.

3

David Strauss makes confessions about this philistine cultivation in a twofold way, through word and through act, namely, through *the word of the confessor and the act of writing*. His book entitled "The Old and the New Faith" is in its content, on the one hand, and as book and literary product, on the other, one uninterrupted confession, and the fact alone that he lets himself make public confessions about his beliefs already constitutes a confession.—Anyone who has reached his fortieth year should have the right to write an autobiography, for even the most insignificant person can have experienced and seen up close something that the thinker may find worthwhile and noteworthy. But to make a confession about one's beliefs must be considered incomparably more exacting, because it presupposes that the confessor ascribes value not only to what he has experienced, explored, or seen during his lifetime, but even to what he has believed. Now, absolutely the last thing a true thinker will wish to know from natures such as Strauss's is the kind of beliefs they tolerate and whatever it is that they "have half-dreamily thought up" (p. 10) regarding things about which only those who know them first-hand have the right to speak. Who would sense the need for a confession of faith from the likes of a Ranke or a Mommsen, both of whom, moreover, were scholars and historians of a totally different ilk than David Strauss; but even they would nevertheless overstep their bounds in annoying fashion if they ever sought to entertain us with their beliefs rather than with their scholarly knowledge. But this is precisely what Strauss does when he tells us about his beliefs. No one desires to know anything about these matters, except perhaps for a few narrow-minded adversaries of Strauss's dogmas who suspect that behind them lie truly dia-

bolical articles of faith, and who must hope that by divulging such diabolical second thoughts Strauss might compromise his scholarly claims. Perhaps these gruff fellows have actually found in this new book just what they were looking for; we
5 others, who have no cause to suspect such diabolical second thoughts, have found nothing of the sort and would by no means be dissatisfied if it were all a bit more diabolical. For certainly, no evil spirit speaks in the manner in which Strauss speaks of his beliefs, but absolutely no intelligent spirit would
10 speak in this manner, least of all a true genius. On the contrary, the only people who speak in this manner are those to whom Strauss introduces us as his "we," those who, if they told us their beliefs, would bore us even more than if they told us their dreams, regardless of whether they are "scholars or art-
15 ists, civil servants or military personnel, businessmen or landowners, all of whom number in the thousands and are hardly the worst people in the land." If they choose to break their silence and seek instead to voice their confessions, even then the noisy din of their *unisono* will not be able to deceive us about
20 the poverty and vulgarity of the tune they sing. How can it dispose us more favorably to hear that a confession is shared by many if it is a confession of the sort that we would not permit anyone who would dare set about relating it to finish speaking without interrupting him with a yawn? If you really have such
25 beliefs, we would have to inform him, then for heaven's sake don't divulge them. It may be that in times past a few harmless people sought a thinker in David Strauss; now they have found the believer and are disappointed. If he had kept silent, then at least for these few he would have remained a philosopher,
30 whereas now no one takes him to be a philosopher. But he also no longer covets the honor of being a thinker; he only wants to be a new believer and is proud of his "new faith." By confessing it in writing he thinks he is composing the catechism "of modern ideas" and building the broad "universal avenue of the
35 future." Indeed, our philistines are no longer discouraged and disgraced, but in fact are confident to the point of cynicism.

There once was a time—a time, to be sure, that is long past—in which the philistine was tolerated simply because he did not speak and was not spoken of; then came a time in which we fondled his wrinkles, found him amusing, and spoke of him.

5 This attentiveness gradually turned him into a dandy, and he began to enjoy his wrinkles and his wrongheaded and simple-minded idiosyncrasies with all his heart; then he himself began to speak, somewhat in the manner of Riehl's *House Music*. "But what's this I see! Is it a phantom, or is it reality? Look how

10 my poodle grows long and wide!" For now he is already wallowing like a hippopotamus on the "universal avenue of the future," and his growling and barking has become the proud sound characteristic of the founders of religions. Is it perhaps your wish, Master, to found the religion of the future? "The

15 time does not yet appear to me to be ripe (p. 8). It has not even crossed my mind to seek to destroy any church."—But why not, Master? It's only a question of whether one has the ability. Besides, in all honesty, you yourself believe that you have the ability: just look at your last page. There you know, after all,

20 that your new avenue "is the sole universal avenue of the future, which only requires some finishing touches in places and basically just needs to be driven on more often in order to become comfortable and agreeable." Don't deny it any longer: the religion founder has been revealed, the new, comfortable, and

25 agreeable highway to the Straussian paradise has been built. It is only with the coach in which you wish to transport us, you humble man, that you are not wholly satisfied; after all, you ultimately tell us "that I cannot claim that the coach to which I have entrusted my valuable readers and myself meets all the

30 requirements" (p. 367): "we sense that we have been thoroughly jolted about." Oh, so you are fishing for compliments, you coquettish religion founder. But we prefer to speak with sincerity. If your reader prescribes for himself the 368 pages of your religion catechism in such a way that he reads one page every day

35 of the year, that is, in the smallest of doses, then we believe that by the end he will feel ill: out of anger, namely, that it has no

effect. It is better instead to gulp it down valiantly!, as much as possible in a single draught!, following the prescribed dosage of all fashionable books. This way the drink can do no damage, this way the drinker by no means feels ill and angry afterward; instead, he feels happy and in good spirits, as if nothing had happened, no religion destroyed, no universal avenue built, no confession made—that's what I call an effect! Doctor, medicine, and illness, all forgotten! And the joyful laughter! The continuous itch to laugh! You are to be envied, sir, for you have founded the most agreeable religion, namely, one whose founder is continuously honored by being laughed at.

4

The philistine as the founder of the religion of the future—that is the new faith in its most impressive form; the philistine turned fanatic—that is the unheard of phenomenon that distinguishes Germany today. But let's provisionally preserve a certain degree of caution even with regard to this fanaticism; after all, none other than the likes of David Strauss himself has advised us in the following wise words to exercise such caution—words in which, to be sure, we are not so much supposed to think of Strauss as we are of the founder of Christianity (p. 80): “we know: there have been noble, intelligent fanatics, a fanatic can stimulate, elevate, can even have a historically enduring influence, but that would still be no reason to choose him as the guiding light of our life. He will lead us astray if we fail to place his influence under the control of reason.” We know even more than this, namely, that there can also be unintelligent fanatics, fanatics who do not stimulate, do not elevate, and who yet hold out the prospect of being guiding lights of our lives and of having a historically enduring influence and dominating the future; we are all the more compelled to place their fanaticism under the control of reason. Lichtenberg has even expressed the opinion: “There are fanatics without abilities, and in such instances they are truly dangerous people.” For the time being we desire, if only for the sake of this controlling reason, noth-

ing but an honest answer to three questions. First: How does the new believer conceive his heaven? Second: What is the extent of the courage with which these new beliefs provide him? And third: How does he write his books? Strauss the confessor
5 will answer the first and second questions for us; Strauss the writer the third.

Of course, the heaven of the new believer has to be a heaven on earth, because for those who stand “even with only one foot” on the Straussian standpoint, the Christian “prospect of an immortal, heavenly life, complete with all the other solaces,” is “irretrievably lost” (p. 364). The manner in which a religion depicts its heaven is significant, and if it is true that for Christianity there are no other heavenly occupations than music making and singing, then this, to be sure, may not be a
10 comforting prospect for the Straussian philistine. However, in this book of confessions there is one paradisiacal page, page 294: this is the parchment that you will want to unroll prior to all others, most fortunate philistines! Here all of heaven descends to you. “We only want to indicate what it is with which
15 we now concern ourselves,” says Strauss, “and have concerned ourselves for years. In addition to our occupations—for we belong to the most diverse occupational groups, we are by no means only scholars or artists, rather we are civil servants, military personnel, businessmen, and landowners, and once again,
20 as already stated, there are not just a few of us, but many thousands, nor are we to be counted among the worst people in the land—in addition to our occupations, as I was saying, we seek to keep our minds as open as possible for all the higher interests of humanity; over the last years we have taken lively interest
25 in our great national war and in the establishment of the German state, and we sense that we have been inwardly elevated by this turning point in the destiny of our severely tried nation, a turning point that is as unexpected as it is magnificent. We aid in the understanding of these things by contributing historical
30 studies, which, thanks to a series of attractive and popularly written historical works, have now been made accessible even
35

to the layman; at the same time we seek to broaden our understanding of the natural world, and to this end there is likewise no lack of generally comprehensible study aids; and finally, we find in the writings of our great poets and in the performance
5 of the works of our great composers stimulation for mind and soul, for our imagination and our sense of humor, that leaves nothing to be desired. Thus we live and go our way in bliss."

"That's our man," cheers the philistine upon reading this; for this is really how we live, this is really how we spend our
10 days. And how well he understands how to express things euphemistically! What else can he possibly mean, for example, by the historical studies with which we contribute to an understanding of the political situation than the newspapers we read, what else by our lively participation in the establishment of
15 the German state than our daily visits to the beer hall? And isn't it a stroll through the zoo that he refers to as the "generally comprehensible study aids" by means of which we broaden our understanding of the natural world? And finally—theater
20 and concerts from which we bring home "stimulation for our imagination and our sense of humor" that "leaves nothing to be desired"—with what wile and wit he dignifies the dubious! "That's our man, for his heaven is our heaven!"

So the philistine cheers, and if we are not as satisfied as he is, then this is because we crave to know more. Scaliger was in
25 the habit of saying: "What does it matter to us whether Montaigne drank red or white wine!" But how highly we would value such detailed information in this more important matter! Suppose we were to find out how many pipefuls the philistine
30 smokes each day according to the regulations of the new faith, and whether the *Spener Zeitung* or the *Nationalzeitung* is the more congenial newspaper for him to read while drinking his coffee. Oh, the unstilled longing of our drive for knowledge! Only in one point are we more fully apprised, and fortunately this information concerns the heaven of heavens, namely those
35 private little art rooms consecrated to the great poets and musicians and in which the philistine "edifies" himself, in which,

moreover, according to his own admission, "all his blemishes are purged and washed away" (p. 363), so that we might come to view those private art rooms as tiny lustral baths. "Yet that is only for fleeting moments, it occurs and is valid only in the realm of the imagination; as soon as we return to crude reality and the constraints of life, our old cares descend upon us again from all sides"—so our master sighs. But let's make good use of those fleeting moments that we are able to spend lingering in these little rooms; we have just enough time to take a good look from various vantage points at the ideal image of the philistine, that is, of *the philistine who is purged of all blemishes* and who now is the purest specimen of the philistine type. In all seriousness, it is instructive to see what presents itself here; may no one who has fallen victim to this book of confessions let it fall from his hands without having read the two addenda with the titles "On Our Great Poets" and "On Our Great Musicians." Here the rainbow of the new covenant is spread before us, and whoever does not take pleasure in it "cannot be helped, he is"—as Strauss says on another occasion, but could just as well say here—"not yet ripe for our standpoint." We are clearly in the heaven of heavens. Our enthusiastic tour guide sets about showing us around and excuses himself in advance for the eventuality that, due to the superabundance of his pleasure at all this magnificence, he might talk too much. "If I should perhaps become more loquacious than will seem proper for this occasion," he tells us, "then may the reader show me indulgence; out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. But let the reader be assured in advance that what he is about to read is not merely drawn from earlier writings and inserted here, but that it instead has been written for the present purpose and for this place" (p. 296). For a moment we are stunned by this confession. What do we care whether these charming little chapters were newly written! As if it were just a matter of writing! Just between us, I wish they had been written twenty-five years ago—at least then I would know why the ideas seem to me so faded and why they have the stench of moldy antiqui-

ties about them. But it arouses my suspicions when something written in 1872 already reeks of mold in 1872. Let's suppose that someone were to fall asleep over these chapters and their stench — what would he be likely to dream about? A friend to whom
 5 this actually happened has confided in me. He dreamed of a wax museum: the classical authors were all standing there, elegantly copied in wax and pearls. While they moved their arms and eyes, a screw inside them squeaked. There he saw something utterly uncanny, an unceremonious figure from which
 10 hung a volume and some yellowed paper and out of whose mouth a piece of paper protruded on which the name "Lessing" was written; as my friend approaches he becomes aware of something horrible: it is the Homeric chimera, Strauss from the front, Gervinus from the rear, and chimera in between — *in*
 15 *summa*, Lessing. This discovery exacted from him a cry of terror; he awoke with a start and did not read any further. Why in the world, Master, did you ever write such moldy little chapters!

To be sure, we do learn a few new things from these chapters: for example, that Gervinus has revealed to us in what ways and
 20 why Goethe possessed no dramatic talent; that in the second part of *Faust* Goethe only produced a schematic allegory; that Wallenstein was a Macbeth who is simultaneously Hamlet; that the Straussian reader plucks the novellas out of the *Wanderjahre* just like naughty children pluck the raisins and almonds from
 25 a batch of sticky dough; that no total effect can be achieved on the stage without the use of drastic, thrilling devices; and that Schiller emerged from Kant as if from a cold-water bath. All of this is truly quite new and striking, but despite the fact that it strikes us, it does not strike our fancy, and just as certain as
 30 this is new, it will certainly never grow old, because it was never young; rather, it sprang from its mother's womb already an avuncular idea. What strange ideas the new-age blessed arrive at in their aesthetic heaven. And we are justified in asking why they haven't at least forgotten some of them already, seeing as
 35 how they are simply so unaesthetic, so mundanely ephemeral, and bear the visible stamp of the foolish, to boot, just as is true,

for example, of the doctrines of Gervinus. But it almost seems as though Strauss's modest greatness and Gervinus's immodest minimity are only too compatible with one another, and so, hail to all the blessed ones, and hail as well to us unblessed ones if this undisputed art critic goes on spreading his studied enthusiasm and his hired-horse gallop, as honest Grillparzer so aptly put it, with the result that all too soon all of heaven will resound with the hoofbeat of this galloping enthusiasm. At least then things will get a bit more lively and noisier than they are now, where the creeping felt-slipped enthusiasm of our heavenly leader and the lukewarm rhetoric he mouths ultimately exhaust and disgust us. I'd like to know what a hallelujah would sound like out of Strauss's mouth; I think we would have to listen very carefully, for otherwise we might think we hear a polite excuse or a whispered gallantry. I can give an instructive and horrifying example of this. Strauss took offense at one of his antagonists for speaking of his reverence for Lessing — the poor man simply misunderstood! To be sure, Strauss maintains that one would have to be dull-witted not to sense that his simple words about Lessing in chapter 90 come from the warmth of his heart. Now, I by no means have any doubts about this warmth; on the contrary, Strauss's warmth for Lessing has always seemed somewhat suspicious; I find in Gervinus the same suspicious warmth for Lessing, raised to the boiling point. Indeed, on the whole, none of the major German writers is as popular with the minor German writers as Lessing, but this is no reason to be grateful to them; for what is it exactly in Lessing that they praise? For one thing, his universality: he is critic and poet, archaeologist and philosopher, dramatist and theologian. Then: "this unity of the writer and the human being, of mind and of heart." This latter feature distinguishes every major writer, sometimes even a minor one, for at base a narrow mind is horribly compatible with a narrow heart. Moreover, the first of these traits, that universality, is not of itself a distinction, especially since in Lessing's case it was a compulsion. On the contrary, what is precisely so amazing about these

Lessing enthusiasts is that they have no eye for that devouring compulsion that drove him through life and to this “universality,” no feeling for the fact that this human being, like a flame, burned out too quickly, nor are they indignant that such
5 a gently glowing soul was troubled, tortured, and suffocated by the vulgar narrowness and poverty of his circumstances, and especially by that of his learned contemporaries. They do not see that the purpose of this touted universality was simply to call forth profound sympathy. “Have pity,” Goethe admonishes
10 us, “on this extraordinary human being for the fact that since he lived in such a miserable time, he incessantly had to engage in polemics.” How can you possibly even think of this Lessing, my fine philistines, since it was precisely your numbing effect, the struggle against your ridiculous clods and gods, the de-
15 plorable state of your theaters, your scholars, your theologians, that destroyed him before he could dare even once that eternal flight which was his purpose in life? And what do you feel at the thought of Winckelmann, who went running to the Jesuits for help in order to free his gaze from your stupidities, and whose
20 disgraceful conversion dishonors you more than it does him? Are you even able to pronounce the name of Schiller without blushing? Just take a look at his picture! The flashing eyes that contemptuously pass over you, the fatal flush of his cheeks; doesn’t this say anything to you? This was such a glorious, di-
25 vine plaything, and you broke it. And if you remove Goethe’s friendship from this stunted life of a man who was harassed to death, then you would cause it to be extinguished even sooner! You have done nothing to further the life’s work of any of your great geniuses, and now you want to derive from this the
30 dogma that no one’s work should be furthered any longer? But for each of them you were that “opposition of the numbing world” that Goethe refers to by name in his epilogue to the “Bell”; for each of them you were the sullenly dull, or jealously narrow-minded, or maliciously selfish opponents: in spite of
35 you they created their works; against you they directed their attacks; and thanks to you they went under too soon, leaving

their day's work undone, broken or stunned by struggles. And now you are supposed to be allowed, *tanquam re bene gesta*, to praise such men! And with words, no less, that make it obvious who it is you really have in mind, words that "throng so warmly from the heart" for the simple reason that we would have to be dull-witted not to notice for whom they are actually intended to show reverence. In truth, we need a Lessing, even Goethe had proclaimed, and woe to all those vain masters and to the entire heavenly kingdom of aesthetes if ever the young tiger, whose uneasy strength is everywhere visible in bulging muscles and in the gaze of its eyes, goes out in search of prey!

5

How clever my friend was not to read further after being enlightened by this chimerical phantom about the Straussian Lessing and about Strauss himself. However, we read further and went on to request of the newly faithful doorkeeper permission to enter his *musical* sanctuary. The master opens the door, accompanies us, offers explanations, drops names—finally we come to a dead stop and eye him warily: might not the same thing happen to us as happened to my friend in his dream? The composers of whom Strauss speaks seem to us, as long as he speaks of them, to be falsely identified, and we are forced to believe that he must be talking about other composers—if, in fact, he is not simply describing some droll apparitions. Take, for example, when he speaks about Haydn with that same warmth that made us suspicious of his praise of Lessing and makes himself out to be a pope and high priest of the Haydnic mystery cult, while in the same breath comparing (p. 362) Haydn with "honest soup" and Beethoven with a "confection" (and that in reference to his quartets, of all things). From this we can conclude only one thing with certainty: *his* sugarcoated Beethoven is not *our* Beethoven, and his soup Haydn is not *our* Haydn. Furthermore, the master considers our orchestras too good to perform Haydn and is of the opinion that only the most modest dilettantes can do this music jus-

tice—once again proof that he is speaking of a different artist and of different works of art—perhaps of Riehl's *House Music*.

But who can Strauss's sugarcoated Beethoven possibly be? He is supposed to have composed nine symphonies, of which
5 the *Pastoral* is "the least inspired"; whenever working on the Third, as we are told, he felt the urge "to kick over the traces and go out in search of adventure," a phrase that almost suggests to us some kind of crossbreed, half horse, half knight. Concerning a certain *Eroica* it is claimed in all seriousness that
10 this centaur fails to clarify "whether it is a matter of an open-field battle or a struggle in the depths of the human heart." In the *Pastoral* he presents an "admirably raging storm" that is made "simply too insignificant" by the fact that it interrupts a peasants' dance; with the consequence that due to the "arbitrary
15 adherence to the underlying trivial occasion"—as Strauss puts it, in a phrase that is about as adroit as it is correct—that this symphony is "the least inspired"—the classical master even seems to have considered a cruder word, but he prefers to express himself here, as he himself says, "with all due modesty."
20 But no, in this our master for once is wrong, here he is really being too modest. Who if not Strauss himself, the only one who seems to be familiar with him, is supposed to teach us about this sugarcoated Beethoven? Besides, upon this there immediately follows a firm judgment—spoken with all due *immodesty*—
25 about nothing other than the Ninth Symphony: it is supposed, namely, to be loved only by those who take "the Baroque to be the mark of genius and view the formless as sublime" (p. 359). To be sure, even the harsh critic Gervinus applauded it, if only for the fact that it confirmed a Gervinian doctrine:
30 nevertheless, he, Strauss, is far from seeking *his* Beethoven's merit in such "problematical products." "It's a shame," our master proclaims amid gentle sighs, "that in the case of Beethoven our enjoyment and our admiration, which we gladly accord him, are spoiled by such reservations." Now, our master
35 himself, of course, is the darling of the muses: and they told him that they accompanied Beethoven only a short distance,

and that after that he lost sight of them. "This is a shortcoming," Strauss proclaims, but perhaps we ought to think that it could also be considered a merit. "Anyone who breathlessly and with great exertion pushes forward a musical idea will appear
5 to be moving something heavier and hence appear to be the stronger" (pp. 355, 356). This is a confession; however, it is not only a confession about Beethoven, but also a confession by the "classical prose writer" about himself: the muses take *him*, the famous writer, by the hand: from the play of lighthearted jokes
10 — that is, Straussian jokes — to the heights of earnestness — that is, Straussian earnestness — they remain unflinchingly at his side. He, the classical hack writer, moves his burden easily and playfully, whereas Beethoven breathlessly pushes his forward. He seems simply to dally along under all this weight: this is a
15 merit; but ought we not believe that it could also be considered a shortcoming? — But surely at most for those who consider the Baroque to be the mark of genius and view the formless as sublime — isn't that right, you dallying darling of the muses?

We begrudge no one those forms of edification he provides
20 himself in the quiet of his own little room or in a new, well done-up kingdom of heaven; but of all possible modes of edification, the Straussian has to be one of the strangest: for he edifies himself at a small sacrificial fire into which he calmly
25 tosses the most sublime works of the German nation in order to consecrate his idols in their smoking incense. If we imagine for a moment that by chance the *Eroica*, the *Pastoral*, and the Ninth Symphony fell into the hands of our high priest of the muses, and that he saw it as his duty to keep the master's image pure by getting rid of such "problematical products" — can anyone
30 have any doubt whatsoever that he would have burned them? And this is precisely how the Strausses of our day do in fact proceed: they want to know only as much about an artist as is appropriate for their domestic needs, and they recognize only the opposite extremes of consecrating something in smoking
35 incense or burning it. At any rate, they should always be at liberty to do this: the only surprising thing is that the aesthetic

opinions of the general public are so insipid, insecure, and easily misled that this public raises no objection when the most wretched philistinism makes such a spectacle of itself; indeed, that this public has no sense for the humor of a scene in which
 5 a wholly inartistic *minimaestro* sits in judgment of Beethoven. And in the matter of Mozart, surely what Aristotle said of Plato applies here, as well: "*his inferiors* have no business even praising him." But now both the public and the master have lost all sense of shame: not only is he permitted to make the sign
 10 of the cross in public over the greatest and purest products of Germanic genius, as if they were godless obscenities; the public also takes pleasure in his candid confessions and admissions of sin, especially when he is not confessing the sins he himself has committed, but rather those that great intellects are sup-
 15 posed to have committed. "Oh, if only our master were truly always right!" think Strauss's adoring readers while yet experiencing a fit of doubts; but he himself stands there, smiling and convinced, perorating, damning and blessing, tipping his hat to himself; and at any moment capable of saying what the
 20 Duchess Delaforte said to Madame de Staël: "I must confess, my dear friend, that I myself am the only person I know who is always right."

6

A corpse is a pleasant thought for a maggot, and a maggot a
 25 dreadful thought for everything living. In their dreams maggots imagine heaven as a fat carcass; philosophy professors picture themselves gnawing about in Schopenhauer's entrails; and ever since there have been rodents, there has also been a rodents' heaven. This provides us with an answer to our first
 30 question: How does the new believer conceive his heaven? The Straussian philistine dwells in the works of our great poets and composers like a maggot that lives by destroying, admires by consuming, and worships by digesting.

Now we come to our second question, which reads: How
 35 much courage does this new religion inspire in its believers?

We would already have an answer to this question, too, if courage and immodesty were one and the same thing: for in that case Strauss could not be found wanting of the true and just courage of a Mameluke; in any case, the due modesty of which

5 Strauss speaks in the reference to Beethoven cited above is merely a stylistic flourish, not a moral statement. Strauss indulges amply in the impudence to which every triumphant hero believes himself entitled; every flower grows for him, the victor, and for him alone, and he praises the sun for shining

10 through none other than *his* window at the right moment. Even the ancient and venerable universe does not escape unscathed from Strauss's praise, as if it first had to be consecrated by this praise and from that moment on would be permitted to revolve only around Strauss, the pivotal monad. The universe,

15 he instructs us, is a machine—to be sure, one made of iron, toothed cogs, heavy pistons, and rods; however, “it consists not merely in the movement of pitiless cogs, but also gushes soothing oil” (p. 365). The universe is most likely less than grateful to the metaphor-mad master for not being able to find

20 a better image with which to praise it, even though it should be pleased by the fact that Strauss has stooped to praising it at all. What do we call the oil that oozes from the pistons and rods of a machine? And of what comfort is it to the worker to know that this oil will gush over him while the machine is mangling

25 his limbs? Even if we assume that this is simply an unfortunate choice of metaphors, our attention is still attracted by yet another procedure Strauss employs, one by means of which he attempts to establish the nature of his own attitude toward the universe, and during which Gretchen's question is on the tip

30 of his tongue: “He loves me—he loves me not—he loves me?” Even if Strauss neither plucks petals nor counts buttons, what he does do is no less harmless, even though it may perhaps require more courage. In order to test empirically whether or not his sensitivity to the “universe” has gone numb and atrophied,

35 Strauss sticks himself: for he knows that a limb that has atrophied or gone numb feels no pain when stuck by a needle. To

be sure, he does not, in fact, actually stick himself, but chooses instead a much more violent procedure, which he describes in the following way: “we slap open Schopenhauer, who takes advantage of every opportunity to slap our idea in the face”
 5 (p. 143). Now since an idea—not even the loveliest Straussian idea of the universe—does not have a face, a quality that is reserved for the person who has an idea, this procedure must consist of the following individual actions: Strauss slaps open Schopenhauer—to be sure, he even slaps him *around*—where-
 10 upon Schopenhauer takes the opportunity to slap Strauss in the face. To this, Strauss “reacts religiously,” which means that he beats up some more on Schopenhauer, reviles him, accuses him of absurdities, blasphemies, and infamies, and even pronounces the judgment that Schopenhauer is out of his mind.
 15 The upshot of this mugging: “we demand for our universe the same piety as the devout of the old school demanded for their God”—in short: “he loves me!” He makes life difficult for himself, our darling of the muses, but he is as courageous as a Mameluke and fears neither the devil nor Schopenhauer. Just
 20 imagine how much “soothing oil” he will have to consume if such procedures are to be employed frequently!

On the other hand, we recognize the magnitude of Strauss’s debt to this Schopenhauer who tickles, jabs, and slaps; hence we are not surprised when he shows him an express act of
 25 kindness: “one need only leaf through Arthur Schopenhauer’s writings, although one would be well advised not merely to leaf through them, but to study them closely . . .” (p. 141). What right does the philistine chieftain have to say this? He who, as can easily be proved, never studied Schopenhauer, he
 30 on whom Schopenhauer would have to turn the tables and say: “this author that does not even deserve to be leafed through, let alone studied.” Apparently, in Strauss’s case Schopenhauer went down the wrong way: so he seeks to rid himself of him by clearing his throat. But in order to achieve the full measure of
 35 his naive eulogies, Strauss even ventures to make a recommendation about an older work of Kant’s: he calls his *Universal His-*

tory and Theory of the Heavens of 1755 “a work that always struck me as no less significant than his later *Critique of Pure Reason*. If in the latter we admire the depth of its insight, in the former we admire the breadth of its purview: if in the latter we come
5 across the old man who is above all concerned with securing a domain of knowledge, even if only a limited one, in the former we encounter a man with all the daring of the explorer and conqueror in the realm of the intellect.” This judgment of Strauss’s about Kant has always struck me as no more modest than his
10 judgment about Schopenhauer: if in the latter judgment we come across the chieftain who is above all concerned with pronouncing a judgment, even if a limited one, then in the former judgment we encounter the renowned prose writer who, with all the courage born of ignorance, even pours his eulogizing
15 perfumes over Kant. But what remains absolutely incredible is that Strauss did not recognize the extent to which his testament of modern ideas might profit from the Kantian *Critique of Pure Reason*; and the fact that whenever he speaks he does so only in order to indulge the crudest sort of realism constitutes one of
20 the most striking features of this new gospel—a gospel that, moreover, merely presents itself as the hard-won achievement of persistent historical and natural-scientific investigations and as such itself disavows any philosophical component. For the philistine chieftain and his “we,” Kantian philosophy simply
25 does not exist. He hasn’t the foggiest notion of the fundamental antinomies of idealism and of the extreme relativity of all knowledge and reason. Or: it is precisely reason that should inform him how little reason can discern about the in-itself of things. Of course, it is true that at certain times in their lives
30 it is impossible for people to understand Kant, especially if, as in Strauss’s case, already in one’s youth one understood—or thought oneself to have understood—Hegel, that “intellectual giant,” or if one, on top of this, had had to come to grips with Schleiermacher, “a man possessing almost too much acumen,”
35 as Strauss says. It will sound strange to Strauss when I tell him that even now he stands in a relationship of “absolute depen-

dence" on Hegel and Schleiermacher, and that his doctrine of the universe, his tendency to regard things *sub specie biennii*, and his lack of backbone where the status quo in Germany is concerned, but above all his shameless philistine optimism, can all be explained by certain youthful impressions, earlier habits, and certain pathological disorders. Once infected by Hegelism or Schleiermachinations, one can never again be completely cured.

There is one passage in this book of confessions in which that incurable optimism lumbers along with a truly festive complacency (pp. 142, 143). "If it is true that things would be better off if the world did not exist," Strauss says, "then philosophical thought, which forms a part of this world, would be better off if it did not think. It does not occur to the pessimistic philosopher that, more than anything else, his thought that declares the world to be bad also declares itself to be bad; but if thought that declares the world to be bad is bad thought, then the world, in fact, is good. Optimism may as a rule make things too easy on itself, and for that reason Schopenhauer's demonstrations of the powerful role that pain and misfortune play in the world are entirely in order; but every true philosophy is necessarily optimistic, since otherwise it denies its own right to exist." If this refutation of Schopenhauer is not exactly what Strauss elsewhere calls "a refutation accompanied by the loud jubilation of the higher spheres," then I completely fail to comprehend this theatrical expression, which at one point he uses against another antagonist. Here optimism has quite intentionally made things easier on itself. But the trick lies in pretending that it is but a trifling matter to refute Schopenhauer and go on pushing the burden so playfully along that the three muses can at any moment take pleasure in the dallying optimist. This is supposed to demonstrate nothing other than that it is wholly unnecessary to take a pessimist seriously: the most untenable sophisms suffice entirely to make evident that at the most one might waste words and jests, but never arguments, on a philosophy as "unhealthy and unprofitable" as Schopenhauer's. At

such moments we better understand Schopenhauer's solemn declaration that optimism, where it does not simply represent the mindless babble of those whose flat skulls provide shelter for nothing but empty words, is not merely an absurd, but, indeed, even a *truly invidious form of thought*, a bitter mockery of the nameless sufferings of humankind. When the philistine finally arrives at a system, as Strauss does, then he also arrives at an invidious form of thought, that is, at an inordinately idiotic doctrine professing the contentment of the "I" or the "we," and this arouses indignation.

Who could be capable, for example, of reading the following psychological explanation without indignation, since it is only too obvious that it could only have stemmed from that invidious theory of contentment: "Beethoven claimed that he would never have been capable of composing a text such as *Figaro* or *Don Giovanni*. *Life had not smiled on him to such an extent that he would have been able to look upon it cheerfully and take the weaknesses of humankind so lightly*" (p. 360). But a hint will suffice to indicate the worst example of that invidiously vulgar attitude: Strauss does not know how to explain the entire dreadfully serious impulse toward self-denial and the pursuit of ascetic sanctification characteristic of the first centuries of Christianity other than as a reaction of disgust and nausea against the excess in every kind of sexual enjoyment practiced during the foregoing age:

The Persians call it "bidamag buden,"
Germans just say "hangover."

Strauss quotes these lines himself, without being ashamed in the least. We, however, must turn away for a moment in order to overcome our disgust.

7

Indeed, our philistine chieftain speaks boldly, even brazenly wherever he supposes that such boldness will delight his noble "we." Hence the asceticism and self-denial of the ancient hermits and saints are simply supposed to be regarded as a form

of hangover, Jesus can be described as a fanatic who in our day and age would scarcely escape the madhouse, and the story of the resurrection can be called "world-historical humbug"—just this once we are willing to put up with all this so that we can
5 examine it for that peculiar form of courage of which Strauss, our "classical philistine," is capable.

First, let's hear his confession: "It is certainly an unpopular and thankless task to tell the world precisely what it least wants to hear. It likes to run its business on a grand scale, like
10 great lords, taking in and spending as long as it has something to spend: but if someone adds up all the figures and presents the bottom line, then he is viewed as a troublemaker. And yet it is precisely to this that the nature of my temperament and intellect has always impelled me." Regardless of whether one
15 chooses to call this sort of temperament and spirit courageous, it still remains doubtful whether this courage is natural and originary or whether it is not instead acquired and artificial; perhaps Strauss just grew accustomed over time to being a trouble-
20 maker by calling, so that he gradually also became courageous by calling. This is wonderfully compatible with natural cowardice, which is peculiar to the philistine: this manifests itself especially in the inconsequentiality of those assertions whose expression requires courage; it sounds like thunder, and yet the air is not cleared. He never manages to carry out an aggressive
25 act, only to utter aggressive words, but he chooses words that are as insulting as possible and thereby exhausts in uncouth and thundering expressions his entire reserve of energy and strength; once his words have died away, he is more cowardly than someone who has never even dared to speak. Yes,
30 even in his ethics, the phantom side of actions, Strauss demonstrates that he is a hero in words alone, and that he shuns every occasion in which he might be required to move from words to grim earnest. He announces with admirable candor that he is no longer a Christian, but that he does not want to disturb
35 anyone else's solace; to him it seems contradictory to found one fellowship merely in order to supplant another—although

this is by no means as contradictory as he thinks. With a certain crude contentment he covers himself with the shaggy cloak of our ape-genealogists and praises Darwin as one of human-kind's greatest benefactors — but we realize with consternation
5 that his ethics is constructed independently of the question: "How do we conceive the world?" Here was a real opportunity to exhibit natural courage: for here he would have had to turn his back on his "we" and boldly deduce from the *bellum omnium contra omnes* and the privileged right of the strong a moral code
10 for life. To be sure, this moral code would have had to have been born of an inwardly undaunted sensibility, like that of Hobbes, and born of a love of truth utterly different from one that always only explodes in angry invectives against priests, miracles, and the "world-historical humbug" of the resurrec-
15 tion. For the same philistine who takes the side of all such invectives would take sides against such a genuine Darwinian ethic that was consistently carried through.

"All moral activity," Strauss claims, "is the self-determination of the individual according to the idea of the species." Trans-
20 lated into clear and comprehensible language that simply means: Live like a human being and not like an ape or a seal. Unfortunately, this imperative is thoroughly useless and powerless, because under the concept of the human being one can yoke together the most diverse and manifold things,
25 from the Patagonian savage, for example, to Master Strauss, and no one will dare to say with equal justification: Live like a Patagonian savage! and: Live like Master Strauss! But suppose someone were to demand of himself that he live like a
30 genius, that is, as nothing other than the ideal expression of the human species. And suppose, moreover, that this person were by chance either a Patagonian or Master Strauss; how greatly, given such an instance, we would all have to suffer under the importunities of original-idiotic genius addicts, about whose mushrooming growth in Germany Lichtenberg already com-
35 plained, and who, screaming wildly, demand of us that we pay attention to the confessions of their newest faith. Strauss has

not even learned that a concept alone can never make human beings better and more moral, and that it is just as easy to preach morality as it is difficult to establish it; instead, it should be his task earnestly to explain and derive, on the basis of his Darwinistic premises, the phenomena of human kindness, compassion, love, and self-denial, whose existence one simply cannot deny: in fact, however, Strauss chose instead to flee from the task of *explanation* by making the leap into imperative diction. With this leap he even happens frivolously to jump over Darwin's most basic principle. "Never forget even for a moment," Strauss says, "that you are a human being and no mere creature of nature, never forget that all others are likewise human beings, that is, for all their individual differences they are the same as you and have the same needs and demands as you—this is the essence of all morality" (p. 238). But where does this resounding imperative come from? How can this be innate to human beings when, according to Darwin, the human being is wholly a creature of nature and has evolved to the heights of humanity by adhering to a completely different set of laws; namely, by no other means than by constantly forgetting that other similar creatures possess the same rights, by feeling himself to be the stronger and gradually bringing about the demise of other specimens displaying a weaker constitution. While Strauss certainly must assume that no two creatures are ever exactly the same, and that the human being's entire evolution, from the animal stage up to the height of the cultural philistine, depends on the law of individual differences, he nevertheless has no trouble whatsoever preaching the exact opposite: "Act as though there were no individual differences!" Where in all this is there room for moral doctrine à la Strauss-Darwin; where, indeed, is there room for courage!

Immediately we receive a new illustration of the point at which that courage reverts to its opposite. For Strauss continues: "Never forget even for a moment that you and everything that you perceive in and around you is not a disjointed fragment, not a wild chaos of atoms governed by coincidence,

but rather that everything springs, according to eternal laws, from One primal source of all life, of all reason, and of all goodness—this is the essence of all religion.” But at the same time all ruin, all unreason, all evil, flows from that same “One primal source,” and this is what Strauss calls the universe. How is it possible that this universe, with its contradictory and self-negating character, is worthy of religious veneration and of being addressed by the name of “God,” as Strauss does on p. 365: “our God does not take us into his arms from without” (here one expects by way of antithesis the remarkable feat of being taken into his arms from within!), “rather, he discloses sources of solace that exist within us. He shows us that chance would be an unreasonable master of the world, and that necessity, that is, the chain of causation manifest in the world, is reason itself” (a sleight of hand that only the “we” do not notice, because they were raised in this Hegelian devotion to the real as the reasonable, that is, to the *idolatry of success*). “He teaches us to recognize that to demand one exception in the fulfillment of a single law of nature would be tantamount to demanding the destruction of the entire cosmos.” On the contrary, Master: an honest natural scientist believes in the absolute adherence of the world to laws, without, however, making any assertions whatsoever about the ethical or moral claims of these laws: in any such assertions he would recognize the supremely anthropomorphic demeanor of a reason unable to adhere to the constraints of what is allowed. But precisely at that point where the honest natural scientist resigns, Strauss “reacts”—in order to deck us with his feathers—“religiously” and consciously proceeds in a scientifically dishonest manner; he simply assumes without further ado that everything that occurs in the world has the *highest* intellectual value, in other words, that it is ordered in an absolutely reasonable and purposive manner, and hence that it embodies a revelation of eternal goodness itself. As a result, he is in need of a complete cosmody and hence places himself at a disadvantage over against those who are concerned only with a theodicy—someone who,

for instance, is able to conceive the entire existence of the human being as an act of punishment or a process of purgation. At this embarrassing juncture Strauss even ventures the thinnest yet most gout-swollen metaphysical hypothesis imaginable, one that is basically only an unwitting parody of a statement by Lessing. “That other statement of Lessing’s” (thus we read on p. 219): “If God held in his right hand all truth, and in his left hand the single always active urge for truth—yet this with the proviso that one would perpetually fall into error— and asked him to choose, he would humbly fall before God’s left hand and beg for its contents—this statement of Lessing’s has always been counted among the most magnificent he left us. In it one finds the brilliant expression of his indefatigable desire for inquiry and activity. This statement always had such a special impact on me because I perceived behind its subjective meaning the resonance of an objective meaning that is of infinite consequence. For does it not contain the best retort to Schopenhauer’s uncouth remark about the ill-advised God who, for lack of anything better to do, entered upon this wretched world? What if the creator himself shared Lessing’s opinion and preferred striving over peaceful possession?” By all means, a God who reserves for himself *perpetual error* but yet retains the striving for truth, a God who perhaps falls humbly before Strauss’s left hand and says: all truth is yours and yours alone. If ever a God and a human being were ill advised, then it is certainly this Straussian God whose hobby is error and failure, and the Straussian human being who has to atone for this hobby—to be sure, in this Straussian world one perceives “the resonance of a significance with infinite consequence”; here Strauss’s soothing universal oil flows; here one has an inkling of the reasonableness of all becoming and all natural laws! Really? Could it not instead be the case that our world, as Lichtenberg once expressed it, is the work of an inferior creature who did not yet understand his own creation correctly, that is, an experiment, a trial run still in need of work? Strauss himself would then surely have to admit that our world is more

the showplace of *error* than of reason, and that there is nothing comforting in any natural laws because all these laws are ordained by an erring God, indeed, by a God who takes pleasure in erring. This is a truly amusing spectacle, to see Strauss as
5 metaphysical master builder building his way up to the clouds. But for whom is this spectacle being performed? Why, for the noble and unperturbed “we,” just to keep them in good humor: perhaps they have begun to grow alarmed at the rigid and pitiless mechanism of the worldly machine and, with trepidation,
10 ask their leader for help. This is the reason why Strauss has his “soothing oil” flow; this is the reason why he parades his passionately erring God on a leash; this is the reason why he plays the utterly astonishing role of a metaphysical architect. He does all this because they are afraid and because he himself
15 is afraid—and here we discover the limits of his courage, even with regard to his “we.” He does not dare tell them honestly: I have liberated you from a compassionate and merciful god, and the “universe” is nothing but a rigid mechanism; beware lest its wheels crush you! He does not dare: and hence he must
20 resort to a sorceress, namely to metaphysics. But the philistine prefers even Straussian metaphysics to Christian metaphysics, and he is more sympathetic to the idea of an erring God than he is to that of a God who performs miracles. For the philistine himself errs, but he has never performed a miracle.

25 This is precisely why the philistine hates the person of genius: for it is genius that is rightly reputed to be able to perform miracles; and it is therefore highly instructive to recognize why Strauss only once makes himself into the brazen defender of genius and of the aristocratic nature of the intellect as such.
30 Why does he do this? Out of fear, specifically, out of fear of the Social Democrats. He refers to Bismarck, Moltke, “whose greatness it is all the more difficult to deny since it emerges in the realm of tangible empirical facts. In such instances even the most obstinate and surly of these fellows have to look up a
35 little in order to be able even to glimpse the knees of these sublime figures.” Do you perhaps wish, Master, to give the Social

Democrats lessons in how to get themselves kicked? The goodwill to deliver such kicks is omnipresent, and you can guarantee the fact that during this procedure those on the receiving end will be able to “glimpse the knees” of the sublime figures kicking them. “In the realms of art and science as well,” Strauss continues, “there will never be a lack of kings with building plans to keep a mass of draymen busy.” Fine—but what if the draymen plan the building? This can happen, Mr. Metaphysician, as you well know—then the kings will have to grin and bear it.

Indeed, this union of impudence and weakness, audacious words and cowardly accommodation, this careful weighing of how and with which words one can impress a philistine, with which ones flatter him, this lack of character and strength masquerading as character and strength, this lack of wisdom that affects superiority and worldly wisdom—all of this is what I detest in Strauss’s book. When I suppose that young men might be able to endure, indeed, might even treasure such a book, then I must abandon in despair my hopes for their future. This confession of an impoverished, hopeless, and truly despicable philistinism is supposed to represent the words of those thousands Strauss calls his “we,” and this “we,” in turn, is supposed to father the next generation! These are ghastly prospects for anyone who wants to help the coming generation acquire what the present one lacks—a truly German culture. To such a person the ground appears strewn with ashes, all stars extinguished; every withered tree, every ravaged field, cries out to him: Barren! Lost! Here spring will never come again! He must surely feel what the young Goethe felt when he peered into the gloomy atheistic twilight of the *Système de la nature*: the book appeared to him so dreary, so Cimmerian, so dead, that he could not stand its presence, that he shuddered as if in the presence of a ghost.

8

We have now been sufficiently instructed about the new believer's heaven and about his courage to be able to pose our final question: How does he write his books and what is the nature of these religious documents?

Anyone who can answer this question rigorously and without prejudice will be confronted with the troublesome problem that Strauss's oracular handbook of German philistinism has already gone through six printings; especially once he hears, in addition, that in scholarly circles, as well, and even at the German universities, Strauss's text has been welcomed as just such an oracular handbook. Students are said to have hailed it as a catechism for strong minds, and their professors are not said to have contradicted them: here and there some have actually gone so far as to consider it a *Bible for scholars*. Strauss himself gives us to understand that this book of confessions is not intended *solely* for the edification of a scholarly and cultivated audience; but despite this claim, we must point out that he addresses himself first and foremost to this audience, primarily to the scholars, in order to present them with a mirror image of the life they themselves lead. For here's the trick: the master pretends to be outlining the ideal of a new way of looking at the world, and his own praise returns to him out of the mouths of all his readers because each of them believes that none other than himself looks at the world and at life in the manner Strauss describes, and that consequently in no one other than in himself has Strauss been able to perceive what he demands for the future already fulfilled in the present. This also explains in part this book's extraordinary success. Delighted that others take delight in it, the scholar calls out to Strauss: "Yes, this is how we live, how we lead lives of happiness, just as you have written in your book." He considers it insignificant if, by chance, he happens to think differently from Strauss on certain points—for example, about Darwin or capital punishment—because he feels so certain that on the whole he is breathing his own

air and hearing the echo of *his own* voice and *his own* needs. This unanimity cannot but pain every true friend of German culture, who for this very reason must be relentlessly severe in accounting for this state of affairs, even if that means making
5 his account public.

All of us are familiar with that peculiar manner in which our age pursues scholarly inquiry; we are familiar with it because we live it, and this is precisely why almost no one asks himself about the possible benefit such a preoccupation with scholar-
10 ship could ever have for culture, even supposing that superior ability and the most honest will to work for the benefit of culture were everywhere present. The essence of the scholarly person (wholly apart from his present manifestation) is marked by a genuine paradox: he behaves like the proudest idler upon
15 whom fortune ever smiled, as if existence were not something hopeless and questionable, but rather a firm possession guaranteed to last forever. He sees nothing wrong in wasting one's life with questions whose answers could be important only to someone already certain of eternal life. Everywhere around
20 this heir to a few meager hours there yawn the most terrifying abysses; at every step he should be reminded to ask: Why and to what purpose? Whither am I going? Whence do I come? But his soul is set aglow at the thought of counting the filaments of a flower or of cracking open the stones along his
25 path, and he sinks the full weight of his attention, joy, energy, and desire into this labor. Now, this living paradox, the scholarly person, has recently begun in Germany to work at such a frantic pace that one must imagine scholarship as a factory in which for every delay of mere minutes the scholarly laborer is
30 punished. Nowadays he labors as hard as the fourth estate, the slaves; he labors, his studies are no longer a calling but an affliction, he looks neither to left nor to right and passes through all the matters of life, even through those that are questionable in nature, with that half-attention or with that odious need for
35 rest and recreation characteristic of the exhausted laborer.

Now, this is also his attitude toward culture. He behaves as if for

him life were only *otium*, but *otium sine dignitate*; and not even in his dreams does he throw off this yoke, like the slave who, even after attaining freedom, dreams of his affliction, his frantic pace, and his beatings. Our scholars are scarcely distinguish-
5 able—at any rate, not in any way that is flattering to them—from farmers who hope to increase the tiny property they inherited and are diligently occupied day and night in sowing the field, driving the plow, and prodding the oxen. Now, Pascal believes generally that human beings pursue their occupa-
10 tions and their scholarship and science so zealously only so as to flee from those all-important questions that every moment of solitude, every moment of true idleness would force upon them—from precisely those questions about the why, whence, and whither. The most obvious question does not even occur
15 to our scholars: What is the purpose of their labor, their frantic pace, their painful frenzy? Surely its aim is not just to earn one's bread or to chase after positions of honor? No, certainly not. And yet you toil like those who are impoverished, like those in need of bread; indeed, you yank the victuals from the table of
20 science with such greed and indiscriminateness that one might think that you were about to starve. However, if you, as scholars, treat scholarship in just the same manner laborers treat the tasks foisted upon them by need and the afflictions of life, then what is to become of a culture that is condemned—especially
25 given the existence of a fidgety scholarship that runs so frantically and breathlessly about—to wait for the moment of its birth and redemption? No one has time for culture—and yet, what is scholarship supposed to be *at all* if it has no time for culture? Please tell us at least where scholarship is going, whence it
30 is coming, and what its purpose is if not to pave the way for culture? Perhaps to pave the way for barbarism? If we are forced to believe that books as superficial as Strauss's satisfy the scholarly class's current level of culture, we must conclude that it has advanced terrifyingly far along this path. For it is in precisely this
35 book that we discover that odious need for rest and relaxation and that casual, only half-attentive deference to philosophy and

culture and especially to all the earnestness of existence. One is reminded of the scholarly class's social gatherings, which, even when the shoptalk ends, bear testimony solely to exhaustion, to the need for diversion at all cost, to memory plucked bare, and to incoherent life experience. Whenever Strauss turns to the vital issues of the day, whether it be the problems of marriage, or the war, or capital punishment, he horrifies us with his lack of any genuine experience, of any original insight into human beings: all of his judgments are so uniformly bookish —indeed, so fundamentally newspaperish. Literary reminiscences take the place of genuine ideas and fresh insights, and affected restraint and a cocky manner are supposed to compensate us for the lack of wisdom and mature thought. How perfectly all this accords with the spirit of the noisy strongholds of German scholarship in our great cities. How compatibly these intellects must communicate with one another, for it is precisely in such circles that culture has most disappeared and the development of a new culture has been made impossible; the noisy preparation of their scholarly pursuits goes hand in hand with the herdlike stampede to their favorite disciplines at the price of abandoning the most significant ones. What kind of lantern would one then need in order to search for human beings who would be capable of fervent self-immersion and pure devotion to genius, human beings who possessed enough courage and strength to invoke demons who have fled the present age! Viewed superficially, one does indeed discover in these scholarly places all the pomp of culture; their impressive apparatuses resemble arsenals replete with enormous cannons and other weapons of war. We see them making their preparations and witness a diligent bustle of activity, as if they were about to take heaven by storm and draw truth from out of the deepest well, and yet in actual war the largest machines often prove least useful. This is why true culture avoids these scholarly locales and, possessing the best instincts, senses that from them it has little to hope and much to fear. For the only form of culture that concerns the bloodshot eye and the numbed

thought organ of this class of scholarly laborers is precisely that *philistine culture* whose gospel Strauss is preaching.

If we look briefly at the basis for this compatibility that links the class of scholarly laborers to philistine culture, then we will also find the path that leads to the *writer* David Strauss, who has been recognized as a classical *writer*, and this in turn leads us to our last major theme.

First of all, this culture has a smug look of satisfaction on its face and believes that nothing of any essence need be changed in the present state of German cultivatedness. Above all, it is in all seriousness convinced of the singularity of all German educational institutions, especially of the college-preparatory schools and universities; it never ceases to recommend these to foreigners, and it does not doubt for a moment that it is thanks to them that the Germans have become the most cultivated and judicious nation on earth. Philistine culture believes in itself, and for this reason it believes in the methods and means at its disposal, as well. Second, however, it places the supreme judgment over all questions of culture and taste into the hands of the scholar and views itself as the ever-growing compendium of scholarly opinions about art, literature, and philosophy; it is concerned with forcing scholars to express their opinions, which it then mixes, dilutes, or systematizes and subsequently administers to the German people as a cure-for-all. Whatever arises outside these circles is listened to either with skeptical half-attentiveness or not at all, is noticed or goes unnoticed, until at last a voice—regardless of whose it is, as long as it bears the well-defined characteristics of the scholarly breed—emanates from this inner sanctum in which traditional infallibility in matters of taste is thought to reside. From this moment onward public opinion has one more opinion and repeats in a hundredfold echo the voice of that individual. In reality, however, the aesthetic infallibility that is supposed to reside in these places and with these individuals is highly dubious; so dubious, in fact, that, until he has proven otherwise, we are justified in assuming that a scholar is tasteless, thoughtless, and aestheti-

cally crude. And only a meager few will be able to prove themselves otherwise. For once they have begun to participate in the wheezing and frantic race of contemporary scholarship, how many will be able to preserve the calm and courageous gaze of the struggling cultured individual—assuming, of course, that they had ever even possessed that gaze capable of condemning this race itself as a barbarizing force? This is why henceforth these few will have to live a contradiction: what can they possibly hope to achieve against the uniform faith of a countless multitude, all of whom have made public opinion their patron saint and who mutually support and sustain one another in this faith? What good can it possibly do if such an individual declares his opposition to Strauss, since the multitude has joined forces with him and the masses he leads have already implored the master six times for his philistrous sleeping potion.

If in this we have simply presumed that Strauss's book of confessions has conquered public opinion and has been welcomed by it as a conqueror, its author will perhaps point out that the various reviews of his book in public journals by no means display a unanimous, and even less an absolutely favorable character, and that he has found it necessary to write an afterword in which he defends himself against the oftentimes inimical tone and the all too insolent and defiant manner of some of these newspaper warriors. "How can there be a public opinion about my book," he will shout at us, "if in spite of this every journalist feels free to brand me an outlaw and revile me to his heart's content!" This contradiction is easily resolved as soon as we distinguish between two aspects of Strauss's book: the theological and the literary. Only in the latter aspect does this book come into contact with German culture. The work's theological coloring places it outside our German culture and awakens the antipathies of various theological sects, indeed, of every individual German to the extent that he is a theological sectarian by nature and invents his own curious private faith only in order to be able to dissent from every other faith. But just listen to what these theological sectarians have to say as

soon as they speak about Strauss the *writer*; suddenly the noise of theological dissonance dies down and they sing out in pure harmony as if from the mouth of *one single* congregation: he nonetheless remains a *classical writer*! Everyone, even the most
5 obstinately orthodox sectarian, flatters Strauss the writer to his face, even if it is only a word about his almost Lessing-like dialectics or about the refinement, beauty, and validity of his aesthetic views. As a book, so it seems, Strauss's creation simply conforms to the ideal. Although they may have spoken in the
10 loudest voice, Strauss's theological antagonists are only a fraction of the public at large: and even where they are concerned, Strauss is probably correct when he says: "Compared with my thousands of readers, these few detractors are a dwindling minority, and they will scarcely be able to prove that they serve
15 these thousands as their faithful translators. If, as is usual in such matters, those who disagree have spoken up while those who agree have contented themselves with silent approval, then that lies in the nature of the circumstances, with which we are all familiar." Thus if we ignore the annoyance that Strauss's
20 theological confession here and there evoked, nothing but unanimity reigns when it comes to Strauss the *writer*—even where his most fanatical antagonists are concerned, to whom Strauss's voice sounds like that of a creature from the abyss. And that is why the treatment accorded Strauss by the literary lackeys of
25 the theological sects in no way disproves our claim that in this book philistine culture celebrates a triumph.

We have to admit that the cultivated philistine is on the average a trifle less candid than Strauss, or at least exercises more restraint when making public proclamations: this is why he is
30 all the more edified by candor when he discovers it in someone else. At home and among his peers, the philistine loudly applauds Strauss, and it is only in his writing that he is reluctant to confess that everything Strauss says is after his own heart. For, as we already know, our cultivated philistine is something of
35 a coward, even where he senses the strongest compatibilities; and it is precisely because Strauss is a little less of a coward that

he becomes a leader, although even *his* courage has very strict limits. If he were to overstep *these* limits—as he does, for example, in almost every statement about Schopenhauer—then he would no longer walk before the philistines as their chief-
 5 tain; instead, they would run away from him just as quickly as they presently run after him. Anyone who would call this clever—albeit not wise—moderation and see in this *mediocri-*
tas of courage an Aristotelean virtue would, to be sure, be in error; for this courage is not the mean between two errors; but
 10 rather the mean between a virtue and a fault—and *all* the characteristics of the philistine lie in this middle ground between virtue and fault.

9

“But he nevertheless remains a classical writer!” Well, that re-
 15 mains to be seen.

Now we are perhaps ready to go on to our discussion of Strauss the stylist and literary craftsman, but first let us consider whether as writer he has the capacity to build his house and whether he really understands the architecture of a book. From
 20 this we can ascertain whether he is an orderly, circumspect, and skillful maker of books, and should we find it necessary to answer this question in the negative, then the fame of being a “classical prose writer” would still remain for him as a last refuge. To be sure, to possess the latter ability while lacking the
 25 former would not be sufficient to elevate him to the rank of a classical writer. At most it would place him among the ranks of the classical improvisationists or virtuosos of style who, despite their expressive abilities and their skill in erecting the literary edifice, nevertheless betray the clumsy hand and the biased eye
 30 of the bungler. We are asking, in other words, whether Strauss has the artistic power to construct a whole, *totum ponere*.

Usually one can recognize on the basis of a rough draft whether an author had the vision to create a totality and whether he found the general direction and the proper propor-
 35 tions appropriate to this vision. Even once this all-important

task is accomplished and the edifice itself has been erected in harmonious proportions, there is still much left to be done: how many minor defects must be corrected, how many gaps filled; here and there provisional partitions or scaffolds have had to suffice for the time being; everywhere you turn there is dust and rubble, and wherever you look you see the signs of problems and of ongoing labor. The house as a whole is still uninhabitable and unhomey; all the walls are naked, and the wind whips through the open windows. When we ask whether Strauss has constructed this building with sound proportions and with an eye for the totality, it does not matter whether he has completed the great and painstaking work that is still necessary at this stage. It is well known that the opposite of this is to assemble a book out of bits and pieces, according to the practice of scholars. They trust that these bits and pieces have a coherence unto themselves, and doing so they confuse logical and artistic coherence. In any case, the relationship among the four main questions that form the thematic subdivisions of Strauss's book is not logical: "Are We Still Christians? Do We Still Have Religion? How Do We Conceive the World? How Do We Order Our Lives?" They are not logical for the simple reason that the third question has nothing to do with the second, the fourth nothing to do with the third, and all three of these nothing to do with the first. The natural scientist who raises the third question, for example, displays his unsullied sense of truth in the fact that he passes over the second question in silence, and Strauss himself seems to understand that the themes of the fourth section — marriage, the republic, capital punishment — would only be confused and obscured when mingled with Darwinistic theories drawn from the third section, at least insofar as he in fact pays no further attention to these theories. But the very question "Are we still Christians?" instantly destroys the freedom of philosophical observation and lends it a disagreeable theological tinge; moreover, he completely overlooks the fact that even today the greater part of humanity is Buddhist and not Christian. How is it pos-

sible that the term "old faith" could refer simply and solely to Christianity! If this merely demonstrates that Strauss never ceased to be a Christian theologian and therefore never learned to become a philosopher, then he surprises us once again by the fact that he is not capable of distinguishing between faith and knowledge and continually speaks of his so-called "new faith" and modern science in one and the same breath. Or is the phrase "new faith" nothing other than an ironic concession to common linguistic usage? So it seems when we see that now and again he harmlessly uses new faith and modern science as synonyms for one another, for example on p. 11, where he asks whether "more of those obscurities and inadequacies that are unavoidable in human matters" are found on the side of the old faith or on that of modern science. Moreover, according to the outline given in his introduction, his aim is to supply those proofs that form the basis of the modern view of the world, but he derives all these proofs from science, and thus he entirely adopts the posture of the knower rather than of the believer.

Thus at bottom this new religion has less to do with a new faith than it does with modern science, and as such it is not a religion at all. Now, if Strauss nevertheless claims to have religion, then its grounding principles must lie beyond the realm of modern science. Only the smallest portion of Strauss's book, at most a few scattered pages, touches on what Strauss might rightly call a faith: namely, that feeling for the cosmos for which Strauss demands the same piety as the devout person of the old school has for his God. In these pages, at any rate, he by no means proceeds scientifically—but if only he proceeded a little more energetically, naturally, and bluntly, and above all with more faith! Given the artificial means by which our author is first able to arrive at feelings at all—by means of sticking and slapping, as we have seen—it is a wonder that he still has any faith and any religion whatsoever. This artificially stimulated faith crawls poorly and weakly along: we shudder at the sight of it.

Although in the outline given in his introduction Strauss promised to show by means of comparison whether this new faith serves the same purpose as the old style of faith did for old-style believers, in the end he senses that he has promised too much. For in the end he disposes of this last question that deals with the purpose of the new faith, with the extent to which it is the same, better, or worse, wholly as an afterthought and with embarrassed haste in but a scant few pages (pp. 366ff), at one point even resorting to a desperate ploy: "anyone who cannot help himself in this matter is simply beyond help and is not yet ripe for our standpoint" (p. 366). Contrast this with the force of conviction with which the ancient Stoic believed in the cosmos and in the rationality of the cosmos! And, viewed in this manner, in what light does Strauss's claim to an original faith appear? But, as stated earlier, it would be irrelevant whether it were new or old, original or imitated, if only it proceeded forcefully, healthily, and naturally. Strauss himself abandons this distilled emergency faith whenever he finds it necessary to impress us and himself with his erudition and to present his newly acquired natural-scientific knowledge to his "we" with a clearer conscience. Although he is timid when speaking of faith, his mouth becomes round and full when citing the greatest benefactor of modern humanity, Darwin: then he not only demands faith in the new Messiah, but also in himself, the new apostle. Take, for example, when, while treating with the pride of the ancients one of the most intricate themes of natural science, he proclaims: "Some will say that I speak of things I don't understand. Fine; but others will come along who will understand it and who will also have understood me." Apparently, Strauss's renowned "we" are supposed to pledge their faith not only in the cosmos but also in Strauss the natural scientist; in this case, we can only hope that the procedures necessary to realize this latter faith will not be as painful and gruesome as those necessary for the former. Or is it in this case perhaps sufficient to pinch and prick the object of faith and not the faithful ones themselves in order to induce in them that "religious re-

action" that is the hallmark of the "new faith"? If so, just think what this would do for the religiosity of that "we"!

Otherwise we might almost have reason to fear that modern human beings will get along without concerning themselves
5 much with the apostle's trappings of religious faith: just as in actuality they have previously managed to get by without the doctrine that the entire cosmos is rational. The modern natural and historical sciences in their entirety have absolutely nothing to do with Strauss's faith in the cosmos, and the fact that the
10 modern philistine has no need for this faith is demonstrated precisely by the depiction of his life that Strauss provides in the section "How Do We Order Our lives?" Hence, he casts doubt on whether the "coach" to which he must "entrust his valued readers is adequate to all that is expected of it." It most
15 definitely is not adequate: for the modern human being makes much swifter headway if he refuses to take a seat in this Straussian street coach—or, to be more accurate: he was making swifter headway long before this Straussian street coach ever existed. Now, if it were true that this celebrated "minority that
20 is not to be overlooked," of whom and in whose name Strauss speaks, "holds consistency in high regard," then they would have to be just as dissatisfied with Strauss the coach builder as we are with Strauss the logician.

But, for all that, let's set Strauss the logician aside: perhaps
25 the book as a whole, when viewed aesthetically, does have a well-conceived form and adheres to the laws of beauty, even if it does not adhere to a well-devised argument. And only after we have recognized that Strauss has not behaved in the manner of a scientific scholar who rigorously orders and systematizes
30 his material can we even pose the question whether he is a good writer.

Perhaps he did not so much set himself the task of frightening people away from the "old faith" as he did of enticing them into feeling at home with this new worldview, of which
35 he paints a charming and colorful picture. Especially since he considered scholarly and cultivated people as his primary

readers, he surely must have known that one can bombard them with the heavy artillery of scholarly evidence without ever forcing them to capitulate, while these very same readers succumb all the more easily to scantily clad arts of seduction. But even Strauss himself calls his book “scantily clad,” and, what is more, “intentionally so,” and those who publicly praise it recommend the book precisely because it is “scantily clad.” For example, one of them—an example chosen quite randomly—circumscribes these sensations in the following manner: “The discourse proceeds with graceful symmetry, and it handles with playful ease the art of proof, both where it turns critically against the old, and no less where it seductively prepares its new ideas and presents them to the unpretentious yet pampered palate. The organization of such a manifold, heterogeneous material, which touches on everything without anywhere going into depth, is well thought out; especially the transitions that lead from one subject to another are artfully structured. Yet one is tempted to admire even more the skill with which disagreeable issues are pushed aside or passed over in silence.” As we see from this quotation, the senses of such eulogizers are not exactly finely tuned to an author’s *abilities*, but for all that they are all the more finely tuned to his *intentions*. What Strauss intends is most clearly betrayed in his emphatic and by no means entirely innocent recommendation of those *Voltairean Graces*, in whose service he certainly could have learned those “scantily clad” arts of which his eulogizer speaks—if it is true, that is, that virtue can be taught and a pedant can learn to dance.

Who does not harbor suspicions when, for example, he reads the following statement by Strauss about Voltaire (p. 219 *Volt.*): “to be sure, Voltaire is not original as a philosopher; rather, he mainly is an adapter of English inquiries: in this, however, he proves himself an absolute master of the material, which he understands how to present and to illuminate with incomparable skill from all possible sides. And it is for this reason, without being rigorously methodical, that he manages to satisfy the demands of thoroughness.” All the negative char-

acteristics are pertinent to Strauss. No one will maintain that Strauss is an original philosopher or that he is rigorously methodical, but the question is whether we will allow him to pass for an "absolute master of the material" and concede to him
5 "incomparable skill." Strauss's admission that his book is "intentionally scantily clad" gives rise to the speculation that incomparable skill was at any rate intended.

The dream of our architect was neither to build a temple nor a residence, but rather to erect a garden house surrounded by
10 the arts of horticulture. Indeed, Strauss's mysterious feeling for the cosmos even seems primarily calculated as a device for aesthetic effect, just as we might view some irrational thing—let us say, the ocean—from the vantage point of the most ornamental and rationally constructed terrace. The walk through the
15 first sections—that is, through the theological catacombs with their darkness and their convoluted and Baroque ornamentation—was similarly just an aesthetic device that allowed Strauss to throw into contrast the purity, brightness, and rationality of the section entitled "How Do We Conceive the World?," for
20 immediately following this walk through the gloom and this glimpse into the irrational expanse, we step into a hall with overhead lighting. It receives us with sobriety and brightness, there are celestial charts and mathematical tables on the walls, it is filled with scientific instruments, in the cabinets there are
25 skeletons, stuffed apes, and anatomical specimens. But from here we amble on, feeling for the first time genuinely happy, into the total comfort of those who dwell in our garden house. We find them surrounded by their wives and children, engrossed in their newspapers and mundane political discussions;
30 for a few moments we listen to them speak about marriage and universal suffrage, capital punishment and labor unrest, and it strikes us that we could not possibly rattle off the rosary of public opinions more quickly than they do. Finally, they also want to convince us of the classical taste of those who dwell here; a
35 brief visit to the library and the music room confirms our expectations: only the best books line the shelves, and only the

most celebrated compositions are on the music stands. They even play something for us, and if it was supposed to be music by Haydn, then Haydn is not to blame if it sounded more like Riehl's *House Music*. Meanwhile, the master of the house has
 5 found occasion to declare his total agreement with Lessing and with Goethe as well—with the exception, however, of the second part of *Faust*. In conclusion, the owner of this garden house praises himself and expresses the opinion that anyone who is not happy here is beyond help and not ripe for his stand-
 10 point; whereupon he even invites us into his coach, although with the discreet qualification that he does not wish to maintain that it will be adequate to our demands. Moreover, the roads have just recently been freshly paved, and we are likely to be badly jolted about. With this our epicurean garden god
 15 takes his leave with the incomparable skill for which he praised Voltaire.

Who could possibly now harbor doubts about this incomparable skill? We recognize the absolute master of his material; the scantily clad garden artist is revealed, and we constantly
 20 hear the voice of the classical author: "As a writer, I simply refuse to be a philistine, refuse! refuse! But by all means a Voltaire, a German Voltaire! Or better yet, a French Lessing!"

We have betrayed a secret: our master does not always know who he would rather be, Voltaire or Lessing; the main thing is,
 25 by no means a philistine; perhaps both Lessing *and* Voltaire—so that it may come to pass as has been written: "he had no character whatsoever, so that whenever he wanted to have one, he first had to assume one."

10

30 If we have understood Strauss the confessor correctly, then he himself is, in fact, a true philistine with a cramped, dried-up soul and scholarly, sober needs; yet despite this, no one would be more enraged at being called a philistine than David Strauss the writer. He would approve if one called him petulant and
 35 rash, malicious and reckless, but his greatest happiness would

lie in being compared with Lessing or Voltaire, since they were anything but philistines. In search of this happiness he often vacillates, uncertain whether he should imitate Lessing's bold dialectical vehemence, or if it would suit him better to
5 assume the pose of the satyrlike, free-spirited elder in the manner of Voltaire. Whenever he sits down to write, he strikes a pose as though he were having his portrait painted, sometimes imitating Lessing, sometimes Voltaire. His praise of Voltaire's manner of portrayal (p. 217 *Volt.*) reads like an appeal to the
10 conscience of the contemporary age for not having long since learned to treasure what it possessed in the modern Voltaire: "his merits," Strauss declares, "are constantly present: natural simplicity, transparent clarity, lively versatility, pleasing elegance. Ardor and vigor, where they are appropriate, are never
15 absent; out of Voltaire's innermost nature came his aversion to bombast and affectation; and if, on the other hand, wantonness or passion on occasion caused his language to be vulgar, then it is the human being in him, not the stylist, who is to blame for this." From this it seems that Strauss clearly understands
20 the virtue of *simplicity of style*: it has always been the mark of the genius, who alone enjoys the privilege of expressing himself simply, naturally, and with naiveté. It therefore betrays no mere common ambition when an author chooses a simple style, for although many will notice just what such an author wants to
25 be taken for, some will even be so obliging as actually to take him for precisely this. But the author of genius does not betray himself in simplicity and precision of expression alone: his excessive power plays with his material, even if it is risky and difficult. No one marches in lockstep down an unknown path
30 along which lie a thousand abysses, but the genius runs nimbly and with impetuous or graceful leaps along such a path, scorning those who carefully and fearfully walk with measured gait.

Strauss himself knows that the problems he passes over are serious and horrible, and that for millennia sages have treated
35 them as such; but despite this he calls his book *scantily clad*. We have no inkling whatsoever of all these horrors—of the omi-

nously serious reflections into which one otherwise falls when posing questions about the value of existence and the responsibilities of humanity—when the gifted master flits by “scantily clad, and intentionally so”—even more scantily clad than his
5 Rousseau, who, he informs us, is clothed only from the waist up, whereas Goethe is said to be clothed from the waist down. Wholly naive geniuses, so it would seem, do not wear anything at all, and perhaps the phrase “scantily clad” is nothing but a euphemism for naked. Those few people who have seen the
10 goddess of truth maintain that she is naked; and perhaps in the view of those who have not seen her but believe the opinion of these few, nakedness, or being scantily clad, is already evidence—or at the very least an indication—of truth. Merely the suspicion that this might be so proves beneficial to the
15 author’s ambition; someone who sees something naked asks himself, while assuming a more solemn demeanor than usual: “What if this were truth!” With this the author has already attained a great deal, for he has forced his readers to view him more solemnly than some other more thoroughly clad writer.
20 This is a step along the road to becoming a “classical author,” and Strauss himself tells us “that people have paid him the unsolicited honor of regarding him as a kind of classical prose writer,” and that he thus has achieved his aim. Strauss the
25 genius runs through the streets as a “classical author” dressed in the clothes of scantily clad goddesses; and Strauss the philistine—to make use of one of this genius’s own original turns of phrase—is supposed, come what may, to be “decreed to be going out of style” or “expelled, never to return again.”

But alas, the philistine does return, again and again, despite
30 all decrees that he is going out of style and despite all expulsions! Alas, that face, twisted to conform to Voltaire’s and Lessing’s features, keeps springing back from time to time into its old, honest, original form! Alas, the mask of genius all too often falls off, and never is the master’s gaze more vexed, or
35 his movements more wooden, than when he tries to imitate the leap or the fiery gaze of the genius. Precisely because he clads

himself so scantily in our cold climate, he exposes himself to the danger of catching cold more often and more severely than others; the fact that others notice this is probably quite embarrassing, but if he is ever to be cured, we must submit him publicly to the following diagnosis. There once was a Strauss, a valiant, rigorous, and austere clad scholar who was as sympathetic to us as any of those in Germany who earnestly and energetically serve truth and who know how to take charge of things while staying within their own limitations. But the David Strauss now celebrated by public opinion has become someone else; perhaps the theologians are to blame. At any rate, his current theatrics with the mask of genius inspires in us hatred or laughter, just as his prior earnestness forced us to respond with earnestness and sympathy. Just recently he declared: "It would be a sign of ingratitude toward *my genius* if I were not to take pleasure in the fact that, along with the talent for relentlessly incisive critique, I was simultaneously endowed with the ability to enjoy the innocent pleasure of artistic creation." It will probably come as a surprise to him that, despite this personal testimony, there are those who hold the opposite opinion: first, that he never possessed any talent for artistic creation, and second, that the pleasure he calls "innocent" is anything but innocent, since it has gradually undermined and ultimately destroyed that talent for being a fundamentally strong and profound scholar and critic—that is to say, *Strauss's true genius*. To be sure, in a fit of absolute candor Strauss himself adds that he always "carried within himself a Merck who cried out to him: 'you don't have to produce such trash any longer; others can do that just as well!'" This was the voice of the genuine Straussian genius; this same voice also tells him how much or how little his new, innocent, scantily clad testament of the modern philistine is worth. Others can do that just as well! And many could do it better! And those who could do it best—more talented, richer minds than Strauss himself—would always at best have produced only trash.

By now I think it is clear how highly I esteem Strauss the

writer: namely, as one esteems an actor who plays the role of the naive genius and the classical author. Even if, as Lichtenberg once remarked, "a simple style is preferable, if only because no upstanding man expresses himself in affected and complicated
5 speech," a simple style alone is by no means proof of a writer's honesty. I wish Strauss the writer were more honest, for then he would write better and be less celebrated. Or—if he insists on playing the actor—then I wish he were at least a good actor and had learned better from the naive genius and the classical
10 author how to write classically and with genius. All that remains to say is that Strauss is a bad actor and what is more, an utterly abominable stylist.

II

To be sure, the reproach of being an extremely bad writer is
15 mitigated by the fact that in Germany it is very difficult to become a tolerably mediocre writer and almost impossible to become a good one. For this the Germans lack a natural soil, an appreciation of aesthetic value, and the occupation with and cultivation of the art of public speaking. As the terms "salon
20 entertainment," "sermon," "parliamentary speech" already indicate, public speaking in Germany has not yet developed a distinct national style; indeed, there is not even recognition of the need for a national style as such. Public speakers have failed to go beyond the most naive experimentation with language;
25 writers have no unified norm to which they might adhere, and they therefore have a certain justification for taking the matter of language into their own hands. This, then, must have as its inescapable consequence that boundless dilapidation of the German language characteristic of "today," a condition that
30 Schopenhauer described so emphatically. "If things continue in this way," he says at one point, "then by the year 1900 we will no longer be able to understand the German classical authors, since we will know no other language than the shoddy jargon of our noble 'today'—whose basic characteristic is impotence." And in fact, in the latest newspapers we can now hear German

arbiters of language and grammarians making the claim that our classical authors are no longer valid models for contemporary style because they employ a large number of words, expressions, and syntactical constructions that are lost to us; for this reason it is appropriate, they tell us, to collect from distinguished writers of today all the verbal artifices in the use of syntax and to publish them as the linguistic models we should imitate — as, for example, Sanders actually has done in his blandly handy pocket dictionary. Here Gutzkow, that odious ogre of style, is included among our classical authors, and in general it appears that we must accustom ourselves to an entirely new mob of “classical authors,” among whom the foremost, or at least one of the foremost, is David Strauss—the same David Strauss whom we cannot describe in any other way than we have already described him, namely, as an abominable stylist.

Now, it is highly revealing of this pseudoculture of the cultivated philistine to see just how he derives the concept of the classical and the exemplary author: he, who shows his strength only when resisting any—in the true sense of the word—artistically rigorous and cultured style, and who only by means of tenacity in such resistance arrives at a uniformity of expression, which, in turn, almost seems to resemble a unified style. How is it even possible that, given that unlimited experimentation in language in which everyone is permitted to partake, certain individual authors still manage to arrive at a universally appealing tone? What is it, in fact, that is so universally appealing in this tone? Above all, a negative quality: the lack of anything offensive—*but everything that is truly productive is offensive.*—Without doubt, newspapers, and the magazines that go with them, constitute the bulk of what the German reads every day: the language they employ, with their incessant, regular drip of the same expressions and the same words, impresses itself upon his ear, and since at any rate he usually devotes to reading those hours in which his weary mind is least disposed to resistance, his ears gradually come to feel at home in this workaday German, insofar as they ache when registering its ab-

sence. Now, in keeping with their occupation, the producers of these newspapers are those most accustomed to the slime of this journalistic jargon; they have, in the truest sense of the word, lost all taste, so that their tongues savor only whatever is thoroughly corrupt and arbitrary. This explains that *tutti unisono* into which every newly coined solecism immediately blends, notwithstanding this universal debility and malaise: by means of such impudent corruptions the wage laborers of language take revenge on language itself for the incredible boredom it inflicts upon them. I remember reading Berthold Auerbach's appeal "To the German People," in which every expression was un-German, wrongheaded, and false, and which in general was comparable to a soulless word mosaic held together with international syntax; not to mention the shamelessly scribbled German used by Eduard Devrient in his memorial to Mendelssohn. Thus our philistine—this is the remarkable thing—does not experience the solecism as offensive, but rather as a stimulating refreshment in the barren, treeless desert of workaday German. But anything *truly* productive remains offensive to him. The wholly twisted, overblown, or frazzled syntax and the ridiculous neologisms of our thoroughly modern model writers are not only condoned, but considered an asset, a piquant embellishment, but woe to the stylist with character who just as earnestly and scrupulously avoids the workaday expression as he does what Schopenhauer called "the monsters hatched overnight from the pens of the scribblers of today." When everything that is flat, hackneyed, powerless, and common is accepted as the norm, when everything that is bad and corrupt is accepted as the stimulating exception, then what is powerful, uncommon, and beautiful falls into disrepute. This is the reason why in Germany that story about the traveler of normal build who visits the land of the hunchbacks is constantly repeated. Everywhere in this land he is shamefully derided because of his supposed deformity, his lack of a hump, until finally a priest takes up his cause and says to the people: "You should take pity on this poor stranger and offer thanks

to the gods that they adorned you with these stately humps of flesh."

If someone now sought to write a definitive grammar of today's cosmopolitan German style and to trace the rules that as
 5 unwritten, unspoken, and yet nevertheless compelling imperatives hold sway at everyone's writing table, then he would come across some curious notions of style and rhetoric. Some of these would perhaps still be drawn from schoolday reminiscences and from the once compulsory exercises in Latin stylistics, or
 10 maybe from the reading of French writers, and every moderately educated person in France would be justified in scoffing at their incredible crudity. Not a single one of the thorough Germans, so it seems, has ever reflected on these odd notions under whose dictates nearly every German lives and writes.

15 Among these notions we find the requirement that from time to time an image or a metaphor must appear, but that the metaphor must be new. However, to the meager brain of the writer the new and the modern are identical, and hence it tortures itself trying to draw its metaphors from the railroad,
 20 the telegraph, the steam engine, the stock market, and it takes pride in the idea that these images, since they are modern, must also be new. In his book of confessions we find that Strauss has paid honest tribute to the modern metaphor. He takes leave of us with an image of modern road improvements that
 25 covers one-and-a-half pages; a few pages earlier he compares the world to a machine, replete with gears, pistons, hammers, and its "soothing oil." (p. 362): A meal that begins with champagne. — (p. 325): Kant as a cold-water hydropathy. — (p. 265): "The Swiss constitution is to the English constitution what a
 30 waterwheel is to a steam engine, a waltz or a song to a fugue or a symphony." — (p. 258): "In the case of appeals, one must adhere to the correct chain of tribunals. The tribunal mediating between the individual and humanity, however, is the nation." — (p. 141): "If we wish to discover whether there is still life in an
 35 organism that seems to us to be dead, we are in the habit of administering to it a strong, perhaps even a painful stimulus, such

as a stab.” — (p. 138): “The religious territory of the human soul is comparable to the territory of the redskins in America.” — (p. 137): “Virtuosos of piety in the cloisters.” — (p. 90): “Set down the sum of all the preceding questions in round numbers at the end of the bill.” — (p. 176): “Darwin’s theory is like a railroad line that has merely been staked out — — — where the little flags marking the right-of-way flap merrily in the wind.” This is the — extremely modern — manner in which Strauss complies with the philistine’s stipulation that from time to time a new metaphor must be used.

A second rhetorical stipulation is also widespread: the stipulation that whatever is didactic unfolds in long sentences and in broad abstractions, and that, by contrast, whatever is persuasive prefers tiny sentences and contrasts that follow hot on the heels of one another. On page 132 Strauss provides a sentence that is exemplary of the didactic and scholarly style, blown up into full Schleiermachiian proportions and creeping along with the veritable swiftness of a tortoise: “According to this derivation of religion, the fact that at earlier stages of religion there appear many ‘whences’ instead of just one, a multitude of gods instead of one God, stems from the fact that the various natural forces or life relationships that arouse in the human being the feeling of absolute dependence at the outset affect him only in all their diversity, so that he is not yet conscious of how, given his absolute dependence upon them, there can be no distinction made among them, so that consequently the whence of the dependence or the essence, to which it in the last instance can be traced, can only be one.” On page 8 we find the opposite example of the short sentences and the affected vitality that led some readers to believe that Strauss and Lessing had to be mentioned in the same breath: “I am entirely aware that countless people know just as well as I — and some perhaps even better than I — the things that I plan to develop in what follows. Some have already spoken up. Is that cause for me to remain silent? I don’t think so. We mutually supplement one another. If someone else knows many things better than I do, then I at least

perhaps know some things better; and I know some things differently, I see some things differently from all the rest. Let us therefore be candid, let us show our colors so that people can decide whether they are our true colors." Usually Strauss's style
5 falls somewhere between this free-and-easy quickstep march and that pall bearers' crawl; however, the mean between two vices is not always a virtue, but often enough only weakness, lameness, impotence. In fact, I was very disappointed when I searched Strauss's book for more refined and more ingenious
10 features and expressions, for seeing as how I had discovered nothing in the confessor that was worthy of praise, I had set up a special rubric in order at least to be able to praise Strauss the writer a little bit here and there. I searched and searched, but my list remained empty. On the other hand, a second
15 rubric bearing the title "Solecisms, Mixed Metaphors, Obscure Abbreviations, Tastelessness, and Stilted Language" swelled to such proportions that in the end I dare present only a modest selection from this superabundant collection of examples. Perhaps I will succeed in assembling under this rubric precisely
20 those things that have incited contemporary Germans to believe that Strauss is a great and alluring stylist: these are oddities of expression that, found amid the dusty dryness of the book as a whole, surprise us—if not pleasantly, then nonetheless in a painfully stimulating manner. At least we notice in such pas-
25 sages—to apply a Straussian metaphor—that we are not yet deadened and can hence still react to such pokes. But the rest of the book evinces that lack of anything offensive—that is to say, of anything productive—that today is reckoned as a positive feature of the classical prose writer. This extreme sobriety
30 and dryness—a truly starved sobriety—today awakens in the cultivated masses the unnatural belief that these are signs of health, so that what the author of the *dialogus de oratoribus* says in fact holds true here: "illam ipsam quam iactant sanitatem non firmitate sed ieiunio consequuntur." They hate all *firmitas*
35 with instinctive unanimity for the simple reason that it bears witness to a kind of health utterly different from their own, and

they set out to cast suspicion on *firmitas*, on taut compactness, on the fiery power of movement, on the fullness and delicate play of the muscles. They have conspired to confuse the nature and the names of things, and henceforth to speak of health
5 where we see weakness, of illness and eccentricity where we encounter true health. This is how David Strauss happens to be considered a "classical author."

If only this sobriety were a rigorously logical sobriety, but it is precisely simplicity and concision of thought that the "weak"
10 have lost, and in their hands the logical texture of language itself has come unraveled. One need only attempt to translate this Strauss-style into Latin. This is something that can still be done with Kant, and with Schopenhauer it would prove an easy and stimulating exercise. The reason why this is not possible
15 with Strauss's German is most likely not because his German is more German than theirs, but rather because it is confused and illogical, while theirs is simple and magnificent. On the other hand, anyone who knows the pains the ancients took to learn how to read and write well, and how few pains the moderns
20 take, experiences a true sense of relief, as Schopenhauer once expressed it, when, after being compelled to wade through a German book such as this one, he can once again turn his attention to the other ancient and yet ever new languages. "For in these instances," Schopenhauer says, "I still have before me
25 a properly fixed language with a firmly established and conscientiously observed grammar and orthography, and hence I can devote myself entirely to their ideas. However, in German works I am constantly distracted by the impudence of the writer, who is intent upon establishing along with his knotty insights his own grammatical and orthographical quirks, as well.
30 I am repelled by this insolently boastful folly. It is genuinely painful to see an old and beautiful language that possesses classical texts being abused by ignoramuses and jackasses."

This is what the holy wrath of Schopenhauer cries out to
35 you, and you cannot say that you were not warned. But for those who insist on ignoring all warnings and who absolutely

refuse to let their faith in Strauss the classical author be spoiled, we have one final recommendation: try to imitate him. But remember, you do so at your own risk, for you will have to pay for it both with your own style and ultimately even with your
 5 own wits, so that in you the dictum of Indian wisdom may well also be fulfilled: "To gnaw on a cow's horn is useless and shortens one's life: you grind down your teeth without obtaining any nourishment." —

I 2

10 In conclusion, let us present our classical prose writer with the promised collection of stylistic examples; perhaps Schopenhauer would give it the general title "New Evidence for the Shoddy Jargon of Today," for we might console David Strauss by saying—if this can be considered consolation—that today
 15 everyone writes as he does, indeed, that some people write even more wretchedly than he does, and that in the country of the blind a one-eyed man is king. To be sure, we give him too much credit if we credit him with having even one eye, but we do this because Strauss does not write as poorly as do the vil-
 20 est of all the corrupters of German, the Hegelians and their crippled progeny. At least Strauss seeks to crawl up out of this swamp and, in part, has succeeded, although he by no means stands on solid ground. It is still obvious that in his youth he stammered that Hegelian idiom; at that time, something inside
 25 him was dislocated, some muscle or other was strained; at that time, his ear, like that of a boy who grows up hearing the constant beating of drums, was so dulled that it could never again be sensitive to those aesthetically subtle and powerful laws of tone that hold sway over the writer when trained on good ex-
 30 amples and with rigorous discipline. With this the stylist loses his most important possession and is condemned to spend the rest of his life sitting on the unfruitful and dangerously shifting sand of journalistic style—unless he wishes to sink back into the Hegelian mire. And yet despite this, he has found fame
 35 for a few hours in the present age, and perhaps even for a few

more hours someone will be aware that he attained fame, but then night comes and with it oblivion, and at the very moment in which we record his stylistic sins in the black book, the twilight of his fame begins. For anyone who has sinned against the German language has profaned the mystery of all our German-
 5 German language has profaned the mystery of all our German-ness; it alone has been preserved over the entire course of that mixing and changing of nationalities and customs, and with it, as though by means of metaphysical magic, the German spirit. It alone guarantees as well the future of this spirit, provided it
 10 does not perish at the hands of the profligate present. "But *di meliora!* Away, pachyderms, away! This is the German language, in which human beings have expressed themselves, indeed, in which great poets have sung and great thinkers have written. Get your paws off of it!" —

15 Let's take as an example a sentence from the very first page of Strauss's book: "*Already in the increase of its power, Roman Catholicism saw itself called upon to dictatorially consolidate its entire spiritual and worldly power in the hands of the pope, who was declared to be infal-*
 20 *lible.*" This slovenly cloak conceals a number of distinct statements that by no means fit together and cannot possibly be stated simultaneously; someone might conceivably recognize that he is being called upon to consolidate his power or to place it in the hands of a dictator, but he cannot dictatorially consolidate it in the hands of another. If Catholicism is being told
 25 that it dictatorially consolidated its power, then it is being compared to a dictator, but apparently the aim here is to compare the infallible pope to a dictator, and only indistinct thought and lack of linguistic sensitivity can explain the misplacement of the adverb. But in order to get a sense for the absurdity of
 30 this statement, I suggest that it be condensed into the following simplified version: The Lord gathers the reins in the hand of his driver. — (p. 4): "*The opposition between the old consistorial government and the aims to establish a synodal constitution is founded on a dogmatic-religious disagreement, lying behind the hierarchical tendency*
 35 *of the one, the democratic tendency of the other.*" It is impossible to express oneself more clumsily: first of all, we have an opposi-

tion between a government and certain aims, and second, this opposition is founded on a dogmatic-religious disagreement, and the disagreement on which it is founded is located behind the hierarchical tendency of the one and the democratic tendency of the other. Riddle: What thing lies behind two things and is the foundation for a third thing?—(p. 18): “*and the days, although unmistakably framed by the narrator between evening and morning,*” etc. I beseech you to translate that into Latin, so that you might recognize what a shameless abuse of language this is.

10 Days that are framed! By a narrator! Unmistakably! And framed between something!—(p. 19): “*In the Bible one cannot speak of erroneous and contradictory reports, of false opinions and judgments.*” How sloppily expressed! You are confusing “in the Bible” with “in the instance of the Bible”: the first would have to be placed

15 before the verb, the second after the verb. I believe what you wanted to say was: one cannot speak in the instance of the Bible of erroneous and contradictory reports, nor of false opinions and judgments in the Bible; why not? Precisely because it is the Bible—hence: “cannot speak in the instance of the Bible.”

20 In order not to have “in the Bible” and “in the instance of the Bible” follow one another in the same sentence, you simply decided to write shoddy jargon. You commit the same crime on p. 20: “*Compilations into which older pieces are worked together.*” You mean either “into which older pieces are worked,” or “in which

25 older pieces are worked together.” On the same page you speak in a schoolboy’s idiom of a “*didactic poem that is placed in the unpleasant position of first being repeatedly misinterpreted, then of calling forth enmity, and finally of being contested*”; and on p. 24 you even speak of “*pointed pedantries by means of which one sought to alleviate*

30 *their severity*”! I am in the unpleasant position of not knowing anything severe whose severity can be alleviated by something pointed; to be sure, Strauss even tells (p. 367) of a “sharpness alleviated by being jolted.”—(p. 35): “*standing opposite a Voltaire on the one side was a Samuel Hermann Reimarus on the other, wholly*

35 *typical of both nations.*” A man can always be typical of only one nation, but cannot stand opposite some other who is typical of

both nations. Despicable violence is done to language in order to spare us or cheat us out of a sentence. — (p. 46): “*Now, however, it came just a few years after Schleiermacher’s death to pass, what— — —*.” For such scribbling riffraff, of course, word order is of little consequence; their drum-deafened ears are just as oblivious to the fact that the words “just a few years after Schleiermacher’s death” are in the wrong place—namely, in front of “to pass,” whereas they should follow it—as they are to the fact that at the end we find “what” where we should read “that.” — (p. 13): “*likewise, in all the different shades in which present-day Christianity shines, for us it can only be a matter of the most extreme, most clarified form, whether we can still profess it or not.*” The question “What is it a matter of?” can either be answered, first, “of this and that,” or, second, with a sentence beginning “of whether we . . .” etc.; muddling these constructions together is a sign of the sloppy worker. What he actually wanted to say was: “in our case it can only be in the most extreme instance a matter of whether we yet profess it,” but the prepositions of the German language, so it seems, exist only in order to be used in such a way that their usage surprises us. On p. 358, for example, the “classical author” conflates the phrases: “the matter of this book is this” and: “it is a matter of this” in order to provide us with just such a surprise, and as a result we have to listen to a sentence the likes of this: “*and thus it will remain uncertain whether its matter is external or internal heroism, struggles in the open field or in the depths of the human heart.*” — (p. 343): “*for our nervously overwrought age whose musical tastes especially bring light upon this illness.*” A disgraceful conflation of “to bring to light” and “to throw light upon.” Such improvers of language, regardless of who they are, ought to be chastised in the same manner as schoolchildren. — (p. 70): “*here we see one of those trains of thought by means of which the disciples have worked their way up to the production of the idea of the resuscitation of their dead master.*” What an image! Truly the fantasy of a chimneysweep! One works by means of a train up to a production!—When on p. 72 Strauss, this heroic wielder of words, designates the story of Jesus’ resurrection as “*world-historical humbug,*” then we only want to know,

seen from the perspective of grammar, whom he is accusing of having this “world-historical humbug” on his conscience—that is, this swindle whose aim is the deceit of others for one’s own personal gain. Who is swindling, who deceiving? For we
5 are incapable of imagining a “humbug” without a subject that seeks to profit by it. Since Strauss can give no answer to this question—assuming that he would shrink from prostituting his God as a swindler who errs out of noble passion—then we persist in considering this expression just as absurd as it is taste-
10 less.—On the same page we read: “*his teachings would have been blown and scattered like so many leaves in the wind, if these leaves had not been bound and thereby preserved, as if in a coarse and sturdy binding, by the insane belief in his resurrection.*” Anyone who speaks of leaves in the wind misleads the imagination of his reader when he goes
15 on to show that he understands them as leaves of paper that can be bound together by a bookbinder. The careful writer avoids nothing *more* than employing a metaphor that confuses or misleads his reader, for a metaphor is always supposed to make the point clearer; but if the metaphor itself is unclearly expressed,
20 then it makes the point more obscure than it was without it. But to be sure, our “classical author” is anything but careful: he brazenly speaks of “*the hand of our sources*” (p. 76), of the “*lack of any handle on our sources*” (p. 77), and of the “*hand of a need*” (p. 215).—(p. 73): “*The belief in his resurrection must be credited to the*
25 *account of Jesus himself.*” Anyone who prefers to use such vulgarly mercantile language to express things that are scarcely vulgar makes it clear that he spent his life reading remarkably bad books. Strauss’s style everywhere betrays this bad reading material. Perhaps he spent too much time reading the writings of
30 his theological adversaries. But where did he learn to pester the ancient Judeo-Christian God with such petit-bourgeois metaphors? Take, for example, p. 105, where “*the chair is pulled out from under that ancient God of the Jews and Christians,*” or p. 105 where “*the old personal God runs into something like a housing shortage,*” or
35 p. 115 where one and the same is removed to a “*spare room in which, however, he is supposed to be respectably put up and employed.*”—

(p. 111): “*with the answered prayer, yet one more essential attribute of the personal God has fallen away.*” Think a little first, you ink smearers, before you smear! I’m surprised the ink itself does not turn red out of embarrassment when you use it to scribble something
5 about a prayer that is supposed to be an “attribute,” and an “attribute that has fallen away,” at that. But what do we find on p. 134! “*Many of the desirable attributes that the human being of earlier times ascribed to his gods—I will cite only the example of the ability to cover distances at the greatest possible speed—he has now, as a consequence of his rational mastery of nature, laid claim to for himself.*” Who
10 can unsnarl this tangle for us! Fine, human beings of earlier times ascribed attributes to their gods; “desirable attributes” is already dubious! Strauss means something like: the human being assumed that the gods really possessed all the attributes
15 he himself desired to have but did not have, and hence a god has attributes that correspond to the desires of human beings, making these more or less “desirable attributes.” But according to Strauss’s teaching, the human being then lays claim to many of these attributes for himself—an obscure process; just as ob-
20 scure, in fact, as that portrayed on p. 135: “*desire must supervene in order to give, by the shortest possible route, an advantageous turn to this dependency.*” Dependency—turn—shortest route, a desire that supervenes—woe to those who would really like to see such a process! It’s a scene from a picture book for the blind. You
25 have to grope around.—A new example (p. 222): “*The ascending direction of this movement, which in its very ascent even overarches the individual decline.*” A more potent example (p. 120): “*In order to arrive at its goal, the last Kantian turn saw itself forced, as we discovered, to take a path that led for some distance over the field of a future life.*” Only
30 a mule could find a path in this fog! Turns that see themselves forced! Directions that overarch decline! Turns that are advantageous on the shortest possible route, turns that take a path for some distance over a field! Over which field? Over the field of the future life! To hell with all topography: lights! lights!
35 Where is Ariadne’s thread in this labyrinth? No, no one should be permitted to write this way, not even if he were the most

famous prose writer, and still less a human being with a “*fully developed religious and moral disposition*” (p. 50). It seems to me that a mature man ought to know that language is an heirloom that is handed down from one’s ancestors and that one bequeaths
 5 to one’s descendants, something that should be honored as one would honor something holy and inestimable and sacrosanct. If your ears have gone deaf, then ask questions, look things up in dictionaries, use good grammar books, but don’t dare to continue rambling on in this sinful manner! Strauss says, for
 10 example (p. 136): “*a delusion from which all those who have acquired insight would have to strive to divest themselves and all humanity.*” This construction is false, and if the fully developed ear of the scribbler does not notice this, then let me scream it into his ear: either you “remove something from someone” or you “divest
 15 someone of something”; hence Strauss has to say: “a delusion of which he and humanity are to be divested” or “a delusion that he must remove from himself and humanity.” But what he wrote is shoddy jargon. Now, what are we supposed to think when we see this stylistic pachyderm wallowing either in newly
 20 fashioned expressions, or in revamped old ones, when it speaks of the “*leveling sense of social democracy*” (p. 279), as though it were Sebastian Frank, or when it imitates an expression drawn from Hans Sachs (p. 259): “*the nations are the God-given, that is, the natural forms in which humanity comes into existence, which no rational person
 25 can disregard, and from which no upstanding person can withdraw.*” — (p. 252): “*The human species is differentiated into races according to a natural law*”; (p. 282): “*to navigate resistance.*” Strauss does not even understand why such an archaic patch is so conspicuous in the midst of his modern threadbare discourse. The reason is that
 30 everyone recognizes that such phrases and such patches have been stolen. But here and there our patchwork mender even shows a little creativity and tailors himself a new word: p. 221 he speaks of a “*self-generating life that wrings itself out and upward*”: but “to wring out” is something done either by the washer-
 35 woman or by the hero in his death throes after a completed battle, whose life is wrung out of him; “to wring out” in the

sense of “self-generating” is Straussian German, just as (p. 223): “*All the steps and stages of wrapping and unwrapping*” is the German of babies wrapped in diapers!—(p. 252): “*in junction with*” for “in conjunction with.”—(p. 137): “*in the daily existence of the*
 5 *medieval Christian, the religious element came to be addressed much more frequently and uninterruptedly.*” “Much more uninterruptedly,” an exemplary comparative—that is, if Strauss is to be considered an exemplary prose writer; to be sure, elsewhere he also uses the impossible “*more perfect*” (p. 223 and 214). But “*come to be*
 10 *addressed*”! Where in the world does this come from, you impetuous literary craftsman? For here I am wholly at a loss, I can find no analogy; addressed about this kind of “address,” the Brothers Grimm remain as mute as the grave. Apparently you simply mean “the religious element expresses itself more
 15 frequently”; in other words, your hair-raising ignorance has caused you to conflate words; to confuse “express” and “address” bears the stamp of vulgarity—although you would be well advised not to address the fact that I have publicly expressed this.—(p. 220): “*because I heard resonating behind its subjective meaning an objective one of infinite bearing.*” As I have already
 20 pointed out, your hearing is either faulty or rather peculiar: you hear “meanings resonating,” indeed, resonating “behind” other meanings, and these meanings you hear are supposed to be “of infinite bearing”! That is either nonsense, or the metaphor of a professional cannoneer.—(p. 183): “*with this the external frame of the theory is already sketched; even some of the springs, which determine the movement within it, have been inserted.*” Once again, this is
 25 either nonsense, or the metaphor of a professional upholsterer, and as such incomprehensible to us. But what value would there be in a mattress that consisted of nothing but springs inserted into a frame? And what kind of springs are these that determine the inner movement of the mattress!? We have our doubts about Strauss’s theory when he presents it to us in this
 30 form, so that we are inclined to say of it what Strauss himself so beautifully says: “*it still lacks some essential joints for it to have any viability for life.*” Well, bring on those joints! Frame and springs are

already present, the skin and muscles have been prepared; to be sure, as long as this is all it has, much is still lacking in order for Strauss's theory to have any viability for life; or, to express ourselves "*more impartially*," in Strauss's own words: "*when one thrusts together such wholly distinct figures, ignoring the transitional steps and stations in between.*" — (p. 5): "*But one can be without a firm position and still not be lying on the ground.*" Oh, we understand you well, you scantily clad master! For someone who neither stands nor lies, must be flying, or perhaps he floats, flutters, or flaps. But if, as the context almost seems to suggest, you intended to express something other than your flightiness, then in your place I would have chosen a different metaphor—one that would express something other than this. — (p. 5): "*the branches of the old tree that have become notoriously thin*"; what a notoriously thin style! — (p. 6): "*he would not be able to withhold his approval even from an infallible pope, as required by that need.*" In no case should one ever confuse the dative case with the accusative case; in the case of schoolboys the result is a howler, in the case of exemplary prosaic writers, a crime. — On p. 8 we find "*the new formation of a new organization of the ideal elements in the life of nations.*" Even assuming that such tautological nonsense is really able to creep out of the inkwell onto the paper, does that mean that it should then necessarily be allowed to appear in print? How is it possible that something like this is not caught when reading the proofs? When reading the proofs of six editions! Incidentally, if you are intent on quoting Schiller, as Strauss does on p. 9, then at least quote him precisely rather than inaccurately! You owe him this much respect! Hence the passage should read: "without fearing anyone's disfavor." — (p. 16): "*for here it at once becomes a deadbolt, a restraining wall against which the entire onslaught of advancing reason, all the battering rams of critique direct themselves with passionate loathing.*" Here we are supposed to imagine something that first becomes a deadbolt and then a wall, against which are directed, finally, "battering rams with passionate loathing," or even an "onslaught" with passionate loathing. Sir, why don't you speak like someone from this world! Battering rams are directed by

someone and cannot direct themselves, and only the person who directs them, not the battering rams themselves, can have passionate loathing — even though it would be unusual, indeed, for someone to have such loathing for a wall, as you would like
 5 to have us believe. — (p. 266): “*which explains why such phrases have always constituted the favorite playground of democratic platitudes.*” Indistinctly thought! Phrases cannot constitute a playground, but at most can only play around on one! Perhaps Strauss wanted to say: “which explains why such points of view have always
 10 constituted the favorite playground of democratic phrases and platitudes.” — (p. 320): “*the inner life of a delicately and richly strung poetic sensibility for which, given his wide-ranging activities in the areas of poetry and natural science, social life, and public affairs, the return to the mellow hearthfire of a noble affection remained a constant need.*” I am
 15 hard pressed to imagine a sensibility that is strung with strings like a harp and that then has a “wide-ranging activity,” that is, a galloping sensibility that ranges as widely as a dark horse, and that finally returns again to the quiet hearthfire. Am I not correct in finding this galloping sensibility harp that returns to the
 20 hearthfire and even engages in politics to be quite original — regardless of how unoriginal, hackneyed, and, indeed, illicit this “delicately strung poetic sensibility” itself is? We recognize the mark of the “classical prose writer” in such ingenious reformulations of what is vulgar or absurd. — (p. 74): “*if we wanted to open
 25 our eyes and honestly admit to ourselves what this eye-opening finds.*” In this pompous and ceremoniously vacuous turn of phrase, there is nothing *more* impressive than the combination of “finding” with the word “honest”: anyone who finds something and does not reveal it, does not admit his “finding,” is dishonest. Strauss
 30 does the opposite and deems it necessary to praise and confess it publicly. “But who has ever reproved him?,” a Spartan asked. — (p. 43): “*he only pulled the threads tighter in one article of faith, in one which, to be sure, is the centerpiece of Christian dogma.*” What actually occurs here remains somewhat obscure: when does
 35 one, in fact, pull threads tighter? Could these threads perhaps have been reins, and the person pulling them tighter a coach-

man? The metaphor makes sense to me only after making this revision. —(p. 226): “*In fur coats there lies a more accurate inkling.*” No doubt about it! “*The primal human being, an offshoot of the primal ape, was by no means*” so highly developed as to know that

5 some day he would progress as far as Strauss’s theory. But now we know “*that it will and must proceed to that point where the little flags marking the right-of-way flap merrily in the wind. Yes, merrily, taken in the sense of the purest and most sublime intellectual pleasure*” (p. 176). Strauss takes such childish delight in his theory that even the

10 “little flags” become merry—merry, strangely enough, “in the sense of the purest and most sublime intellectual pleasure.” And it just keeps getting merrier! Suddenly we see “*three masters, each one standing on the shoulders of his predecessor*” (p. 361), a veritable piece of equestrian artistry performed by the likes of

15 Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven; we watch Beethoven “*kick over the traces*” as though he were a horse; a “*freshly shod road*” (p. 367) is introduced (although until now we were familiar only with freshly shod horses), as is “*a rank dung heap for robbery and murder*” (p. 287); in spite of these obvious miracles, “*miracles are decreed*

20 *to be going out of style*” (p. 176). Suddenly, comets appear (p. 164); but Strauss reassures us: “*in the instance of the loose tribe of comets, we cannot speak of inhabitants*”: true words of comfort, since otherwise where a loose tribe is concerned, one should forswear nothing, not even inhabitants. Meanwhile, there is a new spectacle: Strauss himself “*climbs up*” over “*patriotism to humanitarianism*” (p. 258), while someone else “*sinks down under into ever cruder*

25 *democracy*” (p. 264). Down under into! Not just down into, commands our master of language, who elsewhere (p. 269) incorrectly—if with considerable forcefulness—says “*a sound nobility*

30 *belongs into an organic structure.*” In a higher sphere, inconceivably high above us, dubious phenomena stir, for example, “*the abandonment of the spiritual extraction of human beings from nature*” (p. 201), or (p. 210) “*the confutation of prudishness*”; or on p. 241 the dangerous spectacle in which “*the struggle for existence is sufficiently*

35 *set loose in the animal world.*” — On p. 359 we even experience the miracle of “*a human voice leaping to accompany instrumental music*”;

but a door is opened through which the miracle (p. 177) "*is expelled, never to return again*" — On p. 123 "*all evidence witnesses in death the entire human being, as he was, perishing*"; never before the advent of Strauss, the language tamer, did an "examination witness"
5 something: but now we have witnessed it in his peep show of language and want to praise him. After all, it was from him that we first learned that "*when it is offended, our feeling for the cosmos reacts religiously,*" and we recall the relevant procedure. We already know how alluring it is "*to get to glimpse the knees of these sublime*
10 *figures,*" and we hence consider ourselves fortunate to have had a look at this "classical prose writer" — even given this limitation in our perspective. To be quite honest: what we saw were feet of clay, and what appeared to be healthy flesh was merely a cosmetic veneer. Of course, philistine culture in Germany
15 will react with indignation when we speak of painted idols where it sees a living God. But whoever dares to overturn its idols will scarcely be afraid to tell philistine culture to its face, even in spite of all its indignation, that it has forgotten how to distinguish between living and dead, genuine and counterfeit,
20 original and imitation, god and idol, and that it has lost that healthy, virile instinct for what is real and right. It has earned its downfall: and now already the signs of its dominion are fading, already its purple robe is falling; and when the purple robe falls, the sovereign himself soon follows. —

25 With this, I have made my confession. It is the confession of one individual; and what can one individual do against the entire world, even if his voice were to be heard everywhere! Certainly his judgment would possess—please allow me, in conclusion, to adorn you with one more feather from Strauss's
30 pen—only "*just as much subjective truth, as it is without any measure of objective proof.*" — Isn't that right, my friends? Therefore, take heart in spite of it all! At least for the time being be content with your "*just as much . . . as it is without.*" For the time being! For as long, that is, as what was always timely — and what today
35 more than ever is timely and necessary — is still considered unfashionable: speaking the truth. —

On the Utility and Liability
of History for Life

FOREWORD

“Moreover, I hate everything that only instructs me without increasing or immediately stimulating my own activity.” These words of Goethe’s, a boldly expressed *ceterum censeo*, provide an appropriate beginning for our observations on the worth and worthlessness of history. My purpose here is to demonstrate why instruction without stimulation, why knowledge that inhibits activity, why history as a costly intellectual superfluity and luxury must, in accordance with Goethe’s words, arouse our intense hatred—for the simple reason that we still lack the most basic necessities, and because the superfluous is the enemy of necessity. To be sure, we need history; but our need for it is different from that of the pampered idler in the garden of knowledge—regardless of the noble condescension with which he might look upon our crude and inelegant needs and afflictions. That is, we need it for life and for action, not for the easy withdrawal from life and from action, let alone for whitewashing a selfish life and cowardly, base actions. We only wish to serve history to the extent that it serves life, but there is a way of practicing history and a valorization of history in which life atrophies and degenerates: a phenomenon that it will likely be as painful as it is necessary to diagnose in the striking symptoms of our present age.

I have sought to depict a feeling that has often tormented me; I am taking my revenge on it by exposing it to public scrutiny. Perhaps this depiction will cause someone or other to

declare that he is also familiar with this feeling, but that I have not experienced it in all its purity and originarity, and that I hence have failed to express it with the confidence and maturity of experience that it requires. A few people may, perhaps, make
5 this assertion, but most will say that it is a wholly perverse, unnatural, repulsive, and downright illicit feeling; indeed, they will say that by feeling it, I have proven myself unworthy of that powerful historical orientation of our age, which, as is well known, has made itself evident for two generations now,
10 particularly among the Germans. However, the very fact that I dare to go public with the natural description of my feeling will tend to promote rather than injure general propriety, since I will thereby give many the opportunity to say flattering things about the aforementioned orientation of our age. But I stand
15 to gain something for myself that is worth even more than propriety—to be publicly instructed and set right about our age.

The observations offered here are also unfashionable because I attempt to understand something in which our age justifiably takes pride—namely, its historical cultivation—as a detriment,
20 an infirmity, a deficiency of the age, and furthermore, because I am even of the opinion that all of us suffer from a debilitating historical fever and that we at the very least need to recognize that we suffer from it. But if Goethe was correct in saying that when we cultivate our virtues we simultaneously cultivate our
25 faults, and if, as everyone knows, a hypertrophied virtue—and the historical sensibility of our time seems to me to be just such a hypertrophied virtue—can cause the demise of a people just as easily as a hypertrophied vice, then perhaps just this once I will be permitted to speak up. By way of exculpation, I should
30 not conceal the fact, first, that I have mainly drawn the occurrences that aroused in me those tormenting feelings from my own experiences and that I have drawn on the experiences of others only by way of comparison, and second, that it is only to the extent that I am a student of more ancient times—above
35 all, of ancient Greece—that I, as a child of our time, have had such unfashionable experiences. But I have to concede this

much to myself as someone who by occupation is a classical philologist, for I have no idea what the significance of classical philology would be in our age, if not to have an unfashionable effect—that is, to work against the time and thereby have an effect upon it, hopefully for the benefit of a future time.

I

Observe the herd as it grazes past you: it cannot distinguish yesterday from today, leaps about, eats, sleeps, digests, leaps some more, and carries on like this from morning to night and from day to day, tethered by the short leash of its pleasures and displeasures to the stake of the moment, and thus it is neither melancholy nor bored. It is hard on the human being to observe this, because he boasts about the superiority of his humanity over animals and yet looks enviously upon their happiness—for the one and only thing that he desires is to live like an animal, neither bored nor in pain, and yet he desires this in vain, because he does not desire it in the same way as does the animal. The human being might ask the animal: “Why do you just look at me like that instead of telling me about your happiness?” The animal wanted to answer, “Because I always immediately forget what I wanted to say”—but it had already forgotten this answer and hence said nothing, so that the human being was left to wonder.

But he also wondered about himself and how he was unable to learn to forget and always clung to what was past; no matter how far or how fast he runs, that chain runs with him. It is cause for wonder: the moment, here in a flash, gone in a flash, before it nothing, after it nothing, does, after all, return as a ghost once more and disturbs the peace of a later moment. Over and over a leaf is loosened from the scroll of time, falls out, flutters away—and suddenly flutters back into the human being’s lap. Then the human being says “I remember,” and he envies the animal that immediately forgets and that sees how every moment actually dies, sinks back into fog and night, and is extinguished forever. Thus the animal lives

ahistorically, for it disappears entirely into the present, like a number that leaves no remainder; it does not know how to dissemble, conceals nothing, and appears in each and every moment as exactly what it is, and so cannot help but be honest. The human being, by contrast, braces himself against the great and ever-greater burden of the past; it weighs him down or bends him over, hampers his gait as an invisible and obscure load that he can pretend to disown, and that he is only too happy to disown when he is among his fellow human beings in order to arouse their envy. That is why the sight of a grazing herd or, even closer to home, of a child, which, not yet having a past to disown, plays in blissful blindness between the fences of the past and the future, moves him as though it were the vision of a lost paradise. And yet the child's play must be disturbed; all too soon it will be summoned out of its obliviousness. Then it will come to understand the phrase "it was," that watchword that brings the human being strife, suffering, and boredom, so that he is reminded what his existence basically is— a never to be perfected imperfect. When death finally brings him the much longed for oblivion, it simultaneously also suppresses the present; and with this, existence places its seal on the knowledge that existence itself is nothing but an uninterrupted having-been, something that lives by negating, consuming, and contradicting itself.

If happiness, if striving for new happiness, is in any conceivable sense what binds the living to life and urges them to live on, then perhaps no philosopher is closer to the truth than the cynic, for the happiness of the animal, who is, after all, the consummate cynic, provides living proof of the truth of cynicism. The smallest happiness, if it is uninterruptedly present and makes one happy, is an incomparably greater form of happiness than the greatest happiness that occurs as a mere episode, as a mood, so to speak, as a wild whim, in the midst of sheer joylessness, yearning, and privation. But in the case of the smallest and the greatest happiness, it is always just one thing alone that makes happiness happiness: the ability to for-

get, or, expressed in a more scholarly fashion, the capacity to feel ahistorically over the entire course of its duration. Anyone who cannot forget the past entirely and set himself down on the threshold of the moment, anyone who cannot stand, without dizziness or fear, on one single point like a victory goddess, will never know what happiness is; worse, he will never do anything that makes others happy. Imagine the most extreme example, a human being who does not possess the power to forget, who is damned to see becoming everywhere; such a human being would no longer believe in his own being, would no longer believe in himself, would see everything flow apart in turbulent particles, and would lose himself in this stream of becoming; like the true student of Heraclitus, in the end he would hardly even dare to lift a finger. All action requires forgetting, just as the existence of all organic things requires not only light, but darkness as well. A human being who wanted to experience things in a thoroughly historical manner would be like someone forced to go without sleep, or like an animal supposed to exist solely by rumination and ever repeated rumination. In other words, it is possible to live almost without memory, indeed, to live happily, as the animals show us; but without forgetting, it is utterly impossible to live at all. Or, to express my theme even more simply: *There is a degree of sleeplessness, of rumination, of historical sensibility, that injures and ultimately destroys all living things, whether a human being, a people, or a culture.*

In order to determine this degree and thereby establish the limit beyond which the past must be forgotten if it is not to become the grave digger of the present, we would have to know exactly how great the *shaping power* of a human being, a people, a culture is; by shaping power I mean that power to develop its own singular character out of itself, to shape and assimilate what is past and alien, to heal wounds, to replace what has been lost, to recreate broken forms out of itself alone. There are people who possess so little of this power that they bleed to death from a single experience, a single pain, particularly even from a single mild injustice, as from a tiny little cut. On

the other hand, there are those who are so little affected by life's most savage and devastating disasters, and even by their own malicious actions, that, while these are still taking place, or at least shortly thereafter, they manage to arrive at a tolerable level of well-being and a kind of clear conscience. The stronger the roots of a human being's innermost nature, the more of the past he will assimilate or forcibly appropriate; and the most powerful, most mighty nature would be characterized by the fact that there would be no limit at which its historical sensibility would have a stifling and harmful effect; it would appropriate and incorporate into itself all that is past, what is its own as well as what is alien, transforming it, as it were, into its own blood. Such a nature knows how to forget whatever does not subdue it; these things no longer exist. Its horizon is closed and complete, and nothing is capable of reminding it that beyond this horizon there are human beings, passions, doctrines, goals. And this is a universal law: every living thing can become healthy, strong, and fruitful only within a defined horizon; if it is incapable of drawing a horizon around itself and too selfish, in turn, to enclose its own perspective within an alien horizon, then it will feebly waste away or hasten to its timely end. Cheerfulness, good conscience, joyous deeds, faith in what is to come—all this depends, both in the instance of the individual as well as in that of a people, on whether there is a line that segregates what is discernible and bright from what is unilluminable and obscure; on whether one knows how to forget things at the proper time just as well as one knows how to remember at the proper time; on whether one senses with a powerful instinct which occasions should be experienced historically, and which ahistorically. This is the proposition the reader is invited to consider: *the ahistorical and the historical are equally necessary for the health of an individual, a people, and a culture.*

Everyone has made at least this one simple observation: a human being's historical knowledge and sensitivity can be very limited, his horizon as narrow as that of the inhabitant of an isolated alpine valley; each of his judgments may contain an

injustice, each experience may be marked by the misconception that he is the first to experience it—yet in spite of all these injustices and all these misconceptions, he stands there, vigorously healthy and robust, a joy to look at. At the same time, someone standing close beside him who is far more just and learned grows sick and collapses because the lines of his horizon are restlessly redrawn again and again, because he cannot extricate himself from the much more fragile web of his justice and his truths and find his way back to crude wanting and desiring. By contrast, we saw the animal, which is wholly ahistorical and dwells within a horizon almost no larger than a mere point, yet still lives in a certain kind of happiness, at the very least without boredom and dissimulation. We will therefore have to consider the capacity to live to a certain degree ahistorically to be more significant and more originary, insofar as it lays the foundation upon which something just, healthy, and great, something that is truly human, is able to grow at all. The ahistorical is like an enveloping atmosphere in which alone life is engendered, and it disappears again with the destruction of this atmosphere. It is true: only when the human being, by thinking, reflecting, comparing, analyzing, and synthesizing, limits that ahistorical element, only when a bright, flashing, iridescent light is generated within that enveloping cloud of mist—that is, only by means of the power to utilize the past for life and to reshape past events into history once more—does the human being become a human being; but in an excess of history the human being ceases once again, and without that mantle of the ahistorical he would never have begun and would never have dared to begin. What deeds could a human being possibly accomplish without first entering that misty region of the ahistorical? Or, to put metaphors aside and turn instead to an illustrative example: imagine a man seized and carried away by a vehement passion for a woman or for a great idea; how his world changes! Looking backward he feels he is blind, listening around him he hears what is unfamiliar as a dull, insignificant sound; and those things that he perceives at all he never before

perceived in this way; so palpably near, colorful, resonant, illuminated, as though he were apprehending it with all his senses at once. All his valuations are changed and devalued; many things he can no longer value because he can scarcely feel them
5 any more; he asks himself whether all this time he was merely duped by the words and opinions of others; he marvels that his memory turns inexhaustibly round and round in a circle and yet is still too weak and exhausted to make one single leap out of this circle. It is the most unjust condition in the world,
10 narrow, ungrateful to the past, blind to dangers, deaf to warnings; a tiny whirlpool of life in a dead sea of night and oblivion; and yet this condition—ahistorical, antihistorical through and through—is not only the womb of the unjust deed, but of every just deed as well; and no artist will create a picture, no
15 general win a victory, and no people gain its freedom without their having previously desired and striven to accomplish these deeds in just such an ahistorical condition. Just as anyone who acts, in Goethe's words, is always without conscience, so is he also without knowledge: he forgets most things in order to do
20 one thing, he is unjust to whatever lies behind him and recognizes only one right, the right of what is to be. Thus, everyone who acts loves his action infinitely more than it deserves to be loved, and the best deeds occur in such an exuberance of love that, no matter what, they must be unworthy of this love, even
25 if their worth were otherwise incalculably great.

If in many cases any one person were capable of sniffing out and breathing once again this ahistorical atmosphere in which every great historical event is born, then such a person, as a cognitive being, would be able to elevate himself to a
30 *suprabistorical* standpoint, something Niebuhr once depicted as the possible result of historical reflections. "History," he says, "when understood clearly and fully, is at least useful for one thing: so that we might recognize how even the greatest and loftiest intellects of the human race do not know how fortu-
35 itously their eye has taken on its manner of seeing and forcibly demanded that all others see in this same manner; forcibly, be-

cause the intensity of their consciousness is exceptionally great. Anyone who has not recognized and understood this fully and in many individual instances will be enslaved by the presence of any powerful intellect that places the loftiest passion into a given form." Such a standpoint could be called suprahistorical because anyone who occupies it could no longer be seduced into continuing to living on and taking part in history, since he would have recognized the single condition of all events: that blindness and injustice dwelling in the soul of those who act. From that point onward he would be cured of taking history overly seriously. For he would have learned, for every human being, for every experience—regardless of whether it occurred among the Greeks or the Turks, or in the first or the nineteenth century—to answer the question: Why and to what purpose do people live? Anyone who asks his acquaintances whether they would like to relive the last ten or twenty years will easily recognize which of them are suited for that suprahistorical standpoint. To be sure, they will all answer "No!" but they will give different reasons for this answer. Some, perhaps, by consoling themselves with the claim "but the next twenty will be better." Of such people David Hume once said derisively:

And from the dregs of life hope to receive,
What the first sprightly running could not give.

We shall call them historical human beings; a glance into the past drives them on toward the future, inflames their courage to go on living, kindles their hope that justice will come, that happiness is waiting just the other side of the mountain they are approaching. These historical human beings believe that the meaning of existence will come ever more to light in the course of a *process*; they look backward only to understand the present by observation of the prior process and to learn to desire the future even more keenly; they have no idea how ahistorically they think and act despite all their history, nor that their concern with history stands in the service, not of pure knowledge, but of life.

But that question, whose first answer we have just heard, can also be answered differently. Of course, once again with a “No!,” but for different reasons: with the No of the suprahistorical human being, who does not seek salvation in a process, but for whom instead the world is complete and has arrived at its culmination in every individual moment. What could ten new years possibly teach that the past ten could not!

Suprahistorical human beings have never agreed whether the substance of this doctrine is happiness or resignation, virtue or atonement; but, contrary to all historical modes of viewing the past, they do arrive at unanimity with regard to the statement: the past and the present are one and the same. That is, in all their diversity, they are identical in type, and as the omnipresence of imperishable types they make up a stationary formation of unalterable worth and eternally identical meaning. Just as the hundreds of different languages conform to the same constant types of human needs, so that anyone who understood these needs would be able to learn nothing new from these languages, the suprahistorical thinker illuminates the entire history of peoples and individuals from the inside, clairvoyantly divining the primordial meaning of the different hieroglyphs and gradually even exhaustedly evading this constantly rising flood of written signs: for, given the infinite superabundance of events, how could he possibly avoid being satiated, oversatiated, indeed, even nauseated! Ultimately, perhaps the rashest of these suprahistorical human beings will be prepared to say to his heart, as did Giacomo Leopardi:

Nothing exists that is worthy
of your emotions, and the earth deserves no sighs.
Our being is pain and boredom, and the world
is excrement—nothing else.
Calm yourself.

But let us leave the suprahistorical human beings to their nausea and their wisdom: today we instead want to rejoice with all our hearts in our unwisdom and to make things easier for

ourselves by playing the roles of those active and progressive people who venerate process. Our evaluation of what is historical might prove to be nothing more than an occidental prejudice, but let us at least move forward and not simply stand
5 still in these prejudices! If we could at least learn how to pursue history better for the purpose of *life*! Then we would gladly concede that suprahistorical human beings possess more wisdom than we do; at least, as long as we are certain of possessing more life, for then, at least, our unwisdom would have more
10 of a future than their wisdom. And so as to banish all doubts about the meaning of this antithesis between life and wisdom, I will come to my own aid by employing a long-standing practice and propound, without further ado, some theses.

A historical phenomenon, when purely and completely understood and reduced to an intellectual phenomenon, is dead
15 for anyone who understands it, for in it he understands the delusion, the injustice, the blind passion, and in general the whole darkened earthly horizon of that phenomenon, and from this simultaneously its historical power. At this point
20 this power becomes powerless for him as someone who understands it, but perhaps it is not yet powerless for him as someone who lives.

History, conceived as a pure science and accorded sovereignty, would be for humanity a kind of conclusion to life and a
25 settling of accounts. But historical cultivation is beneficial and holds out promise for the future only when it follows in the wake of a powerful new torrent of life, for example, an evolving culture; that is, only when it is governed and guided by a superior power, instead of governing and guiding itself.

30 Insofar as it stands in the service of life, history also stands in the service of an ahistorical power, and because of this subordinate position, it neither could nor should become a pure science on the order of mathematics, for example. But the question about the degree to which life needs the service of history
35 at all is one of the supreme questions and worries that impinges on the health of a human being, a people, or a culture. For at

the point of a certain excess of history, life crumbles and degenerates — as does, ultimately, as a result of this degeneration, history itself, as well.

2

5 That life requires the service of history must be comprehended, however, just as clearly as the proposition that will subsequently be proved—that an excess of history is harmful to life. History pertains to the living person in three respects: it pertains to him as one who acts and strives, as one who pre-
10 serves and venerates, and as one who suffers and is in need of liberation. These three relations correspond to three kinds of history: insofar as it is permissible to distinguish between a *monumental*, an *antiquarian*, and a *critical* kind of history.

Above all, history pertains to the active and powerful human
15 being, to the person who is involved in a great struggle and who needs exemplars, teachers, and comforters, but is unable to find them among his contemporaries and in the present age. This is how it pertained to Schiller, for, as Goethe observed, our age is so wretched that the poet encounters no useful quali-
20 ties in the lives of the human beings around him. Polybius, for example, was thinking of the person who takes action when he called political history the proper preparation for governing a state and the best teacher, who admonishes us steadfastly
25 misfortunes of others. Anyone who has come to recognize in this the meaning of history cannot help but be annoyed to see curious tourists or meticulous micrologists climbing about on the pyramids of great past ages; where he finds inspiration to emulate and to improve, he does not wish to encounter the
30 idler who, longing for diversion or excitement, saunters about as though among the painted treasures in a gallery. So as not to experience despair and disgust amid these weak and hopeless idlers, amid these excited and fidgety contemporaries, who in fact only appear to be active, the person who takes action must,
35 in order to catch his breath, glance backward and interrupt the

progress toward his goal. However, his goal is some kind of happiness—not necessarily his own, but often that of a people or of all of humanity; he shrinks from resignation and uses history as a means to combat it. For the most part, he can hope for
5 no reward other than fame, that is, the expectation of a place of honor in the temple of history, where he can, in turn, serve later generations as a teacher, comforter, and admonisher. For his commandment reads: Whatever was once capable of extending the concept of “the human being” and of giving it
10 a more beautiful substance must be eternally present in order for it perpetually to have this effect. That the great moments in the struggles of individuals form links in one single chain; that they combine to form a mountain range of humankind through the millennia; that for me the highest point of such
15 a long-since-past moment is still alive, bright, and great—this is the fundamental thought in the belief in humanity that expresses itself in the demand for a *monumental* history. Precisely this demand that what is great be eternal sparks the most terrible struggle, however. For every other living thing cries out:
20 “No! The monumental shall not come into being”—this is the watchword of those who oppose it. Dull habit, the trivial and the common, fill every nook and cranny of the world, gather like a dense earthly fog around everything great, throw themselves in the path that greatness must travel to attain immor-
25 tality so as to obstruct, deceive, smother, and suffocate it. But this path leads through human minds! Through the minds of frightened and short-lived animals who constantly return to the same needs and only with great effort ward off destruction for a short time. For first and foremost they want only one thing:
30 to live at all costs. Who could possibly imagine that they would run the difficult relay race of monumental history that greatness alone can survive! And yet again and again a few awaken who, viewing past greatness and strengthened by their observation of it, feel a sense of rapture, as if human life were a magnifi-
35 cent thing and as if the most beautiful fruit of this bitter plant were the knowledge that in an earlier time some person once

passed through this existence with pride and strength, another pensively, a third helpfully and with compassion—all of them leaving behind the single lesson that the most beautiful life is led by those who do not hold existence in high regard. While
5 the common human being clutches to this span of time with such greed and gloomy earnest, those who were on the way to immortality and to monumental history at least knew how to treat it with Olympian laughter, or at least with sublime derision; often they went to their graves with a sense of irony—
10 for what was left of them to bury! Certainly only that which as waste, refuse, vanity, and animality had always oppressed them, something that now would fall into oblivion after long being the object of their contempt. But one thing will live on: the signature of their most authentic being, a work, a deed, a
15 rare inspiration, a creation; it will live on because posterity cannot do without it. In this, its most transfigured form, fame is something more than just the tastiest morsel of our self-love, as Schopenhauer called it; it is the belief in the coherence and continuity of what is great in all ages, it is a protest against the
20 change of generations and against transitoriness.

Of what utility to the contemporary human being, then, is the monumental view of the past, the occupation with the classical and rare accomplishments of earlier times? From it he concludes that the greatness that once existed was at least
25 *possible* at one time, and that it therefore will probably be possible once again; he goes his way with more courage, for the doubt that befalls him in his weaker moments—Is he not, in fact, striving for the impossible?—is now banished. Suppose someone believed that no more than one hundred productive
30 human beings, educated and working in the same spirit, would be needed to put an end to the cultivatedness that has just now become fashionable in Germany; would he not be strengthened by the recognition that the culture of the Renaissance was borne on the shoulders of just such a band of one hundred
35 men?

And yet—so that we might immediately learn something

new from the same example—how fluid and tentative, how imprecise that comparison would be! If it is to be effective, how many differences must be overlooked, with what violence the individuality of what is past must be forced into a general
5 form, its sharp edges and its lines broken in favor of this conformity. Basically, in fact, what was possible once could only become possible a second time if the Pythagoreans were correct in believing that when an identical constellation of the heavenly bodies occurs, identical events—down to individual,
10 minute details—must repeat themselves on the earth as well; so that whenever the stars have a particular relation to each other, a Stoic will join forces with an Epicurean to murder Caesar, and whenever they are in another configuration Columbus will discover America. Only if the earth always began its drama all
15 over again after the conclusion of the fifth act, only if it were certain that the same entanglement of motives, the same *deus ex machina*, the same catastrophe would recur at fixed intervals, could the powerful human being possibly desire monumental history in its absolute iconic *veracity*, that is, with every fact
20 depicted in all its peculiarity and uniqueness. This is unlikely to happen until astronomers have once again become astrologers. Until then, monumental history will have no need for that absolute veracity: it will continue to approach, generalize, and ultimately identify nonidentical things, it will continue to
25 diminish the differences between motives and causes in order to present, to the detriment of the *causae*, the *effectus* as monumental—that is, as exemplary and worthy of emulation. As a result, since it disregards all causes, one would with little exaggeration be able to call monumental history a collection of
30 “effects in themselves,” of events that will have an effect on every age. What is celebrated at popular festivals and at religious or military commemorations is really just such an “effect in itself”: this is what disturbs the sleep of the ambitious, what lies like an amulet on the heart of the enterprising—not the
35 true historical *connexus* of causes and effects, which, once fully comprehended, would only prove that the dice game of the

future and of chance would never again produce something wholly identical to what it produced in the past.

As long as the soul of historiography lies in the great *stimuli* that a powerful person derives from it; as long as the past must
5 be described as worthy of imitation, as capable of imitation and as possible a second time; it is in danger of becoming somewhat distorted, of being reinterpreted more favorably, and hence of approaching pure fiction. Yes, there are ages that are entirely incapable of distinguishing between a monumental past
10 and a mythical fiction, because they could derive the very same stimuli from the one as from the other. Thus, if the monumental view of the past *prevails* over other modes of viewing it, over the antiquarian and the critical views, then the past itself is *damaged*: entire large parts of it are forgotten, scorned, and washed
15 away as if by a gray, unremitting tide, and only a few individual, embellished facts rise as islands above it. There seems to be something unnatural and wondrous about those rare persons who become visible at all, much like the golden hip by which the disciples of Pythagoras claimed to recognize their
20 master. Monumental history deceives by means of analogies: with seductive similarities it arouses rashness in those who are courageous and fanaticism in those who are inspired; and if one imagines this history in the hands and heads of talented egoists and wicked fanatics, then empires will be destroyed, princes
25 murdered, wars and revolutions incited, and the number of historical "effects in themselves"—that is, of effects without sufficient causes—further increase. So much as a reminder of the damage that monumental history can cause among powerful and active human beings, regardless of whether they are good
30 or evil: just imagine the effect it would have if it were seized and exploited by the powerless and inactive!

Let's take the simplest and most common example. Just picture to yourself the unartistic and insufficiently artistic natures clad and armored in the monumental history of art: against
35 whom will they now turn their weapons! Against their archenemies, the strong artistic spirits; in other words, against those

who alone are capable of truly learning — that is, learning with an eye to life — from history and of translating what they have learned into a higher form of praxis. Their path is obstructed; their air is darkened when zealous idolators dance around the
5 shrine at some half-understood monument of a great past, as if they wanted to say: “Look, this is the only true and real art; of what concern to you is art that is just coming into being or has not yet been realized!” Apparently this dancing mob even has the privilege of determining what “good taste” is, for anyone
10 who himself actually creates has always been at a disadvantage to those who merely observe and do not themselves take a hand in creation; just as in all ages the bar-stool politician is more intelligent, just, and reflective than the governing statesman. But if one insists on transposing the custom of popular refer-
15 erendum and majority rule into the realm of art and thereby forcing, as it were, the artist to defend himself before a jury of aesthetic do-nothings, then you can bet that he will be condemned; and this not despite the fact that, but precisely *because*, his judges have ceremoniously proclaimed the canon of monu-
20 mental art—that is, according to our earlier explanation, of the art that in all ages “produced an effect”: whereas for the appreciation of all art that is nonmonumental simply because it is contemporary, these judges lack, first, the need, second, the genuine inclination, and third, precisely that authority of
25 history. On the other hand, their instinct tells them that art can be murdered by art: the monumental should by no means come into being again, and to prevent this they deploy the authority of the monumental derived from the past. Thus they are connoisseurs of art because they want to do away with art
30 altogether; thus they masquerade as physicians, while in fact they intend to administer a poison; thus they cultivate their tongue and their taste in order to explain from their position of fastidiousness why they so persistently reject all the nourishing artistic dishes offered them. For they don’t want great
35 art to come into being: their strategy is to say: “Look, great art already exists!” In truth, however, they are as little con-

cerned with this great art that already exists as they are with that art that is coming into being; their lives bear witness to this. Monumental history is the costume under which their hatred of all the great and powerful people of their age masquerades as
5 satiated admiration for the great and powerful people of past ages, the costume in which they surreptitiously turn the actual meaning of the monumental view of history into its opposite; whether they are clearly aware of it or not, they act as though their motto were "Let the dead bury the living."

10 Each of these three types of history is valid only in one soil and in one climate; in any other it develops into the most devastating weed. If the human being who wants to create something great needs the past at all, then he takes control of it by means of monumental history; those, on the other hand, who
15 wish to remain within the realm of the habitual and the time-honored, foster the past in the manner of antiquarian historians; and only those who are oppressed by the affliction of the present and who wish to throw off this burden at all costs sense the need for critical history—that is, for history that judges and
20 condemns. Much harm stems from the thoughtless transplanting of these plants: the critic without affliction, the antiquarian without piety, the connoisseur of greatness unable to create something great are just such plants that, alienated from the natural soil that nurtures them, have degenerated and shot up
25 as weeds.

3

Second, history pertains to the person who preserves and venerates, to him who looks back with loyalty and love on the origins through which he became what he is; by means of this
30 piety he gives thanks, as it were, for his existence. By attending with caring hands to what has subsisted since ancient times, he seeks to preserve for those who will emerge after him the conditions under which he himself has come into being—and by doing so he serves life. For such a soul the possession of an-
35 cestral household effects takes on a different meaning, for far

from the soul possessing these objects, it is possessed by them. Small, limited, decaying, antiquated things obtain their own dignity and sanctity when the preserving and venerating soul of the antiquarian human being takes up residence in them
5 and makes itself a comfortable nest. The history of his city becomes his own history; he understands its wall, its towered gate, its ordinances, and its popular festivals as an illustrated diary of his youth, and he rediscovers himself in all of this, his strength, his diligence, his joy, his judgments, his foolishness, and his ill manners. "It was possible to live here," he says
10 to himself, "because it is possible to live here and will in the future be possible to live here, for we are tough and cannot be broken overnight." With this "we" he looks beyond his own transient, curious, individual existence and senses himself to
15 be the spirit of his house, his lineage, and his city. At times he even greets across the distance of darkening and confusing centuries the soul of his people as his own soul; the ability to empathize with things and divine their greater significance, to detect traces that are almost extinguished, to instinctively read
20 correctly a past frequently overwritten, to quickly understand the palimpsests, indeed, polypsests—these are his gifts and his virtues. It was with these that Goethe stood before Erwin von Steinach's monumental work; the historical veil of clouds that separated them was torn apart in the storm of his emotions: he
25 recognized this German work for the first time, "exerting its effect out of a strong and rugged German soul." It was just such a sensibility and impulse that guided the Italians of the Renaissance and reawakened in their poets the ancient Italian genius to "a marvelous new resounding of the lyre," as Jacob Burckhardt has expressed it. But that antiquarian sense of veneration
30 has its greatest worth when it infuses the modest, rough, even wretched conditions in which a human being or a people live with a simple and stirring sense of joy and satisfaction. Just as Niebuhr, for example, admits with honest frankness that he
35 lived contentedly, without missing art, in moor and meadow among free peasants who had a history. How could history

serve life better than by binding even less-favored generations and populations to their native land and native customs, helping them settle in, and preventing them from straying into foreign lands in search of better things for whose possession they then compete in battle? At times what ties individuals, as it were, to these companions and surroundings, to these tiresome habits, to these barren mountain ridges, seems to be obstinacy and imprudence—but it is an imprudence of the healthiest sort, one that benefits the totality. Anyone is aware of this who has ever come to understand the dreadful consequences of the adventurous joy of migration, especially when it takes hold of an entire population, or who has studied up close the conditions of a people that has forfeited loyalty to its own past and has succumbed to restless, cosmopolitan craving for new and ever newer things. The opposite sensation, the contentment the tree feels with its roots, the happiness of knowing that one's existence is not formed arbitrarily and by chance, but that instead it grows as the blossom and the fruit of a past that is its inheritance and that thereby excuses, indeed, justifies its existence—this is what today we are in the habit of calling the true historical sensibility.

Now, to be sure, this is not the condition in which the human being would be most capable of reducing the past to pure knowledge; so that even here we also perceive, as we already perceived in the case of monumental history, that the past itself suffers as long as history serves life and is governed by the impulses of life. To take some freedoms with our metaphor: the tree feels its roots more than it sees them; however, this feeling estimates their size in analogy to the size and strength of the visible limbs. Even if the tree is wrong about this: how wrong must it then be about the surrounding forest, about which it knows and feels anything only to the extent that it hinders or promotes its own growth—but nothing else! The antiquarian sensibility of a human being, of a civic community, of an entire people always has an extremely limited field of vision; most things it does not perceive at all, and the few things it does

see, it views too closely and in isolation; it is unable to gauge anything, and as a result it regards everything to be equally important, and consequently the individual thing to be too important. There is no criterion for value and no sense of proportion for the things of the past that would truly do them justice when viewed in relation to each other; instead, their measure and proportions are always taken only in relation to the antiquarian individual or people that looks back on them.

This always brings with it one immediate danger: ultimately, anything ancient and past that enters into this field of vision is simply regarded as venerable, and everything that fails to welcome the ancient with reverence—in other words, whatever is new and in the process of becoming—is met with hostility and rejected. Thus, in the plastic and graphic arts even the Greeks tolerated the hieratic style alongside the free and great style; indeed, later they not only tolerated pointed noses and frosty smiles, but even turned them into a sign of refined taste. When a people's sensibility hardens in this way; when history serves past life to the extent that it not only undermines further life but especially higher life; when the historical sense no longer conserves but rather mummifies it, then beginning at its crown and moving down to its roots, the tree gradually dies an unnatural death—and eventually the roots themselves commonly perish. Antiquarian history degenerates from the moment when the fresh life of the present no longer animates and inspires it. At this point, piety withers, the scholarly habit persists without it and revolves with self-satisfied egotism around its own axis. Then we view the repugnant spectacle of a blind mania to collect, of a restless gathering together of everything that once existed. The human being envelops himself in the smell of mustiness; by this antiquarian behavior he even succeeds in reducing a more significant impulse, a nobler need, to this insatiable curiosity—or more accurately, to an all-encompassing desire for what is old. Often he sinks so low that in the end he is satisfied with any fare and even devours with gusto the dust of bibliographical minutiae.

But even if that degeneration does not occur, if antiquarian history does not lose that foundation in which alone it can take root if it is to serve the well-being of life: there are still enough dangers that remain, should it become too powerful and stifle the other modes for viewing history. For antiquarian history understands only how to *preserve* life, not how to create it; therefore, it always underestimates those things that are in the process of becoming because it has no divining instinct—as, for example, monumental history has. Thus, antiquarian history impedes the powerful resolve for the new, it lames the person of action, who, as person of action, must always offend certain acts of piety. The fact that something has grown old gives rise to the demand that it be immortal; for if we add up all the experiences such an antiquity—an old custom, a religious belief, an inherited political privilege—has accumulated over the course of its existence, calculating the entire sum of piety and veneration that individuals and generations have felt toward it, then it seems presumptuous or even impious to replace such an antiquity with a novelty and to oppose such a numerical accumulation of acts of piety and veneration with the single digit of something that is still in the process of becoming and is contemporary.

With this it becomes clear just how badly the human being often needs, in addition to the monumental and antiquarian modes of viewing the past, a *third* mode, the *critical*; and this once again in the service of life. In order to live, he must possess, and from time to time employ, the strength to shatter and dissolve a past; he accomplishes this by bringing this past before a tribunal, painstakingly interrogating it, and finally condemning it. But every past is worthy of being condemned—for this is simply how it is with human affairs: human violence and weakness have always played a powerful role in them. It is not justice that sits in judgment here; even less so is it mercy that passes judgment: rather, it is life and life alone, that dark, driving, insatiable power that lusts after itself. Its verdict is always merciless, always unjust, because it has never flowed from the

pure fountain of knowledge; but in most instances the verdict would be the same, even if spoken by justice itself. "For everything that comes into being is *worthy* of perishing. Thus it would be better if nothing came into being." It takes great
5 strength to be able to live and forget the extent to which living and being unjust are one and the same thing. Even Luther once expressed the opinion that the world came into being only due to an act of forgetfulness on God's part: for if God had thought of "heavy artillery," he would never have created the world. But
10 at times this very life that requires forgetfulness demands the temporary suspension of this forgetfulness; this is when it is supposed to become absolutely clear precisely how unjust the existence of certain things—for example, a privilege, a caste, or a dynasty—really is, and how much these things deserve to
15 be destroyed. This is when its past is viewed critically, when we take a knife to its roots, when we cruelly trample on all forms of piety. It is always a dangerous process, one that is, in fact, dangerous for life itself; and human beings or ages that serve life by passing judgment on and destroying a past are always
20 dangerous and endangered human beings and ages. For since we are, after all, the products of earlier generations, we are also the products of their aberrations, passions, and errors—indeed, of their crimes; it is impossible to free ourselves completely from this chain. If we condemn these aberrations and
25 regard ourselves as free of them, this does not alter the fact that we are descended from them. At best we arrive at an antagonism between our inherited, ancestral nature and our knowledge, or perhaps even at the struggle of a new, stricter discipline against what was long ago inborn and inbred. We
30 cultivate a new habit, a new instinct, a second nature, so that the first nature withers away. This is an attempt to give ourselves *a posteriori*, as it were, a new past from which we would prefer to be descended, as opposed to the past from which we actually descended—this is always dangerous because it is
35 so difficult to set limits on this negating of the past, and because second natures are usually feebler than first natures. Too

frequently we stop at knowing what is good without actually doing it, because we also know what is better without being capable of doing it. But here and there a victory is nonetheless achieved, and for those embroiled in this struggle—for those
5 who make use of critical history in the service of life—there is one noteworthy consolation: the knowledge, namely, that even that first nature was once a second nature, and that every victorious second nature will become a first nature.—

4

10 These are the services that history is capable of rendering to life; every human being and every people needs, each according to its capacities and needs, a certain knowledge of the past, sometimes as monumental, sometimes as antiquarian, and sometimes as critical history; but not as a horde of pure
15 thinkers who merely observe life, not as knowledge-hungry individuals who can be satisfied by knowledge alone and for whom the increase of knowledge is an end in itself, but always and only for the purpose of life, and hence also always subordinate to the dominance and supreme guidance of this purpose.
20 That this is the natural relation of an age, a culture, or a people to history—called forth by hunger, regulated by the degree of need, kept within bounds by an inherent shaping power; that knowledge of the past is at all times desirable only insofar as it serves the future and the present—not insofar as it weakens
25 the present or uproots a future that is full of life—all of this is simple, just as the truth is simple, and it immediately convinces anyone who does not first insist that historical proof be provided.

And now let's take a quick look at our own time! We are hor-
30 rified and recoil with a start: what happened to all the clarity, all the naturalness and purity of that relation between life and history? How confused, how exaggerated, how disquieting is this problem that now appears before our eyes! Does the fault lie with us, the viewers? Or has the constellation of life and history
35 really been altered because a powerfully hostile star has come

between them? Let others demonstrate that our perception is incorrect; we intend to express what we think we perceive. Such a star, a brilliant and magnificent star, has indeed come between them, the constellation has, indeed, been altered—*by*
5 *science, by the demand that history be a science.* Today life no longer rules alone and constrains our knowledge of the past: instead, all the boundary markers have been torn down and everything that once was is now collapsing upon the human being. As far
10 back into the past as the process of becoming extends, as far back as infinity, all perspectives have shifted. No past generation ever witnessed an unsurveyable spectacle of the sort now being staged by the science of universal becoming, by history; but, to be sure, it is staging this spectacle with the dangerous audacity of its motto: *fiat veritas pereat vita.*

15 Let's paint a picture of the spiritual process that is thereby induced in the soul of the modern human being. Historical knowledge constantly flows into him from inexhaustible sources; alien and disconnected facts crowd in upon him; his memory opens all its gates and is still not open wide enough;
20 nature struggles as best it can to receive, order, and honor these alien guests, but they themselves are involved in a struggle with one another, and it seems necessary to overpower and subdue them all if he himself is not to perish as a result of their struggle. Habituation to such a disorderly, stormy, and struggling household gradually becomes second nature, although
25 there can be no doubt that this second nature is much weaker, much more restless, and in every way more unhealthy than the first. Ultimately, the modern human being drags around with him a huge number of indigestible stones of knowledge, which
30 then on occasion, as in the fairy tale, make quite a racket inside his stomach. This racket betrays the fundamental characteristic of this modern human being: the remarkable antithesis between an interior that corresponds to no exterior and an exterior that corresponds to no interior—an antithesis unknown
35 to the peoples of the ancient world. Knowledge consumed in excess of hunger—indeed, even contrary to one's need—

now no longer is effective as a shaping impulse directed outward, but remains instead hidden in a chaotic inner world that every modern human being, with peculiar pride, designates his own characteristic "inwardness." Of course, he then says that
5 he has the content and only the form is lacking, but for all living things this is a wholly incongruous antithesis. Our modern cultivation is nothing living precisely because it cannot be comprehended without this antithesis: that is, it is no real cultivation, but rather only a kind of knowledge about cultivation;
10 it remains satisfied with the thought and feeling of cultivation, but never arrives at the resolve for achieving cultivation. On the other hand, the true motivation, what becomes externally visible as action, often signifies nothing more than an indifferent convention, a pitiful imitation, or even a crude caricature.
15 In his interior, sentiment then just lies around, much like that snake that swallowed rabbits whole and now lies peacefully in the sun, avoiding all unnecessary movement. The inner process itself now becomes the only matter of real significance: it is the only genuine "cultivation." Every passerby can only hope that
20 such cultivation does not die of indigestion. Imagine, for example, a Greek passing by such cultivation: he would perceive that for modern human beings the terms "cultivated" and "historically cultivated" seem to be so close that they are synonymous and differ only in the number of words. If he were to say
25 "Someone can be highly cultivated and still be historically entirely uncultivated," we would think we had not heard him right and shake our heads in disbelief. That well-known people of the not-so-distant past—I am speaking, of course, of the Greeks—stubbornly preserved an ahistorical sensibility throughout the
30 period of its greatest strength; if a contemporary human being were to be magically transported to that world, he would presumably find the Greeks to be very "uncultivated"; and this, of course, would expose to public ridicule the secret of modern cultivation that is so painstakingly concealed. For we
35 moderns have nothing that we have drawn from ourselves alone; we become something worthy of attention—namely, walking

encyclopaedias, as an ancient Greek transported into our time might perhaps call us—only by stuffing and overstuffing ourselves with alien times, customs, arts, philosophies, religions, and knowledge. However, in the case of an encyclopaedia the only thing of value is what is in it, its content, not its binding or its cover; similarly, all of modern cultivation is basically inward: on its outside the bookbinder has printed on it something to the effect “Handbook of Inward Cultivation for Outward Barbarians.” Indeed, this antithesis between inner and outer makes the exterior even more barbaric than would otherwise be the case if a primitive people had evolved only out of itself and its own harsh necessities. For what means does nature still have at its disposal for overcoming those things that overabundantly press upon it? Only the means of accepting it as lightly as possible, in order to dispose of and expel it again quickly. From this develops the habit of no longer taking real things seriously; from this develops the “weak personality,” on whom the real, the subsisting, makes only a slight impression. Eventually we become ever more negligent and indolent where outward things are concerned and widen the precarious gulf between content and form to the point of becoming insensitive to barbarism—as long as our memory is repeatedly stimulated anew, as long as new things worthy of knowing, which can be neatly placed in the pigeonholes of that memory, keep streaming in. The culture of a people that is the antithesis of that barbarism was once termed—and in my opinion, rightfully so—the unity of artistic style that manifests itself throughout all the vital self-expressions of a people; this designation should not be misunderstood to imply that it is only a matter of an antithesis between barbarism and *beautiful* style. A people to whom we attribute a culture should in all reality be but a single, vital unity and not fall apart so miserably into inner and outer, content and form. Anyone who wants to aspire to and promote the culture of a people should aspire to and promote this higher unity and work for the destruction of modern cultivatedness in favor of a true cultivation. Such a person should dare to reflect

on how the health of a people undermined by history can be restored, how it can rediscover its instincts and with them its honesty.

I want to speak specifically only about us Germans of the present day, since we suffer more than any other people from that weakness of personality and that contradiction between content and form. We Germans commonly regard form as a convention, as a disguise and deception, and for this reason among us form, if not actually hated, is at any rate not loved. It would be more correct to say that we have an extraordinary fear of convention, both as word and as thing. This fear caused the German to abandon the French school, for he wanted to become more natural and thereby more German. However, he seems to have miscalculated with this "thereby": after running away from the school of convention, he simply let himself follow his own inclinations wherever they led, and then he basically imitated in a sloppy, arbitrary, and half-attentive manner what he had earlier painstakingly imitated with some success. So, compared to earlier times, even today we live in a slovenly, incorrect French convention, as our entire mode of walking, standing, conversing, dressing, and dwelling indicates. By believing that we were retreating to what was natural, we in fact only opted for letting ourselves go, for comfort, and for the smallest possible measure of self-overcoming. Just stroll through any German city—every convention, when compared with the national peculiarities of foreign cities, manifests itself in the negative; everything is colorless, worn out, badly copied, slipshod; everyone does as he likes, but his likes are never powerful and thoughtful, but instead follow those laws prescribed, first, by universal haste, and second, by the universal addiction to comfort. A piece of clothing whose invention does not require any ingenuity and whose design does not cost any time—in other words, something borrowed from a foreign country and carelessly copied—is immediately regarded by the German as a contribution to German national dress. The Germans flatly and ironically reject the sense for form—for they

have a *sense for content*: they are, after all, that people notorious for its inwardness.

There is, however, also a notorious danger associated with this inwardness: the content itself, which one always assumes cannot be seen from the outside at all, may sometimes evaporate. But from the outside we would notice neither its absence nor its prior presence. But even if we imagine the German people to be as far away from this danger as possible, the foreigner's reproach that our inner being is too weak and disorganized to have an outward effect and to take on form will still be largely justified. And yet our inner being can to an uncommon degree prove itself to be finely receptive, serious, powerful, sincere, good, and perhaps even richer than the inner being of other peoples. But as a totality it remains weak because all the beautiful threads are not bound together in a strong knot, so that any visible deed is not the deed of the totality and the self-revelation of this inner being, but rather only a feeble and crude attempt to give one or other of these threads the appearance of being a totality. This is why the German cannot be judged by his actions and why as an individual he remains fully hidden even after taking action. One must gauge him, as is well known, according to his thoughts and feelings, and these he now expresses in his books. If only these very books had not recently aroused more doubts than ever before about whether this notorious inwardness is really still sitting in its inaccessible little temple; it would be horrible to think that someday it might disappear, leaving only that exterior, that arrogantly awkward and humbly slovenly exterior, as the distinguishing mark of the German. It would be almost as horrible if, without our being able to see it, that inwardness were still sitting in this temple, and that it had been disguised, painted, and made up to be an actress, if not something worse. At any rate, this seems to be what Grillparzer, someone who stands to one side and quietly observes, gathers from his experience in the theater. "We feel with abstractions," he says, "we scarcely know any longer how our contemporaries express their feelings; we let them act in

ways in which nowadays feelings would no longer make them act. Shakespeare has spoiled all of us moderns.”

This is an individual case, one which I have perhaps been too quick to generalize. But how terrible this generalization, if
5 justified, would be if the individual cases were to come to the attention of the observer all too frequently; how desperate the first sentence of Grillparzer’s statement would then sound: we Germans feel with abstractions. We have all been spoiled by history—a statement that would destroy at its roots all hope
10 for a future national culture. For every such hope grows out of faith in the authenticity and immediacy of German feeling, out of faith in our unimpaired inwardness. What can we possibly still hope for, what can we possibly still have faith in once the source of hope and faith has been muddied, once inwardness
15 has learned to take leaps, to dance, to paint its face, to express itself in abstractions and with calculation, and gradually to lose itself! And how is the great, productive spirit supposed to be able to endure living among a people that is no longer certain of its unitary inwardness and that is divided into cultivated
20 persons of ill-cultivated and corrupted inwardness and uncultivated persons of inaccessible inwardness? How is he supposed to endure if the unity of national feeling is lost, if, moreover, he knows that precisely in that part of the population that calls itself cultivated and lays claim to the artistic spirits of the nation
25 this feeling has been counterfeited and covered with makeup. Even if here and there the judgment and taste of some individuals have become more refined and more sublime—that is no compensation for him; it torments him that he is forced to address himself only to a sect, as it were, and that he is no
30 longer needed by his people as a whole. Perhaps he will prefer to bury his treasure because he feels disgust at being pretentiously patronized by a sect while his heart is full of compassion for all. The instinct of his people no longer embraces him; it is useless for him to stretch out his longing arms. What else can
35 he do but turn his inspired hatred against that hindering constraint, against the barriers erected in the so-called cultivation

of his people, so that as judge he can at least condemn what he, a vital and life-giving being, regards as destruction and degradation. So he trades the profound insight into his fate for the divine joy of the creative and helpful person, and he ends his
 5 days as a solitary knower, as an oversatiated sage. This is the most painful spectacle: anyone who witnesses it will recognize in it a sacred compulsion. He will say to himself: "Something has to be done here; that higher unity in the nature and soul of a people must be restored, that schism between the inner and
 10 the outer must once again disappear under the hammer blows of necessity." But what means should he employ? All that remains for him is his profound knowledge: by expressing it, disseminating it, strewing it in handfuls, he hopes to sow the seeds of a need, and from this strong need someday a strong
 15 deed will emerge. And so as to leave no doubt about the source from which I draw my example of this necessity, this need, this knowledge, I hereby explicitly declare that it is *the German unity* in its highest sense to which we aspire, and to which we aspire more strongly than we do to political unification—*the unity of*
 20 *the German spirit and German life after the destruction of the antithesis between form and content, between inwardness and convention.*—

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It seems to me that the surfeit of history in a given age is inimical and dangerous to life in five respects: such an excess
 25 produces the previously discussed contrast between the internal and the external and thereby weakens the personality; this excess leads an age to imagine that it possesses the rarest virtue, justice, to a higher degree than any other age; this excess undermines the instincts of a people and hinders the maturation of
 30 the individual no less than that of the totality; this excess plants the seeds of the ever dangerous belief in the venerable agedness of the human race, the belief that one is a latecomer and epigone; this excess throws an age into the dangerous attitude of self-irony, and from this into the even more dangerous attitude of cynicism: however, in the latter it matures more and
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more in the direction of a cunning, egoistical praxis through which its vital forces are paralyzed and ultimately destroyed.

Now let us return to our first proposition: the modern human being suffers from a weakened personality. Just as the
5 Roman from the age of the Empire became un-Roman in regard to the world that was at his feet, just as he lost himself in the influx of foreign influences and degenerated in the cosmopolitan carnival of gods, customs, and arts, so the same must happen to the modern human being, who continually has his
10 historical artists prepare for him the festival of a world's fair. He has become a spectator who strolls about enjoying himself, and he has been reduced to a condition in which even great wars and great revolutions can scarcely change anything even for a moment. Before the war is even over, it has already been
15 transformed into a hundred thousand pages of printed paper, it has already been served up as the latest delicacy to the exhausted palates of the history-hungry. It seems almost impossible that a richer, fuller tone might even be produced by the mightiest strumming of the strings: it promptly fades out, in
20 the very next moment it has already dissolved into a faint historical echo. Expressed in moral terms: you no longer succeed in holding on to the sublime, your deeds are sudden claps, not rolling thunder. Even if you accomplish the greatest and most wonderful things, they will still descend silent and unsung into
25 Orcus. For the moment you cover your deeds with the canopy of history, art takes flight. Anyone who seeks to understand, calculate, or comprehend in a moment when he should stand in prolonged awe at the sublime as the incomprehensible, might be called rational, but only in the sense in which Schiller speaks
30 of the rationality of rational people: he fails to see some things that even a child sees; he fails to hear some things that even a child hears. And it is precisely these things that are important. Because he does not understand this, his understanding is more childish than a child, more simple than simplemindedness—in
35 spite of the many clever wrinkles in his parchmentlike features and the virtuosity of his fingers when it comes to untangling

what is entangled. What this means is: he has destroyed and lost his instinct; he can now no longer trust in the "divine animal" and give it free rein when his rationality wavers and his path leads him through deserts. The individual thus becomes
5 hesitant and uncertain and can no longer believe in himself; he sinks into himself, into his interior, which in this case means into nothing but the cumulative jumble of acquired knowledge that has no outward effect, of learning that fails to become life. If we take a look at their exterior, we notice how the expulsion
10 of the instincts by means of history has nearly transformed human beings into mere abstractions and shadows: no one runs the risk of baring his own person, but instead disguises himself behind the mask of the cultivated man, the scholar, the poet, the politician. If we take hold of these masks, believing that
15 they are serious and not just part of a farce—since all of them affect such seriousness—then suddenly we find ourselves holding in our hands nothing but rags and colorful tatters. This is why we should no longer allow ourselves to be deceived, why we should demand of them: "Either take off your jackets or be
20 what you seem." No longer should every person who is serious by nature become a Don Quixote, since he has better things to do than to grapple with such would-be realities. But he must in any event take a close look, and every time he discovers a mask he should shout "Halt! Who goes there?" and rip off the person's disguise. How strange! One would think that above all
25 else history would encourage people to be *honest*—even if only to be an honest fool. And previously this was always its effect: only today is this no longer so! Historical cultivation and the bourgeois cloak of universality rule simultaneously. Although
30 "free personality" was never before spoken of in such glowing terms, we see no personalities at all, much less free ones; instead we see nothing but anxiously disguised universal human beings. The individual has withdrawn into his interior: on the exterior we see no trace of it, whereby we may doubt whether
35 there can be any causes without effects. Or is it necessary to have a race of eunuchs to stand guard over the great histori-

cal world-harem? Certainly pure objectivity is quite becoming in eunuchs. It almost seems as if the task is to watch over history so that nothing will ever come of it but history stories—but certainly no events! This would also prevent personalities
5 from becoming “free”—that is to say, truthful to themselves and truthful to others in both word and deed. Only this truthfulness can bring to light the distress and internal misery of the modern human being, and only then can art and religion, as true helpers, take the place of that anxiously concealing
10 convention and masquerade, in order jointly to plant the seeds of a culture that answers to true needs and that does not solely teach us—as does the universal cultivation of today—to lie to ourselves about these needs and thereby become walking lies.

Into what unnatural, artificial, and in any event unworthy
15 states the most truthful of all scholarly disciplines, the honest, naked goddess Philosophy, must be reduced in an age that suffers from universal cultivation! In a world of such coerced external uniformity she remains the scholarly monologue of a lonely wanderer, the chance prey of the individual, the hidden
20 secret or harmless chatter of aged academics and children. No one dares to fulfill the law of philosophy in himself, no one lives philosophically, with that simple manly loyalty that compelled an ancient, if he had once declared loyalty to the Stoa, to act as a Stoic wherever he was and whatever he did.
25 All modern philosophizing is political and policed, limited by governments, churches, academies, customs, and human cowardice to scholarly pretense: it is satisfied with the sigh “if only,” or with the knowledge of the “once upon a time.” In the context of historical cultivation, philosophy has no rights if it
30 seeks to be more than just an inwardly restrained knowledge without effect. If only the modern human being were more courageous and resolute, if only he were not an inward creature even in his enmities, he would banish philosophy. As it is, he contents himself with bashfully covering her nudity. To
35 be sure, we think, write, publish, speak, and teach philosophically—as long as it only goes this far, just about everything is

permitted. But in action, in so-called life, it is different: here only one thing is ever permitted and everything else forbidden, since that's the way historical cultivation wants it. "Are these still human beings," we then ask ourselves, "or are they perhaps merely machines that think, write, and speak?"

Goethe once said of Shakespeare: "No one despised the material costume more than he; he knows the inner human costume quite well, and in this all of us are identical. It has been asserted that he portrayed the Romans splendidly; I don't think this is so. They are nothing but flesh-and-blood Englishmen, and yet they are certainly human beings, human beings from head to foot, and even the Roman toga fits them well." Now, I ask you if it would be at all possible to present today's literati, popular leaders, functionaries, and politicians as Romans. It could not possibly work, because they are not human beings, but only flesh-and-blood compendia, and as such, concrete abstractions, as it were. Even if they should happen to have character and a manner of their own, it is buried so deep down in them that it can never make its way out into the light of day; if they are human beings at all, then only for someone who "examines their innards." For anyone else they are something else, not human beings, not gods, not animals, but historically cultivated products of cultivation, cultivation through and through, image, form without demonstrable content, unfortunately bad form, and, moreover, uniform. And may the reader now understand and ponder my proposition: *history can be endured only by strong personalities; it completely extinguishes weak ones.* The reason for this is that history bewilders feeling and sensibility wherever they are not strong enough to take themselves as the measure of the past. Those who no longer dare to trust themselves, but instead instinctively turn to history for advice and ask it "How should I feel in this instance?" gradually become actors out of timorousness and play a role—usually even many roles, which explains why they play them so badly and shallowly. Gradually all congruence between the man and his historical domain disappears; we see brash little schoolboys

treating the Romans as if they were their equals, and they dig and grub about in the Greek poets as if they were *corpora* laid out for dissection, as if they were mere *vilia*, as their own *corpora* may well be. Assuming someone were to concern himself
5 with Democritus; the question always occurs to me, Why not Heraclitus? Or Philo? Or Bacon? Or Descartes—or anyone else, for that matter? And then: Why a philosopher, anyway? Why not a poet, an orator? And: Why must it be a Greek, why not an Englishman, a Turk? Isn't the past large enough for you
10 to find something that does not make you look so ridiculously arbitrary? But, as I have said, we are dealing with a race of eunuchs; and for a eunuch one woman is just like any other, just a woman, woman-in-herself, the eternally unapproachable—and hence it makes no difference what you do, as long as his-
15 tory itself remains neatly “objective” and is preserved by those who themselves can never make history. And since the Eternal Feminine will never draw you upward, you drag it down to your level, and since you are neuters, you consider history to be a neuter, as well. But lest someone be led to believe that I
20 am earnestly comparing history with the Eternal Feminine, let me state clearly that, quite to the contrary, I consider it to be the Eternal Masculine. But for those who are “historically cultivated” through and through it cannot make much difference whether it is one or the other: for they themselves are neither
25 man nor woman, nor even hermaphrodite, but instead always only neuters—or, in more cultivated terms, simply the Eternal Objective.

Once personalities have been snuffed out in the manner just depicted, reduced to eternal subjectlessness—or, as they say, to
30 “objectivity”—then nothing can affect them any longer; even if something good and just should occur, as action, as poetry, or as music, at once those hollowed out by cultivation will pass over the work and inquire into the history of its author. If the author has already created several works, then he must im-
35 mediately submit to an interpretation of his past development and the probable course of his future development. Immedi-

ately he is compared to others, dissected regarding the choice and treatment of his material, torn apart, then cleverly put back together again in a new way, and generally admonished and reprimanded. Even if something that is most astonishing
5 should occur—the mob of the historically neutral is always on the spot, ready to survey and supervise the author from afar. Immediately the echo resounds: but always as “critique,” while just a short time earlier the critics had not even dreamed of the possibility of the event. At no point does the work give rise to
10 an effect, but always only to a “critique,” and the critique likewise produces no effect, but instead is only subjected to a further critique. They have struck an agreement, moreover, that many critiques are to be regarded as an effect, few critiques as a failure. But basically, despite this kind of “effect,” everything
15 remains as it was: to be sure, for some time people jabber in a novel way, and then later in some other novel way, but meanwhile they keep on doing what they have always done. The historical cultivation of our critics does not even permit them to produce an effect in the true sense of that word, namely, an
20 effect on life and action: even the blackest writing is absorbed by their blotting paper; even on the most graceful drawing they smear their fat brushstrokes that are supposed to be seen as corrections. Then that’s the end of it. But their critical pens never cease to flow, for they have lost control of them, and instead
25 of guiding their pens they are guided by them. It is precisely in this immoderation of their critical outpourings, in this lack of self-mastery, in what the Romans called *impotentia*, that the weakness of the modern personality is disclosed.

6

30 But enough about this weakness. Let’s turn instead to one of the much-touted strengths of the modern human being by addressing the admittedly painful question whether he has the right, on the basis of his well-known historical “objectivity,” to call himself strong, that is *just*, and just to a higher degree
35 than the human beings of other ages. Is it true that this ob-

jectivity has its origin in a heightened need and longing for justice? Or does it, as the effect of utterly different causes, just make it appear that justice is the genuine cause of this effect? Does it perhaps seduce us into a dangerous—because all too
5 flattering—prejudice about the virtues of the modern human being?—Socrates regarded it as an affliction bordering on madness to imagine oneself in the possession of a virtue that one did not possess; and certainly such a delusion is more dangerous than its opposite, the delusion of suffering from a flaw,
10 from a vice. For by means of this latter delusion it is perhaps at least possible to become better, but the former illusion makes the human being or the age worse with every passing day—that is, in this instance, more unjust.

Truly, no one deserves our veneration more than those who
15 possess the urge and the strength for justice. For in justice, the highest, rarest virtues are united and hidden, just as an unfathomable sea receives and absorbs all the rivers that flow into it from all directions. The hand of the just person with the authority to sit in judgment no longer trembles when it holds
20 the scales; unbending toward himself, he adds weight upon weight; his eye betrays no emotion when the scales rise or fall, and his voice sounds neither harsh nor halting when he pronounces the verdict. If he were a cold demon of knowledge, he would exude the icy atmosphere of a superhumanly horrible
25 majesty that we would have to fear rather than revere; but that he is a human being and yet still attempts to rise up from pardonable doubt to rigorous certainty, from tolerant clemency to the imperative “you must,” from the rare virtue of generosity to the rarest of all virtues, justice; that he now resembles that
30 demon of knowledge, without ever being anything other than a poor human being; and above all, that in every moment he must do penance for his own humanity and tragically consume himself in pursuit of an impossible virtue—all this places him in solitary heights as the *most venerable* exemplar of the human
35 species. For he seeks truth; however, not merely as cold, inconsequential knowledge, but rather as the ordering, punishing

judge; truth not as the egoistic possession of the individual, but rather as the sacred legitimation to shift all the boundaries of egoistic possessions—truth, in a word, as Last Judgment, and by no means as the captured prey and the pleasure of the individual hunter. Only insofar as the truthful person has the unconditional will to be just is there anything great in that striving for truth that everywhere is so thoughtlessly glorified: whereas in the eyes of those who are not so clear-sighted an entire host of the most different impulses—impulses such as curiosity, fear of boredom, disfavor, vanity, desire for amusement, which have nothing whatsoever to do with truth—merge with that striving for truth that has its roots in justice. To be sure, the world then appears to be full of those who “serve truth,” and yet the virtue of justice is rarely present, even more rarely recognized, and almost always mortally hated; whereas by contrast, the host of sham virtues has at all times been received with honor and pomp. Few people truly serve the truth, because only a few people possess the pure will to be just, and of these even fewer possess the strength to be able to be just. It is by no means sufficient to possess solely the will to justice, and the most horrible afflictions have befallen humanity precisely due to this urge to justice that lacks the power to judge. This is why the general welfare would require nothing *more* than to sow as widely as possible the seeds of the power to judge, so that we would always be able to distinguish the fanatics from the judge, the blind desire to be a judge from the conscious strength that makes one capable of judging. But where might we find the means for planting the power to judge!—for whenever we speak to people about truth and justice, they will eternally persist in their hesitant vacillation over whether it is a fanatic or a judge who is speaking to them. This is why we should excuse them if they have always welcomed with special pleasure those “servants of truth” who possess neither the will nor the strength to judge, and who set themselves the task of pursuing “pure, ineffective” knowledge—or, to state it more bluntly, a truth that amounts to nothing. There are very many

indifferent truths; there are problems whose correct solution does not even cost us any effort, let alone a sacrifice. In this indifferent and safe realm it may well be easy for someone to succeed at becoming a cold demon of knowledge. But despite
5 this! Even if in especially favored ages entire cohorts of scholars and researchers are transformed into such demons—it unfortunately still remains possible that such an age would suffer from a lack of rigorous and great justice—from the lack, in short, of the most noble kernel of the so-called urge to truth.

10 Now, picture to yourself the present-day historical virtuoso: is he the most just man of his age? It is true, he has cultivated in himself a sensibility so tender and sensitive that absolutely nothing human is alien to him; his lyre can echo in kindred tones the sounds of the most diverse ages and persons; he has
15 become an echoing passivity whose resonance, in turn, has a resounding effect on other passivities of the same sort, until ultimately the air of an age is filled with the buzzing counterpoint of such tender and kindred echoes. Yet it seems to me that only the harmonics, as it were, of that original historical
20 note remain audible: the harshness and power of the original can no longer be divined in the thin and shrill sound of the lyre strings. Moreover, the original tone usually awakened deeds, difficulties, and terrors, whereas this lyre tone just lulls us to sleep and turns us into gentle epicures. It is as though the *Eroica*
25 symphony had been arranged for two flutes and were intended for the benefit of dreaming opium smokers. Already from this we can gauge how things stand with these virtuosos where the loftiest claim of the modern human being, the claim to higher and purer justice, is concerned. This virtue never has anything
30 pleasing about it; it knows no arousing tremors, it is harsh and terrible. Measured by its standard, how low even magnanimity stands on the scale of virtues; magnanimity, which is the trait of a few rare historians! But many more of them arrive at mere tolerance, at accepting the validity of what simply cannot be
35 denied, at measured and well-meaning ordering and prettifying—under the clever assumption that the inexperienced per-

son will interpret it as the virtue of justice when the past is recounted without harsh accents and without the expression of hatred. But only superior strength can sit in judgment; weakness must be tolerant, unless it wants to feign strength and transform justice sitting on its bench into an actress. There is yet one more frightful species of historian: competent, rigorous, and honest characters—but narrow-minded. They display both the will to justice and the juridical pathos, but all their verdicts are false for roughly the same reason that the judgments of ordinary juries are false. How improbable it is that historical talent would appear in such abundance! And this is true even if we disregard the disguised egoists and partisans that wear an objective look on their face as they play their evil game. It is also true if we likewise disregard those wholly unreflective people who write as historians in the naive faith that, according to all popular opinions, their age is right, and that to write in conformity with this age amounts to exactly the same thing as being just—a belief on which every religion thrives, and about which nothing more need be said where religions are concerned. Measuring past opinions and deeds according to the widespread opinions of the present moment is what these naive historians call “objectivity.” It is in these that they discover the canon of all truth; their aim is to force the past to fit the mold of their fashionable triviality. By contrast, they call “subjective” every form of historiography that refuses to accept these popular opinions as canonical.

And might not an illusion creep into the meaning of the word “objectivity” even when interpreted in the loftiest manner? When taken in this sense the word is understood as the condition in which the historian observes all the motives and consequences of an event with such purity that it has absolutely no effect on his subjectivity; it connotes that aesthetic phenomenon, that detachment from personal interest with which the painter, in a stormy setting among lightning and thunder, or on a tempestuous sea, contemplates his inner picture; it connotes that total immersion in things. However, it is a

superstition that the image that things produce in such an aesthetically attuned person reproduces the empirical essence of these things. Or are we to suppose that in such moments the things etch, sketch, or photograph themselves, as it were, onto
5 this pure passivity by means of their own activity?

This would be mythology, and bad mythology, at that. In addition, one would be forgetting that precisely this moment is the most powerful and most spontaneous creative moment in the inner being of the artist, a compositional moment of the
10 highest sort, whose result will probably be an aesthetically true picture, not a historically true one. To conceive history objectively in this way is the silent work of the dramatist; that is, to think of all things as interrelated, to weave isolated events into a totality—always with the presupposition that a unity of
15 plan must be inserted into the things if it is not already inherent in them. This is how the human being spins his web over the past and subdues it; this is how his artistic urge expresses itself—not, however, his urge to truth or to justice. Objectivity and justice have nothing to do with one another.
20 It would be possible to conceive of a historiography that does not contain a single drop of common empirical truth and that yet could lay claim in a high degree to the predicate of “objectivity.” Indeed, Grillparzer dares to declare: “What is history other than the way in which the spirit of the human being
25 assimilates what for him are *impenetrable occurrences*; connects things of which only God knows whether they belong together; substitutes the comprehensible for the incomprehensible; projects his concepts of an external purposiveness onto a totality that probably has only an internal purposiveness; and assumes
30 chance when a thousand tiny causes are at work. At the same time, every human being has his own particular necessity, so that a million curved and straight lines run parallel to one another, intersect one another, reinforce and impede one another, run forward and backward, so that for each other they
35 take on the character of the fortuitous and thereby make it impossible—apart from the influences of natural occurrences—

to demonstrate any overarching, wholly comprehensive necessity in events." However, as the result of that "objective" view of things, just such a necessity is supposed to be brought to light! This is a presupposition that, when pronounced by the
5 historian as an article of faith, can only assume a curious form. Schiller, of course, is quite clear about the essentially subjective nature of this assumption when he says of the historian: "One phenomenon after another begins to escape the realm of blind chance and lawless freedom and to integrate itself as
10 a well-fitting part into a harmonious totality—*which exists, of course, only in his imagination.*" But what are we supposed to make of the following assertion by a celebrated historical virtuoso that is introduced with such conviction and that hovers artificially between tautology and nonsense: "The fact of the matter
15 is that all human actions are subject to the gentle, often unnoticed, but powerful and irresistible course of events"? In a statement like this we perceive not so much enigmatic truth as we do unenigmatic untruth, much as in the assertion by Goethe's gardener, "Nature can be forced, but not compelled";
20 or, on the sign of a carnival booth, as related by Swift: "Here you can see the largest elephant in the world, with the exception of itself." For where, ultimately, is the opposition between human actions and the course of events? I am particularly struck by the fact that such historians as the one whose state-
25 ment we quoted above no longer have anything to teach us as soon as they fall into generalities, thereby betraying in obscurities the sense of their own weakness. In other scholarly disciplines generalities are all-important, at least to the extent that they contain laws; but if such assertions as the one cited earlier
30 are meant to be regarded as laws, we must object that in that case the labor of the historian is wasted. For whatever remains at all truthful in such statements after subtracting from them that obscure, irreducible residue is well known and even trivial, since it is self-evident to any person with even the smallest
35 range of experience. To incommode entire nations and devote years of tiresome labor to this effort is tantamount to amass-

ing experimental knowledge in the natural sciences even after one already has enough experimental evidence to establish the law in question. Incidentally, according to Zöllner, it is just such a senseless excess of experimental evidence that plagues
5 the natural sciences today. If the value of a drama lies solely in its final and primary thought, then the drama itself is a most lengthy, roundabout, and tiresome path to this goal; and thus I hope that history will not see its own significance in general thoughts as a kind of blossom and fruit. I hope, instead, that
10 its value lies precisely in its ability to intelligently circumscribe, to elevate a well-known, perhaps even commonplace theme, an everyday melody, heightening it into a comprehensive symbol, and thereby intimating in the original theme a whole world of profundity, power, and beauty.

15 But to achieve this requires above all a great artistic power, a creative floating above things, a loving immersion in the empirical data, a poetic elaboration of given types—certainly, objectivity is necessary for this as well, but as a positive trait. But so often objectivity is only a phrase. Affectation of tranquillity
20 takes the place of that inwardly flashing, outwardly unmoved and darkly tranquil eye of the artist; just as lack of pathos and moral strength tend to be disguised as piercing iciness of observation. In certain instances even banality of sentiment—the wisdom of the common man whose boringness alone is re-
25 sponsible for the impression of tranquillity and emotional calm that it makes—dares to show its face so that it might be passed off as that artistic condition in which the subject becomes silent and wholly unnoticeable. What is then searched out is what does not arouse any excitement at all, and the driest phrase
30 suits just fine. Indeed, one goes so far as to assume that anyone who is *totally disinterested* in a particular moment of the past is the one who must be called upon to portray it. This is the way in which philologists and Greeks often relate to each other: with total disinterest—and this is what is then called “objec-
35 tivity”! Where it is precisely a matter of portraying the loftiest, rarest of things, this intentional, ostentatious disinvolvement,

this artificial, soberly superficial motivation is utterly revolting—at least when it is the historian's *vanity* that impels him to assume this indifference posing as objectivity. When dealing with such authors we are well advised to base our judgment on
5 the principle that every man's vanity is directly proportional to his lack of intelligence. No, at least be honest! Do not seek the semblance of that artistic power that can truly be called objectivity, do not seek the semblance of justice if you have not been ordained to the terrible calling of the just person. As if
10 it were the duty of every age to have to be just to everything that ever existed! On the contrary, ages and generations never have the right to be the judges of all prior ages and generations: this unpleasant mission always falls only to individuals, even to the rarest individuals, at that. Who compels you to sit
15 in judgment? And then, too—just ask yourselves whether you could even be just if you wanted to! As judges you would have to stand higher than those you judge; but you merely come after them. The guests that come to the table last must rightly content themselves with the last places, and you want to have
20 the first? Well, then at least accomplish the highest and greatest thing; perhaps then they will actually make room for you, even if you are the last to arrive.

Only from the highest power of the present can you interpret the past; only with the greatest exertion of your noblest qualities will you
25 *divine what in the past is great and worth knowing and preserving. Like for like! Otherwise you will drag the past down to your level. Do not trust any historiography that does not spring from the mind of the rarest intellects; but you will always be able to gauge the quality of their intellect when they find it*
30 *necessary to state a general truth or to reformulate an age-old truth: the genuine historian must have the power to recast what is age-old into something never heard of before, to proclaim a general truth with such simplicity and profundity that we overlook the simplicity due to the profundity, and the profundity*
35 *due to the simplicity. No one can be a great historian, an artistic human being, and a blockhead at one and the same time;*

on the other hand, we should not look down on those laborers who cart, heap, and winnow just because they will never become great historians, but still less should we mistake them for great historians. Instead, we should recognize them as necessary apprentices and journeymen in the service of their master; 5 as, for example, the French, with greater naiveté than it is possible to find among Germans, are accustomed to speaking of the “historiens de M. Thiers.” These laborers are eventually supposed to become great scholars, but for all that they can 10 never become masters. A great scholar and a great blockhead — these two are easier to combine under one and the same hat.

Thus: history can be written only by the experienced and superior person. The person whose experience of some things is not greater and superior to the experience of all other people 15 will also not be able to interpret the great and superior things of the past. The voice of the past is always the voice of an oracle; only if you are architects of the future and are familiar with the present will you understand the oracular voice of the past. Today we tend to explain the extraordinarily profound 20 and extensive effect of the Delphic oracle with the claim that the Delphic priests had precise knowledge of the past; it is time we recognized that only those who build the future have the right to sit in judgment of the past. By looking ahead, setting yourself a great goal, you will simultaneously subdue that over- 25 exuberant analytical impulse that currently reduces the present to a wasteland and makes all tranquil growth and maturation almost impossible. Draw around yourselves the fence of a great, all-embracing hope, of a hopeful striving. Create within yourselves an image to which the future should conform, and 30 forget the false conviction that you are epigones. You have enough to ponder and invent by pondering that future life, but do not ask history to show you how and by what means. If, instead, you begin to immerse yourselves in the histories of great men, then you will derive from them the supreme command- 35 ment of becoming mature and escaping the paralyzing education spell cast upon the present age — a spell that sees its utility

in preventing you from becoming mature so that it can master and exploit you in your immaturity. And if you are looking for biographies, then please ignore those whose titles sound the refrain "Mr. So-and-So and His Age"; instead, choose biographies whose title page reads "A Fighter Against His Age." Satisfy your souls by reading Plutarch and dare to believe in yourselves by believing in his heroes. With a hundred such unmodernly educated human beings—that is, human beings who have matured and grown accustomed to the heroic—the entire noisy sham cultivation of this age could now be silenced once and for all. —

7

The historical sensibility, when it rules *uncontrolled* and is allowed to realize all its consequences, uproots the future because it destroys illusions and robs existing things of that atmosphere in which alone they are able to live. Historical justice, even if it is really practiced with the purest of intentions, is a terrible virtue for the simple reason that it always undermines and destroys living things; its verdict is always a death sentence. If no constructive impulse is at work behind the historical impulse, if things are not destroyed and swept away so that a future that is already alive in our hopes can erect its house on cleared ground, if justice alone rules, then the creative instinct is enfeebled and discouraged. A religion, for example, that is supposed to be transformed under the rule of pure justice into historical knowledge, a religion that is supposed to be understood scientifically through and through, will be destroyed as soon as it reaches this goal. The reason for this is that every historical audit always brings to light so much falsehood, coarseness, inhumanity, absurdity, and violence that the pious atmosphere of illusion, in which alone everything that wants to live is actually capable of life, vanishes. However, only in love, only in the shadow of the illusion of love, does the human being create—that is, only in the unconditional belief in perfection and justice. Everyone who is forced no longer to love uncondi-

tionally has been cut off from the roots of his strength; he cannot help but wither, that is, become dishonest. In such effects art is the antithesis of history, and only when history allows itself to be transformed into a work of art, into a pure aesthetic structure, can it perhaps retain or even arouse instincts. However, this type of historiography would run wholly counter to the analytical and unartistic temper of our age; indeed, our age would view it as a counterfeit. But a history that only destroys without being guided by an inner constructive impulse in the long run makes its instruments blasé and unnatural; for such human beings destroy illusions, and "anyone who destroys illusions in himself and others is punished by nature, the sternest of all tyrants." To be sure, one can occupy oneself with history for quite some time in a completely harmless and thoughtless manner, just as if it were one occupation among many. Modern theology, in particular, seems to have gotten mixed up with history in a purely harmless way, and now it scarcely wants to notice that by doing so—and probably against its own will—it has entered into the service of Voltaire's *écrasez*. No one should presume that it is based on new, powerful, constructive instincts; in order for this to be the case, we would have to accept the so-called Protestant Union as the womb of a new religion, and take, say, the jurist Holtzendorf (who edited and introduced the even much more so-called Protestant Bible) to be John the Baptist at the River Jordan. For a short time, perhaps, the Hegelian philosophy that still steams in the heads of some older people will help to propagate that harmlessness; for instance, by distinguishing the "idea of Christianity" from its manifold and imperfect "phenomenal forms," and by spinning the tale that it is the "fancy of the Idea" to reveal itself in ever purer forms, revealing itself ultimately in its purest, most transparent—indeed, scarcely visible—form in the brain of the present-day *theologus liberalis vulgaris*. But if an impartial person listens to these purest of all Christianities speaking about the earlier impure Christianities, he gets the impression that they are not talking about Christianity at all, but rather about—well,

just what are we supposed to think when the “greatest theologian of the century” designates Christianity as the religion that permits us “to empathize with all actual and even with some merely possible religions,” and when the “true church” is supposed to be one that “becomes a fluid mass where there are no defined outlines, where each part is sometimes here, sometimes there, and in which all things peacefully mingle.” Once again, what are we supposed to think?

What we can learn about Christianity is that under the influence of a historicizing treatment it has become blasé and unnatural, to the point that ultimately a perfectly historical—that is, just—treatment dissolves it into pure knowledge of Christianity and thereby destroys it. We can study this same process in all living things: they cease to live when they have been totally dissected, and they live a pained and sickly life as soon as we begin to practice historical dissection on them. There are people who believe in the revolutionary and reforming healing power of German music among the Germans; they respond with anger and regard it as an outrage against what is most vital in our culture when scholarly rubbish is already heaped upon such men as Mozart and Beethoven and they are forced by the torture system of historical criticism to answer a thousand impertinent questions. Aren't the things whose vital effects are by no means exhausted prematurely done away with, or at least paralyzed, when we direct our curiosity at the countless trivialities of the life and the works and go out in search of intellectual problems when we should be learning to live and to forget all problems? Just transport in your imagination a few of these modern biographers to the birthplace of Christianity or of the Lutheran Reformation; their sober, pragmatic lust for the new would be just enough to render every ghostly *actio in distans* impossible, just as the most wretched animal can prevent the mightiest oak tree from coming into existence by eating the acorn from which it would sprout. All living things need to be surrounded by an atmosphere, a mysterious cloud of vapor; if this cloud is removed, if a religion, an art, a genius,

is condemned to be a planet orbiting without an atmosphere, then we should cease to be surprised that they quickly wither, becoming hard and unfruitful. That's how it is with all great things, "which never prosper without some illusion," as Hans Sachs puts it in *Die Meistersinger*.

But even every people, indeed, every human being who wants to become *mature* needs such an enveloping illusion, such a protecting and enveloping cloud; but today we hate the process of maturation itself, because we honor history more than we do life. Indeed, we rejoice in the fact that "science has begun to take control over life." It is possible that this will occur, but certainly a life controlled in this manner has little worth, because it is much less *life*, and because it guarantees much less life for the future than did a former mode of life dominated not by knowledge but by instincts and powerful illusions. But, as stated earlier, ours is not supposed to be the era of harmonious personalities that are complete and fully mature, but rather of common, utilitarian labor. That simply means: human beings must be broken in to serve the purposes of the age, so that they can be put to work at the earliest possible moment; they are supposed to go to work in the factory of general utility before they are mature—indeed, so that they do not become mature—because allowing them to mature would be a luxury that would divert a great deal of energy away from "the labor market." Some birds are blinded so that they will sing more beautifully: I do not believe that present-day human beings sing more beautifully than their grandfathers did, but I do know that they have been blinded at an early age. However, the means, the infamous means, that are employed in order to blind them is *a light that is all too bright, all too sudden, and all too variable*. Young people are whipped onward through the millennia: young men who understand nothing about war, about diplomacy, or about trade policy are presumed to be worthy of an introduction to political history. But we moderns run through art galleries and listen to concerts in just the same way that young people run through history. We sense, of course, that one thing sounds dif-

ferent from another, that one thing has a different effect from another: increasingly we lose this sense of surprise, so that we are no longer overly amazed at anything and, ultimately, find satisfaction in everything — this is what is called historical sensibility, historical cultivation. Stated noneuphemistically: the massive influx of impressions is so great; surprising, barbaric, and violent things press so overpoweringly — “balled up into hideous clumps” — in on the youthful soul; that it can save itself only by taking recourse in premeditated stupidity. Wherever a more refined, stronger consciousness existed, a new sensation most likely occurs: nausea. The young person has become an outcast and is skeptical of all customs and concepts. Now he knows that in every age things were different, that it does not matter what you are. In melancholy apathy he lets opinion after opinion pass him by and understands Hölderlin’s mood when reading what Laertius Diogenes has to say about the lives and teachings of Greek philosophers: “Here I have once again experienced something that already occurred to me several times before: that the ephemeral and changing character of human thoughts and systems struck me as more tragic than the destinies we usually take to be the only real ones.” No, such an overflowing, stupefying, and violent historicizing is certainly not necessary for youth, as the ancients have demonstrated; indeed, it is extremely dangerous, as the moderns have demonstrated. But now consider the student of history, who already in his childhood has clearly inherited a premature jadedness. Now he has acquired the “method” for accomplishing his own work, the proper technique, and the noble tone of his master; a wholly isolated chapter of the past falls victim to his acumen and the method he has learned. He has already produced something — or, to express it with greater dignity — “created” something; through this deed he has now become the servant of truth and master in the world domain of history. If already as a child he was “complete,” he is now already overcomplete: you only need to shake him, and his wisdom falls with a clatter into your lap. But this wisdom is rotten, and every apple

has its worm. Believe me: when human beings are forced to work in the factory of scholarship and become useful before they are mature, then in a short time scholarship itself is just as ruined as the slaves who are exploited in this factory from
5 an early age. I regret that it is already necessary to make use of the jargon of slave owners and employers in order to describe such conditions, which in principle should be conceived free of utility and freed from the necessities of life. But the words “factory,” “labor market,” “supply,” “utilization”—along with
10 all the other auxiliary verbs that egoism now employs—involuntarily cross one’s lips when one seeks to depict the youngest generation of scholars. Solid mediocrity is becoming more and more mediocre, and scholarship more and more useful in the economic sense. Actually, the most recent scholars are wise
15 only in one single respect, but in this they are wiser than all past human beings; in all other respects they are merely infinitely different—to express it cautiously—than all the scholars of the old school. Nevertheless, they demand honors and advantages for themselves, as if the state and public opinion were obliged
20 to take their new coins to be just as valuable as the old. The carters have negotiated a labor contract among themselves and declared genius to be superfluous—by reminding every carter as a genius. A later age will probably be able to tell by looking at their buildings that they were carted together rather than
25 constructed. To those who tirelessly mouth the modern cries to battle and to sacrifice, “Division of labor!” “In rank and file!” we have to say clearly and bluntly: if you want to further scholarship as quickly as possible, then you will also destroy it as quickly as possible, just as the hen that you artificially force to
30 lay eggs as quickly as possible also perishes. Granted, scholarship has been furthered at an astonishingly quick pace in the last decades, but just look at the scholars, the exhausted hens. They are truly not “harmonious” natures: they can only cackle more than ever because they are laying eggs more frequently.
35 To be sure, the eggs have kept getting smaller (although the books have only gotten bigger). The final and natural con-

sequence of this is that universally favored “popularization” (along with “feminization” and “infantization”) of scholarship; that is, the infamous tailoring of the cloak of scholarship to the body of the “mixed public”—to make use just this once
5 of a language suited to tailors to designate an activity suited to tailors. Goethe saw in this an abuse, and he demanded that scholarship have an impact on the outside world only by means of an *enhanced praxis*. Moreover, older generations of scholars had good reasons for considering such an abuse to be difficult
10 and burdensome. Younger scholars have equally good reasons for finding it easy, since they themselves—with the exception of a tiny niche of knowledge—are a part of this mixed public, and they bear its needs within them. They need only to sit down comfortably somewhere in order to succeed in opening
15 up their tiny area of study to the compulsive curiosity of the mixed general public. In retrospect, they give this act of comfort the designation “a modest condescension of the scholar to the people,” whereas basically the scholar—insofar as he is not a scholar but actually a plebeian—only descends to his own
20 level. Create for yourselves the concept of a “people”: you can never conceive it to be noble and lofty enough. If you were to think highly of the people, you would be merciful toward them and you would take care not to offer them your historical *aqua fortis* as a refreshing elixir of life. But in your heart of hearts
25 you think poorly of them, because you are incapable of having a sincere and profound respect for their future, and you act like practical pessimists—I mean, like people who are guided by the presentiment of disaster and who therefore become indifferent and careless about the welfare of others, indeed, about
30 their own welfare. If only the ground will continue to support us! And if it ceases to support us, then that’s all right, too.—This is how they feel, and they live an *ironic* existence.

It may seem strange, but surely not contradictory, that I ascribe
35 to our age, an age that tends so perceptibly and insistently

to break out into the most carefree jubilation over its historical cultivation, a kind of *ironic self-consciousness*, a haunting inkling that there is no cause for jubilation, a fear that all the amusement of historical knowledge will perhaps soon come to an end. Goethe presented us with a similar puzzle with regard to individual personalities in his remarkable characterization of Newton. He finds at the base (or, to be more precise, at the top) of Newton's being "an obscure inkling of his own error," an expression observable only in the rare moments, as it were, of a superior, critical consciousness that attains a certain ironic perspective on his own necessary inner nature. Thus, it is precisely in the greater and more highly developed historical person that we find an awareness, often muted to the point of universal skepticism, of just how much incongruity and superstition are inherent in the belief that the education of a people must be as predominantly historical as it is today. After all, the strongest peoples—that is, those strong in both deeds and works—lived differently and educated their youth differently. But that incongruity, that superstition—so goes the skeptical objection—suits us historical latecomers, the last, anemic offspring of powerful and cheerful generations; it suits us, who seem to confirm Hesiod's prophecy that one day humans would have gray hair already at birth, and that Zeus would eradicate them as soon as this sign became visible. Historical cultivation is really a kind of congenital grayness, and it stands to reason that those who bear its sign at birth must arrive at the instinctive belief in the *old age of humanity*; but today it is befitting of old age that it be devoted to the preoccupations of the aged, namely, to retrospection, to tallying and closing accounts, to seeking comfort in the past by means of memories—in short, to historical cultivation. But the human race is a tough and tenacious thing and it dislikes being viewed in its progression—forward and backward—after millennia, or hardly even after hundreds of millennia. In other words, it *absolutely refuses* to be viewed by that infinitesimal atom, the individual human being, as a totality. For what is it about a couple of millennia

(or, expressed in different terms, the time period of 34 consecutive human lives at 60 years apiece) that permits us to speak of humanity's "youth" at the beginning of such a period, and of its "old age" at the end! Doesn't this paralyzing belief in an already
5 withering humanity contain the misunderstanding of a Christian theological conception, inherited from the Middle Ages, of the imminent end of the world, the fearfully awaited Last Judgment? Isn't the heightened historical need to sit in judgment nothing but this same conception dressed up differently,
10 as though ours, the last possible age, had itself been authorized to pass the Last Judgment on the entire past—a judgment that Christian belief certainly does not expect to come from humanity itself, but instead from the "Son of Man"? Previously this "*memento mori*," called out both to humanity and to the individual, was always a terribly painful goad and the pinnacle, as it
15 were, of medieval knowledge and conscience. The phrase with which the modern age answers this call, "*memento vivere*," still sounds, to be quite frank, rather timid; it has no resonance, and almost seems to be insincere. For humanity is still fixed on the
20 *memento mori*, and it betrays this by means of its universal need for history; despite the powerful beating of its wings, knowledge has not been able to break out into the open. A profound sense of hopelessness remains and has taken on that historical tinge with which today all historical education and cultivation
25 is gloomily darkened. A religion that regards the last hour of a human life to be the most significant one, that predicts the end of life on earth and condemns all living things to live in the fifth act of a tragedy, certainly arouses the most profound and noble powers, but it is inimical to all attempts to sow the seeds
30 of the new, to engage in daring experiments, to desire freely. It opposes every flight into the unknown, because it finds nothing to love or hope for there: only against its own will does it permit what is in the process of becoming to be forced upon it, so that, at the proper time, this becoming, which seduces to
35 existence and lies about the value of existence, can be repudiated or sacrificed. What the Florentines did while under the

influence of Savonarola's calls to penance, undertaking those notorious sacrificial burnings of paintings, manuscripts, mirrors, and masks, is precisely what Christianity would like to do with every culture that incites people to go on striving and that bears that *memento vivere* as its motto. And if it is not possible to do this in a blunt and direct manner—say, by overpowering such cultures—then it can attain this end just as well by forming an alliance with historical cultivation—usually without the latter even being aware of this. And then, speaking in the name of this historical cultivation, it rejects with a shrug of the shoulders everything that is in the process of becoming and spreads over it the stigma of being a latecomer and epigone—in short, the stigma of congenital grayness. The harsh and profoundly serious reflection on the worthlessness of all occurrences, on the maturity of the world to pass judgment, has volatilized into the skeptical awareness that it is, in any event, good to know all these occurrences, since it is too late to do anything better. This is how historical sensibility makes its servants passive and retrospective, and those who have come down with the historical fever become active only in those moments of forgetfulness when this historical sensibility is absent; and as soon as this action is completed, it is dissected, so that reflective analysis can prevent it from having any further effect and ultimately reduce it to bare “history.” In this sense, we still live in the Middle Ages and history is still a disguised theology, just as the reverence that the unscholarly layman feels for the scholarly caste is a reverence handed down from the reverence previously reserved for the clergy. Today we give to scholarship—although, more sparingly—what people previously gave to the Church; but the fact that we give at all is attributable to the Church, not to the modern spirit, which, on the contrary, despite its other, more positive qualities, is notoriously stingy and a bungler when it comes to the noble virtue of generosity.

Perhaps this observation is displeasing, perhaps just as displeasing as my derivation of the excess of history from the medieval *memento mori* and from the hopelessness that Christian-

ity bears in its heart toward all the coming ages of earthly existence. But we should nevertheless try to substitute for this explanation, which I have advanced somewhat hesitantly, better explanations; for the origin of historical cultivation—as well as
5 its intrinsic and wholly radical contradiction with the spirit of a “new age” and a “modern consciousness”—this origin *must* itself, in turn, be understood historically, history itself *must* solve the problem of history, knowledge *must* turn the goad upon itself—this threefold *must* is the imperative of the spirit
10 of the “new age,” provided that there is really something new, powerful, life-promoting, and original in it. Or is it perhaps true that we Germans—to leave the Romance peoples aside—in all higher matters of culture always had to be mere “descendants,” for the simple reason that this was all that we *could*
15 be. Wilhelm Wackernagel once expressed this in the following statement, which merits serious consideration: “We Germans are merely a people of descendants; in all our higher knowledge, and even in our beliefs, we have always been the heirs of the ancient world; even those who are inimical to it have no
20 choice but to breathe in the immortal spirit of ancient classical cultivation along with the spirit of Christianity. And if someone were to succeed in removing these two elements from the living atmosphere that surrounds the inner human being, then not much would remain with which to sustain a spiritual life.”
25 But even if we were happy to accept our calling as descendants of antiquity, even if we were resolved to take this calling seriously and pursue it vigorously and to acknowledge this vigor as our distinguishing and unique privilege—in spite of this we would still have to ask whether we are forever doomed to being
30 the *disciples of fading antiquity*. At some time or other we may be allowed gradually to set our goal higher and farther; at some time or other we should be able to praise ourselves for having recreated in ourselves the spirit of Hellenistic and Roman culture—even by means of our universal history—in such a fruitful
35 and magnificent manner, so that we now, by way of the most noble reward, can charge ourselves with the even more prodigious

gious task of striving to go behind and beyond this Hellenistic world and seek our models in the primordial world of ancient Greece with all its greatness, naturalness, and humanity. *But here we will also find the reality of an essentially ahistorical cultivation and of a form of cultivation that despite—or precisely because of—this fact is indescribably rich and vital.* Even if we Germans were nothing but descendants—if we were to view such a cultivation as an inheritance we could make our own—then we could find no greater or prouder destiny than that of being descendants.

10 With this I mean to say only one thing, and one thing alone: that even the often painful thought of being epigones can, when conceived grandly, guarantee both to the individual and to a people a hope-filled longing for the future: insofar, at least, as we understand ourselves as heirs and descendants of
15 the remarkable powers of antiquity and see in this our honor, our incentive. That is to say, not as anemic and stunted lateborn offspring of powerful generations, who eke out a cold existence as the antiquarians and grave diggers of these prior generations. To be sure, such lateborn offspring lead an ironic
20 existence: destruction follows hot on the heels of their limping course through life. They shudder at it when they take pleasure in the past, for they are living memories; and yet without heirs, their memory is meaningless. Thus, they are overcome by the gloomy inkling that, since no future life can justify it, their life
25 is an injustice.

However, what if we were to imagine such antiquarian late offspring suddenly exchanging their painfully ironic modesty for impudence; let's imagine them declaring in shrill voices: "Our race has now reached its apex, for only now has it attained
30 knowledge of itself and been revealed to itself"—the result would be a spectacle in which, as in a parable, the enigmatic significance for German cultivation of a certain very famous philosophy would suddenly become clear. I do not believe that there was any dangerous deviation or turn in German cultivation
35 in this century that did not become more dangerous due to the enormous and still spreading influence of this philoso-

phy—Hegelian philosophy. In truth, the belief that one is the lateborn offspring of prior ages is paralyzing and upsetting, but it must seem horrible and destructive when one day, in a brazen inversion, such a belief deifies this lateborn offspring as the true meaning and purpose of all previous historical events, when his knowing wretchedness is identified with the culmination of world history. It is just such a manner of looking at things that allowed the Germans to grow accustomed to speaking of the “world process” and justify their own age as the necessary result of this world process. This manner of viewing things has put history in the place of the other intellectual powers, art and religion, establishing it as the sole sovereign, insofar as history is the “self-realizing concept,” “the dialectic of the spirit of nations,” and the “Last Judgment.”

Understood in this Hegelian manner, history has scornfully been dubbed the sojourn of God on earth—although this God, for his part, is himself only the product of history. But it was inside Hegelian heads that this God became transparent and comprehensible to himself, and it has already climbed up through all the dialectically possible stages of its process of becoming, up to the point of that self-revelation, so that for Hegel the apex and culmination of the world process coincided with his own existence in Berlin. Indeed, he might even have said that everything that came after him could actually be regarded as only a musical coda of the world-historical rondo—or, more precisely, as superfluous. He did not say this: instead, he instilled in those generations nurtured by his philosophy that admiration for the “power of history” that in almost every moment reverts to naked admiration of success and leads to the idolatry of the factual. This idolatry is now generally referred to with a very mythological and, moreover, very German expression: “to take account of the facts.” But those who first learned to kneel down and bow their heads before the “power of history” eventually nod their “yes” as mechanically as a Chinese puppet to every power—regardless of whether it is a government, a public opinion, or a numerical majority—

and move their limbs in precisely that tempo with which whatever power pulls the strings. If every success contains within itself a reasonable necessity, if every occurrence represents the victory of what is logical or of the "Idea"—then fall to your
5 knees at once and genuflect on every rung of the stepladder of "successes"! What, there are no longer ruling mythologies? What, religions are dying out? Just look at the religion of historical power; pay attention to the priests of the mythologies of the Idea and their skinned-up knees! Aren't all virtues in fact
10 adherents of this new faith? Or is it not a sign of selflessness when the historical human being lets himself be made into an objective mirror? Is it not a sign of generosity to renounce all violence in heaven and on earth by worshipping in every form of violence nothing but violence in itself? Is it not a sign of
15 justice if one constantly holds a balance in one's hands and watches to see which one, as the stronger and heavier of the two, tips the scales? And what a school of decorum such a view of history is! To accept everything objectively, get irate about nothing, love nothing, comprehend everything—oh, how that
20 makes one soft and supple: and even if someone educated in this school were to get irate and angry in public, this makes us happy, for we know, after all, that he only means it artistically. It is *ira* and *studium*, and yet it is utterly *sine ira et studio*.

How old-fashioned my thoughts about this conglomerate of
25 mythology and virtue are! But they just have to come out, even if they only make you laugh. So I would say that history always impresses upon us: "Once upon a time . . .," with the moral: "Thou shalt not . . ." or "Thou shouldst not have . . ." Thus history becomes a compendium of factual immorality. How
30 gravely we would err if we were simultaneously to view history as the judge of this factual immorality! For example, it is an insult to morality that someone like Raphael had to die when he was only thirty-six years old: such a person should never die at all. Now if, as apologists of the factual, you want to come
35 to history's defense, you will say: "Raphael expressed everything that was inside him; if he had lived longer, he would only

have created more beauty of the same type, not a new type of beauty," or something to that effect. You thereby become the devil's advocates by making success, the fact, into your idol: whereas the fact is always stupid and has at all times looked
5 more like a calf than a god. Moreover, as apologists of history, ignorance is your prompter: for it is only because you do not really know what a *natura naturans* like Raphael is that you are not outraged to hear that he once lived and will never live again. Recently someone sought to inform us that at age eighty-two
10 Goethe had exhausted himself: and yet I would gladly trade entire wagonloads of fresh, ultramodern lives for but a couple years of the "exhausted" Goethe just in order to participate in discussions like those Goethe had with Eckermann. This would be my way of protecting myself from all the fashionable teach-
15 ings of the legionnaires of the moment. By comparison with such great people who are dead, how few living people have a right to live at all! That the many still live and those few no longer live is nothing but a brutal truth, that is, an incorrigible stupidity, a tactless "That's just the way it is," as opposed to
20 morality that says: "It should not be this way." Yes, as opposed to morality! For you can discuss any virtue you like—justice, generosity, courage, the wisdom and pity of human beings—everywhere the human being is virtuous precisely because he rebels against that blind power of facts, against the tyranny
25 of the real, and he subjects himself to laws that are not the laws of those historical fluctuations. He always swims against the historical tide, either because he struggles against his passions as those stupid facts closest to his existence, or because he commits himself to honesty while the glittering nets of lies
30 are being spun all around him. If history were simply nothing other than "the world system of passion and error," then humans would have to read it the way Goethe advised us to read *Werther*: as if history were calling out to them "Be a man and don't follow me!" Fortunately, however, history also preserves
35 the memory of the great fighters *against history*, that is, against the blind power of the real; and it ties itself to the whipping

post by exalting as the true historical natures precisely those who were little troubled by the "That's how it is," but instead pridefully followed a "This is how it should be." It is not the burial of their generation, but the founding of a new one that
 5 drives them unrelentingly onward; and if they themselves are lateborn offspring—there is a way to live that makes up for this — coming generations will know them only as the firstborn.

9

Is our age perhaps such a firstborn?—In fact, the vehemence of
 10 its historical sensibility is so great and expresses itself in such a universal and utterly unlimited manner that in this respect, at least, future ages will praise it as a firstborn—assuming, that is, that there will even be *future ages* at all that can be understood to be cultured. But this is precisely what remains seriously in
 15 doubt. In close proximity to the modern human being's pride stands his *self-irony*, his awareness that he must live in a historicizing and, as it were, twilight atmosphere, his fear that he will not be able to salvage for the future anything whatsoever of his youthful hopes and energies. Here and there some move even
 20 further in the direction of *cynicism* and justify the course of history, indeed, the entire development of the world, quite literally as occurring for the everyday utility of the modern human being, according to the cynical canon: things had to evolve in precisely the way they did, and the human being could not
 25 have become any different from human beings today, since it is futile to rebel against this "must." Those who cannot endure irony flee into the well-being of just this kind of cynicism; moreover, the last decade presents them with the gift of one of its most beautiful inventions, a well-rounded and full phrase to
 30 describe this cynicism: it calls their fashionable and absolutely unreflective way of living "the total surrender of one's personality to the world process." Personality and the world process! The world process and the personality of the earthly flea! If only we did not have to hear that hyperbole of hyperboles, the
 35 word "world, world, world," where honesty demands that one

ought to say "man, man, man"! The heirs of the Greeks and Romans? Of Christianity? All this seems to those cynics to be nothing; but heirs of the world process! Apex and aim of the world process! Meaning and solution of each and every riddle
5 of becoming, as manifest in the modern human being, the ripest fruit on the tree of knowledge!—That's what I call inflated self-aggrandizement! This is the trademark by which the firstborn of all ages can be recognized, regardless of whether they are also simultaneously the lastborn. Never has the view of
10 history soared so high, not even in its own dreams, for now the history of humanity is merely the continuation of the history of animals and plants. Indeed, even in the deepest depths of the ocean the historical universalist discovers the traces of himself in living slime. Looking back with amazement on the miracle
15 of the immense distance that the human being has already traveled, he reels at the sight of that even more amazing miracle, the modern human being himself, who is capable of surveying this immense distance. He stands tall and proud atop the pyramid of the world process; when he lays the capstone of his
20 knowledge at its apex, he appears to be calling out to nature that listens all around him: "We have reached our goal; we are the goal; we are nature perfected."

Overproud European of the nineteenth century, you are stark raving mad! Your knowledge does not perfect nature,
25 but only kills your own nature. Just measure the wealth of your knowledge against the poverty of your abilities. Certainly, you climb on the sunbeams of your knowledge up to the heavens, but also down into chaos. Your manner of traveling—namely, climbing as a person of knowledge—is your doom;
30 for you, solid ground crumbles away into uncertainty; your life is no longer supported by pillars, but only by spiderwebs that are torn apart by every new grasp of your knowledge.—But enough of this gloomy seriousness, since it is possible to speak of the matter more cheerfully.

35 The ravingly unreflective shattering and destruction of all foundations, their disintegration into a fluid, dispersing be-

coming, the tireless unraveling and historicizing by the modern human being—this great spider at the center of the cosmic web—of all that has come into being: all this may occupy and disturb the moralist, the artist, the pious person, and even the statesman, but today, for once, we are going to let it cheer us up by viewing it in the gleaming magic mirror of a *philosophical parodist* in whose head the present age arrives at an ironical self-consciousness of such clarity that it “verges on infamy,” to speak in a Goethean fashion. Hegel once taught us that “when Spirit takes a sudden leap, we philosophers are also at hand.” Our age made a sudden leap into self-irony, and lo and behold, E. von Hartmann was at hand and had written his *Philosophy of the Unconscious*—or, to put it more clearly, his “Philosophy of Unconscious Irony.” I have seldom seen a more humorous invention or read anything so full of philosophical roguishness as this work of Hartmann’s; anyone whom it fails to enlighten on the subject of *becoming*—indeed, anyone whom it does not set aright—is truly fit to be called a has-been. The beginning and goal of the world process, from the first startled jolt of consciousness to the point at which it is flung back into nothingness, including the precisely delineated task of our generation in this world process—all of this drawn from the cleverly ingenious inspiration well of the unconscious and bathed in apocalyptically shining light, all of this so deceptively imitated and immersed in such an upstanding seriousness, as though it were in fact a serious philosophy and not merely a philosophical joke—a totality of this sort establishes its creator as one of the first philosophical parodists of all time. Let us thus make sacrifices at his altar; let us sacrifice to him, the inventor of a genuine panacea, a lock of hair—to purloin one of Schleiermacher’s expressions of admiration. For what cure could possibly be more effective against the excess of historical cultivation than Hartmann’s parody of all world history?

If we wanted to express succinctly what Hartmann proclaims from the smoke-enshrouded tripod of his unconscious irony, then we would say: he proclaims that our age must be exactly

the way it is if humanity is ever to become thoroughly fed up with this existence: a belief with which we heartily agree. That horrifying ossification of our age, that restless rattling of bones — which David Strauss has naively depicted in all its splendid
 5 facticity—Hartmann not only justifies on the basis of the past, *ex causis efficientibus*, but also on the basis of the future, *ex causa finali*. This rogue lets the light of the Last Judgment shine upon our age, and seen in this light, it appears that our age is very good—good, that is, for those who wish to suffer as severely as
 10 possible from the indigestibility of life and for whom the Last Judgment cannot arrive too soon. To be sure, Hartmann calls the time of life that humanity is now approaching its “age of manhood”; however, according to his description, this is the joyous state in which there is nothing but “solid mediocrity,”
 15 in which art is the equivalent of “what an evening’s farce is, say, to a Berlin stockbroker,” and in which “geniuses are no longer necessary, because that would be tantamount to throwing pearls to swine, or even because the age has progressed beyond that stage suited to genius to a more significant stage” —
 20 that is, to that stage of social development in which every worker “leads a comfortable existence, due to the fact that his working hours leave him sufficient leisure to attend to his own intellectual education.” Rogue of rogues, you are giving voice to the longing of present-day humanity; but you also know just
 25 what kind of ghost will appear at the end of humanity’s age of manhood as a result of this education to solid mediocrity—nausea. Things are clearly in a very sorry state, but things will get even sorer, since “the Antichrist is clearly ever extending his sphere of influence”—but it *must* be this way, it *must* come
 30 to this, for with all this we are well on our way to experiencing nausea with all of existence. “Therefore, as laborers in the vineyards of the Lord, let us strive vigorously onward, for it is the process alone that can lead to redemption.”

The vineyard of the Lord! The process! To redemption! Who
 35 does not see and hear in this the historical cultivation that only knows the word “becoming,” that intentionally disguises itself

behind a parodistic deformation, that makes the most wanton statements about itself from behind this grotesque mask! For what does this final roguish call to the laborers in the vineyards actually demand of them? In what labor are they supposed to strive vigorously onward? Or, to put the question differently: What is left to do for the historically cultivated person, the fanatic of the process who is swimming and drowning in the flow of becoming, before he can some day harvest that nausea, the precious fruit of that vineyard? — He has to do nothing but go on living as he has always lived, go on loving as he has always loved, go on hating as he has always hated, and go on reading the same newspapers he has always read. For him there is only one sin — to live differently from the way he has always lived. But precisely how he has always lived is described to us with the excessive clarity of letters carved in stone on that celebrated page whose propositions are printed in boldfaced capitals, and over which all of today's fashionably cultivated scum have fallen into blind rapture and rapturous frenzy because they believe they have discovered in these propositions their own justification, a justification bathed, moreover, in apocalyptic light. For the unconscious parodist demanded of each and every individual "the total surrender of his personality to the world process for the sake of its goal, the redemption of the world." Or even brighter and clearer: "The affirmation of the will to life is proclaimed to be the only correct thing for the time being; for only in the total surrender to life and its sorrows, and not in cowardly personal resignation and withdrawal, can something be accomplished for the world process." And: "To strive for individual negation of the will is just as foolish and useless — if not even more foolish — than suicide." And: "The thoughtful reader will understand without further elucidation the shape that a practical philosophy founded on these principles would take, and that such a practical philosophy must necessarily entail a reconciliation with life, not estrangement from it."

The thoughtful reader will understand; but Hartmann could be misunderstood! And how incredibly funny it is that he was

misunderstood! Are Germans of today supposed to be very subtle? A worthy Englishman believes they lack "delicacy of perception"; indeed, he even dares to assert that "in the German mind there does seem to be something splay, something
5 blunt-edged, unhandy and infelicitous." Would the great German parodist contradict this? To be sure, according to his explanation we are approaching "that ideal state in which the human race fashions its own history in full consciousness," but we are obviously still very far away from that perhaps even
10 more ideal state in which humanity reads Hartmann's book in full consciousness. If we ever reach this state, then no human being will ever again let the term "world process" pass his lips without these lips simultaneously smiling, for in doing so he will remember the time in which Hartmann's parodistic Gospel
15 was listened to, sucked in, debated, venerated, disseminated, and canonized with all the gullibility of that "German mind," indeed, with "the exaggerated seriousness of the owl," as Goethe once put it. But the world must move forward; that ideal state cannot be attained by dreaming of it, it must be
20 fought and struggled for, and only cheerfulness can lead to redemption, to redemption from that misleading owlish seriousness. This will be the day when we wisely avoid all constructions of the world process or even of the history of humanity, a time in which we will no longer pay attention to the masses,
25 but once again only to individuals, who form a kind of bridge over the turbulent stream of becoming. Individuals do not further a process, rather they live timelessly and simultaneously, thanks to history, which permits such a combination; they live in the republic of geniuses of which Schopenhauer once spoke.
30 One giant calls to another across the desolate expanses of time, and this lofty dialogue between spirits continues, undisturbed by the wanton, noisy chattering of the dwarfs that crawl about beneath them. The task of history is to be their mediator and thereby continually to incite and lend strength to the production
35 of greatness. No, the goal of humankind cannot possibly be found in its end stage, but only in its highest specimens.

Of course, to this our comedian with that admirable dialectic—a dialectic that is about as genuine as its admirers are admirable—retorts: “It would be just as incompatible with the concept of development to ascribe to the world process an infinite duration in the past, since then every conceivable development would already have to have occurred, and this is definitely not the case” (oh, you scoundrel!), “as it would be to concede to the process an infinite duration in the future. Both would annul the concept of development toward a goal” (oh, double scoundrel!) “and would make the world process appear similar to the Danaïdes’ futile attempts to draw water. However, the complete victory of the logical over the illogical” (oh, scoundrel of scoundrels) “must coincide with the temporal end of the world process, with the Last Judgment.” No, you clear and mocking spirit, as long as the illogical prevails as it does today, as long, for instance, as it is still possible to speak, as you do, of the “world process” and still elicit general approval, the Last Judgment is still far away: for it is still all too cheerful on this earth, some illusions still blossom, as, for example, the illusion your contemporaries have of you; we are not yet ripe for being flung back into your nothingness. For we believe that it is going to get even funnier when people finally start to understand you, you misunderstood man of the unconscious. However, if despite this we should be overcome by a violent spell of nausea, much like the sort that you prophesied to your readers, if your depiction of your present and future should prove to be correct—and no one has ever scorned these two, scorned them with as much disgust as you—then I would be happy to cast a vote with the majority, in precisely the way you propose, for the demise of your world next Saturday evening at twelve o’clock sharp. And our decree will close with the words: “As of tomorrow, time will cease to exist and no newspapers will appear.” But perhaps our decree will be in vain and will have no effect: well, in any event we will then have enough time to perform a nice experiment. Let us take a balance and place Hartmann’s unconscious on one of the scales, and Hartmann’s

world process on the other. There are people who believe that they will have precisely the same weight, for each contains an equally bad phrase and an equally good joke. — If Hartmann's joke is ever understood, then Hartmann's phrase "world process" will never again be used except in jest. In fact, the time is long overdue to protest with all the might that satirical malice can muster against the aberrations of the historical sensibility, against the excessive joy in the process at the price of being and life, against the senseless displacement of all perspectives; and the author of the *Philosophy of the Unconscious* should continually be proud that he was the first to succeed in clearly recognizing the ridiculousness of the notion of the world process, and, thanks to the uncommon seriousness of his portrayal, in helping us recognize this ridiculousness with even greater clarity. For the time being we need not be bothered with why the "world" exists, why "humanity" exists, unless we want to crack a joke, for the impudence of the tiny human worm is simply the most comical, amusing thing ever to play on the world stage. But just ask yourself why you, as an individual, exist; and if no one can tell you, then just try to justify the meaning of your existence *a posteriori*, as it were, by setting yourself a purpose, a goal, a "reason why," a lofty and noble "reason why." Go ahead and perish in the attempt — I know of no better purpose in life than perishing in the attempt to accomplish something great and impossible, *animae magnae prodigus*. If, by contrast, the doctrines of sovereign becoming, of the fluidity of all concepts, types, and species, of the lack of any cardinal difference between human and animal — doctrines I hold to be true, but also deadly — are flung at the people for one more generation in the craze for education, then no one should be surprised if that people perishes of petty egoism and wretchedness, of ossification and selfishness, after first falling apart and ceasing to be a people at all. It will then perhaps be replaced in the arena of the future by systems of individual egoisms, brotherhoods whose purpose will be the rapacious exploitation of the nonbrothers, and similar products of utilitarian vulgarity. In order to pave

the way for these creations we only need continue to write history from the standpoint of the *masses* and scrutinize history for those laws that can be derived from the necessities of these masses, that is, for those laws that govern the movement of society's lower strata, its loam and clay. Only in three respects does it seem to me that the masses are deserving of notice: first, as faded copies of great men printed on poor paper with wornout plates; second, as resistance to the great; and finally, as tools of the great. With regard to everything else, they can go to the devil and to statistics! What? Can statistics prove that there are laws in history? Laws? Yes, it proves how vulgar and disgustingly uniform the masses are. Should we apply the word "laws" to those effects derived from the forces of stupidity, imitation, love, and hunger? All right, we are ready to concede this, but then the corollary proposition also holds, namely, that to the extent that there are laws in history, these laws are worthless and hence history itself is worthless. But precisely that form of history is now generally valued that takes the great drives of the masses to be what is important and paramount in history, and that views all great men merely as their clearest expression, as if they were bubbles that become visible on the surface of the flood. According to this, the masses are supposed to produce greatness out of themselves; order, in short, is supposed to be produced out of chaos. In the end, of course, the hymn to the great productive masses is sung. Then everything is called "great" that has moved these masses for a longer period of time and thus has been, as they say, "a historical power." But isn't this tantamount to intentionally confusing quantity and quality? If the coarse masses have found any thought whatsoever — for example, a religious thought — to be entirely adequate, have bitterly defended it, and dragged it along with them for centuries, then and only then is the discoverer and founder of this thought supposed to be great. But why!? What is noblest and loftiest has no effect at all on the masses; the historical success of Christianity, its historical power, tenacity, and longevity, none of this, fortunately, testifies to the great-

ness of its founder, since it basically would testify against him. But between him and that historical success there lies a very worldly and obscure layer of passion, error, greed for power and honor, of the enduringly effective impact of the *imperium*
5 *romanum*, a layer from which Christianity acquired that worldly taste and worldly residue that made possible its continued survival in the world and gave it, as it were, its endurance. Greatness ought not to depend upon success, and Demosthenes possessed greatness even though he never had success. The purest
10 and most sincere adherents of Christianity have always tended to question and impede, rather than to promote, its worldly success, its so-called "historical power," for they were accustomed to placing themselves outside "the world," and they paid no attention to the "process of the Christian idea." This explains
15 why they have for the most part remained unknown to and unnamed by history. Expressed in Christian terms: The devil is the ruler of the world, and hence the lord of success and progress; he is the true power at work in all historical powers, and this is how things will essentially remain—despite the fact
20 that this may ring quite painfully in the ears of an age that is accustomed to deifying success and historical power. In fact, it was precisely here that this age learned how to give things new names, and it even went so far as to rechristen the devil himself. It is certainly the hour of a great danger: human beings
25 seem to be close to discovering that the egoism of individuals, of groups, or of the masses was in all ages the lever behind historical movements, but at the same time they are by no means troubled by this discovery; instead, they decree: "Egoism shall be our God." Armed with this new belief, they set with unmistakable
30 intent about the task of erecting future history upon egoism; only it is supposed to be a prudent egoism, one that submits to some limitations so that it can establish itself permanently, one that studies history precisely so that it will become acquainted with imprudent egoism. From this study one has
35 learned that the state has a very special mission in the world system of egoism that is to be founded: it is supposed to become

the patron of all prudent egoisms in order to protect them with the might of its military and police forces from the horrible eruptions of imprudent egoism. It is with this same purpose in mind that history—in particular the history of animals and
 5 human beings—has been carefully indoctrinated into the dangerous—because imprudent—masses and the working classes, since it is known that a single grain of historical cultivation is capable of breaking coarse and dull instincts and desires, or at least of channeling them in the direction of refined egoism.

10 In sum: The human being is now concerned, in the words of E. von Hartmann, “with a practical, comfortable accommodation in his worldly home, one that looks out thoughtfully toward the future.” The same writer calls such a period the “manhood of humanity,” and he thereby ridicules what today
 15 is called a “man,” as though this concept referred solely to the sober egocentric, just as he likewise prophesies that this manhood will be followed by its corresponding old age, thereby clearly venting his sarcasm on those old men who are typical of our time. For he speaks of the mature introspection with which
 20 they survey “all the stormy, dissolute sufferings of their past lives and grasp the vanity of what they had once supposed to be the goal of all their striving.” No, that cunning and historically cultivated egoism’s age of manhood is followed by a period of old age that clutches without dignity and with disgusting
 25 greediness to life, and then comes a final act in which the

Last scene of all,

That ends this strange eventful history,
 Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
 Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

30 Regardless of whether the dangers threatening our life and our culture come from these dissolute toothless and tasteless old men or from Hartmann’s so-called “men,” in defiance of both we want to hold on with our teeth to the rights of our *youth* and will never tire of defending our youth against those iconoclasts who would destroy the images of the future. However,
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in this struggle we are forced to make an especially painful observation: *that the aberrations of the historical sensibility from which the present suffers are deliberately promoted, encouraged, and—utilized.*

But they are utilized against youth so as to make it fit the
5 mold of that mature manhood of egoism to which the whole world aspires; they are utilized so as to overcome youth's natural aversion to that manly-unmanly egoism by transfiguring it so that it appears in a magically scientific light. It is well known—indeed, too well known—what a certain excess of
10 history is capable of: namely, of uprooting the strongest instincts of youth, its fire, defiance, self-oblivion, and love; of smothering the ardor of its passion for justice; of repressing or suppressing its desire to mature slowly by supplanting it with the opposite desire to be quickly finished, quickly useful, and
15 quickly productive; of infecting youth's honesty and boldness of feeling with doubt. Indeed, it is even capable of cheating youth out of its most beautiful privilege, out of the power to plant, overflowing with faith, a great thought within itself and letting it grow into an even greater thought. A certain excess
20 of history is capable of doing all of this, as we have seen, and it accomplishes this by constantly shifting the human being's horizons and perspectives, by removing the atmosphere that envelops him, thereby preventing him from feeling and acting
ahistorically. He then retreats from an infinite horizon into him-
25 self, into the tiniest egoistical realm, and is doomed to wither there and dry up. It is probable that he will attain cleverness, but he will never attain wisdom. He compromises, calculates, and accommodates himself to the facts; he does not seethe, but merely blinks and knows how to seek his own or his party's
30 advantage in the advantage or disadvantage of others; he unlearns superfluous shame and thereby arrives successively at the stages of Hartmann's "man" and "old man." But that is what he is *supposed to* become, precisely this is the meaning of that
35 cynically demanded today—for the sake of his goal, the redemption of the world, as E. von Hartmann assures us. Now,

the will and the goal of Hartmann's "men" and "old men" is hardly world redemption, but certainly the world would be even more redeemed if it were redeemed of these men and old men. For then the kingdom of youth would be at hand.—

10

Thinking of *youth* at this point, I call out "Land ho!, Land ho!" Enough, more than enough, of this passionately seeking but fruitless voyage on strange, dark seas! Now, at least, we see a shore: regardless of what it is like, this is where we must land, and even the poorest haven is better than being swept back into this infinite hopelessness and skepticism. Our first task is to make land; later on we will find the good harbors and make landing easier for those who follow us.

This voyage was dangerous and exciting. How far we now are from the calm contemplation with which we first watched our ship set out to sea. Going out in search of the dangers of history, we found ourselves exposed to all of them in the most acute manner; we ourselves bear the marks of those sufferings that afflict human beings of the modern age as a consequence of an excess of history, and this very treatise exhibits, as I freely admit, in the immoderation of its criticism, in the immaturity of its humaneness, in its frequent shifts from irony to cynicism, from pride to skepticism, its thoroughly modern character, the character of the weak personality. And yet I still have faith in the inspirational power that, in lieu of genius, has guided my vessel; I have faith in *youth*, and I have faith that it has steered me correctly by forcing me into a position of *protest against the historical education of the modern human being in his youth*, and by forcing this protester to demand that human beings above all learn to live and to employ history only *in the service of the life they have learned to live*. It is necessary to be young in order to understand this protest; indeed, given the premature grayness of our youth today, one can scarcely be young enough and still be able to sense exactly what I am protesting against. Let me turn to an example for help. It has been little over a century since a

natural instinct for what is called poetry awoke in some of the young people in Germany. Are we to suppose that prior generations and even their own contemporaries never spoke at all about that art that was inwardly alien and unnatural to them?

5 We know the opposite to be true, namely, that they reflected, wrote, and argued about "poetry" with all the energy at their disposal, producing words about words about words about words. That incipient awakening of the word to life did not immediately spell the death of these word producers; in a certain

10 sense they live on yet today. For if it is true, as Gibbon claims, that the demise of a world takes nothing but time, albeit a great deal of time, then it will take nothing but time, albeit even a great deal more time, for a false notion to perish in Germany, the "land of the gradual." And yet: Today there are perhaps a

15 hundred more people than there were a hundred years ago who know what poetry is; perhaps a hundred years from now there will be a hundred more who meanwhile will also have learned what culture is, and will have learned that the Germans, no matter how much they might speak of it and flaunt it, to this day

20 simply have had no culture. In their eyes, the general satisfaction of the Germans with their "cultivation" will appear just as unbelievable and foolish as Gottsched's once widely acknowledged classicism or Ramler's status as the German Pindar now seem to us. They will perhaps conclude that this cultivation is

25 a kind of knowledge about cultivation, and a false and superficial knowledge, at that. False and superficial because the Germans tolerated the contradiction between life and knowledge, because they utterly failed to perceive what was characteristic about the cultivation of truly cultured nations: that culture

30 can only grow and flourish out of life, whereas in the case of the Germans it is always pinned on like an artificial flower or put on like a sugarcoating, and for that reason can never be anything but mendacious and unfruitful. But the education of German youth proceeds from precisely this false and unfruitful

35 concept of culture; its aim, conceived purely and loftily, is by no means the independent cultivated person, but rather the

scholar, the scientifically oriented person, a person, moreover, who is useful at the earliest possible age and places himself outside life in order to recognize it more clearly. Its result, when viewed in a vulgar empiric^al manner, is the historically and
5 aesthetically cultivated philistine, the quickly dated up-to-date babbler about the state, the church, and art, the *sensorium* for a thousand secondhand sensations, an insatiable stomach that does not even know the meaning of genuine hunger and thirst. That an education with that aim and with this result is unnatu-
10 ral can only be sensed by those who have not yet been fully shaped by it; only the instincts of youth can sense this, because youth still possesses the instincts of nature that are artificially and violently broken by that education. However, anyone who, in turn, seeks to break this education must help youth express
15 itself, must help illuminate, with the lucidity of concepts, the path of their unconscious resistance against this education and transform it into an aware and outspoken consciousness. But how can such an unusual goal be achieved?—

Above all by destroying one superstition, the belief in the
20 *necessity* of this type of education. It is still commonly believed that there is no alternative to our present, extremely distressing reality. With this question in mind, we need only examine the literature on secondary and higher education that has appeared over the past few decades: we will discover to our dismay just
25 how uniformly the entire aim of education has been conceived, despite the great divergence of opinions and the vehemence of the controversies; we will discover just how unswervingly the previous product of education, the “cultivated human being” as he is conceived today, is accepted as the necessary and
30 rational foundation of all further education. This is more or less the substance of that monotonous educational canon: the young person must begin with knowledge about cultivation, not with knowledge about life, and even less so with life and experience themselves. Moreover, this knowledge about cul-
35 tivation is instilled or inculcated in the youth in the form of historical knowledge; that means that his head is jammed with

an enormous number of concepts that are derived not from the immediate perception of life, but from the extraordinarily mediate acquaintance with past ages and peoples. Any desire to experience something for himself and to sense how his own
5 experiences grow inside him into an integrated and organic system is numbed and, as it were, intoxicated by the illusory promise that in the span of a few short years it will be possible to collect in himself the highest and most remarkable experiences of older ages, especially the greatest of these. It is exactly
10 the same insane method that drives our young painters into the art museums and galleries instead of into the workshop of a master, and above all into the singular workshop of the singular master, nature. It is as though on a fleeting stroll through history we could pick up the skills and artistry of the past, the
15 actual fruits of past lives; indeed, as though life itself were not a craft that has constantly to be learned from the ground up and relentlessly practiced if it is supposed to produce anything but bunglers and babblers!—

Plato thought it necessary that the first generation of his
20 new society (in the perfect state) be educated with the aid of a powerful *necessary lie*; children should learn to believe that they had all lived for some time in a dream state beneath the earth, where they were shaped and formed by the demiurge of nature. It would be impossible to rebel against this past! It
25 would be impossible to oppose the work of the gods! It was to be regarded as an inviolable law of nature: those born to be philosophers have bodies of gold; those born to be guardians, bodies only of silver; and those born to be laborers, bodies of iron and bronze. Just as it is not possible to mix these metals,
30 Plato asserts, so should it not be possible ever to intermix or overturn these caste divisions; the belief in the *aeterna veritas* of this order is the foundation of the new form of education and therewith of the new state. — The modern German now has the same belief in the *aeterna veritas* of his education, of his type of
35 culture; and yet this belief would collapse, just as the Platonic state would have collapsed, if its necessary lie were ever con-

fronted with a *necessary truth*: that the German has no culture for the simple reason that his education makes it impossible for him to have one. He seeks to have the flower without the roots and stem; he therefore seeks it in vain. That is a simple
5 truth, an unpleasant and crude, but genuinely necessary truth.

But *our first generation* must be educated in this necessary truth; it will certainly suffer the most under it, for it has to educate itself—educate itself, moreover, against itself—by means of this necessary truth in order to acquire new habits and a
10 new nature and leave its old habits and its first nature behind. Thus it could address itself with the classical Spanish phrase *Defienda me Dios de my*, Lord protect me from myself, that is, from that nature acquired through my upbringing. It must sip this truth drop by drop, sip it like a bitter yet powerful medicine, and every individual of this generation must overcome
15 himself in order to pass judgment on himself, something that would be easier to endure in the form of a general judgment on the entire age. “We have no cultivation; what is worse, we are ruined and incapable of living, of correct and simple seeing and hearing, of happily seizing what is nearest and natural; and to date we do not even possess the foundation of a culture, because we ourselves are not convinced that there is a true life within us. Fragmented and disintegrated, our totality half-mechanically divided into an interior and an exterior, littered
20 with concepts as with dragon’s teeth, producing concept dragons; suffering, furthermore, from the sickness of words and mistrustful of every individual feeling that does not yet bear the stamp of words: as such a nonliving and yet incredibly active factory of concepts and words, I perhaps am still justified
25 in saying *cogito, ergo sum*, but not *vivo, ergo cogito*. I am granted empty ‘being,’ but not full, green ‘life’; my original feeling only vouches for the fact that I am a thinking, but not a living creature, that I am no *animal*, but at the very most a *cogital*. First grant me life, and then I will create a culture from it!”—This
30 is what the individual of this first generation cries out, and all
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these individuals will recognize one another by this call. Who will grant them this life?

No god and no human being: only their own *youth*. Unshackle this youth and with it you will have liberated life. For
5 it merely lay hidden, in prison, it has not yet withered and died out—just ask yourselves!

But it is sick, this unshackled life, and must be cured. It is sick with many ills and does not merely suffer from the memory of its chains; it suffers—and this is of special concern to us—
10 from the *historical sickness*. The excess of history has attacked the shaping power of life, it no longer understands how to utilize the past as a powerful nourishment. This illness is horrible, but nevertheless! If youth did not possess the prophetic gift of nature, then no one would even know that it is an illness
15 and that a paradise of health has been lost. However, this same youth divines with the healing instinct of this same nature how paradise is to be regained; it is acquainted with the balms and remedies effective against the historical sickness, against the excess of history. What are the names of these remedies?

20 Well, don't be surprised to find out that they are the names of poisons: the antidotes to the historical are—*the ahistorical and the suprahistorical*. With these names we return to the beginning of our observations and to its calm tenor.

With the term “the ahistorical” I designate the art and power
25 to be able to *forget* and to enclose oneself in a limited *horizon*; I term “suprahistorical” those powers that divert one's gaze from what is in the process of becoming to what lends existence the character of something eternal and stable in meaning, to *art* and *religion*. *Science*—for it is science that here would speak of
30 “poisons”—views in this strength, in these powers, antagonistic powers and strengths, for it considers the mere observation of things to be true and correct, that is, to be scientific observation, which everywhere perceives only what has already become something, something historical, and nowhere does it
35 perceive something being, something eternal. Science lives in

an internal contradiction with the eternalizing powers of art and religion, just as it hates oblivion, the death of knowledge; it seeks to suspend all the limitations placed on horizons and to catapult the human being into an infinite, unlimited light-wave sea of known becoming.

If only he could live in it! Just as in an earthquake cities collapse and are destroyed and human beings build their houses but fearfully and fleetingly on volcanic ground, so life caves in on itself and becomes feeble and discouraged when the *concept-*
 10 *quake* unleashed by science robs the human being of the foundation for all his security and tranquillity, his belief in what is lasting and eternal. Should life rule over knowledge and science, or should knowledge rule over life? Which of these forces is higher and more decisive? No one will doubt: life is the
 15 higher, the ruling force; for any knowledge that destroyed life would simultaneously destroy itself. Knowledge presupposes life; hence it has the same interest in the preservation of life that every creature has in its own continued existence. This is the reason why science needs the supervision and surveillance
 20 of a higher power; a *hygiene of life* occupies a place close by the side of science; and one proposition of this hygiene would be: the ahistorical and the suprahistorical are the natural antidotes to the stifling of life by the historical, to the historical sickness. It is likely that we, the historically sick, will also have to
 25 suffer from these antidotes. But the fact that we suffer from them provides no evidence that could call the correctness of the chosen therapy into question.

And it is in this that I recognize the mission of that *youth* of which I have spoken, of that first generation of fighters and
 30 dragon slayers who will advance a happier, more beautiful cultivation and humanness, without themselves ever having more than a promising inkling of this future happiness and coming beauty. This youth will suffer simultaneously from the illness and the cure, but despite this they believe that they can boast
 35 better health and even a more natural nature than the generations that preceded them, the cultivated "men" and "old men"

of the present. But it is their mission to shatter the conceptions that this present age has of "health" and "cultivation," and to arouse scorn and hatred against these monstrous conceptual hybrids. And the symptom that will vouch for their greater
5 health will be that this youth will be able to use no concepts, no party slogans from among the verbal and conceptual coins that are currently in circulation, to designate their own being. Rather, their conviction will derive only from a power active within them that struggles, discriminates, and analyzes, and
10 from a feeling for life that is constantly heightened in every good hour. Some may disagree with the claim that this youth will already have cultivation—but what youth would consider this a reproach? We may accuse them of being crude and in-temperate—but they are not yet old and wise enough to mod-
15 erate their demands. But above all, they do not need either to feign or defend a ready-made cultivation, and they enjoy all the consolations and privileges of youth, especially the privilege of courageous, unreflected honesty, and the inspiring consolation of hope.

20 I know that these hopeful individuals have a concrete understanding of these generalizations and will translate them by means of their own experience into a doctrine that is personally meaningful. In the meantime, others may perceive nothing but covered dishes that could possibly even be empty, until one day
25 they are surprised to see with their own eyes that these dishes are full and that assaults, demands, life drives, and passions that could not remain concealed for very long are packed into and compressed within these same generalizations. Calling the
30 attention of these skeptics to time, which brings everything to light, I will conclude by turning to that society of hopeful individuals, in order to relate to them by means of a parable the course and progress of their cure, their redemption from the historical sickness, and hence their own personal history up
35 to that point at which they will once again be healthy enough to pursue history anew and to make use of the past in the service of life in the sense of the three historical modes described

above, namely, the monumental, the antiquarian, and the critical. At that moment they will be less knowledgeable than the “cultivated people” of the present, for they will have forgotten much of what they learned and will even have lost all desire to
5 attend at all to the things that those cultivated persons want to know. Seen from the perspective of these cultivated persons, their distinguishing marks are precisely their “lack of cultivation,” their indifference and reserve with regard to many things that are otherwise celebrated, even with regard to many things
10 that are good. But when they have arrived at the conclusion of their cure, they have once again become *human beings* and have ceased to be humanlike aggregates—that’s quite an accomplishment! There is still hope. Don’t your hearts rejoice at this, you hopeful individuals?

15 “And how will we arrive at this goal?” you will ask. At the very beginning of your journey to that goal the God of Delphi will call out to you his imperative, “Know thyself.” It is a difficult imperative, for this God, as Heraclitus has said, “neither conceals nor reveals, but merely alludes.” What does he al-
20 lude to?

There were centuries in which the Greeks found themselves threatened by a danger similar to the one we face today, the danger, namely, of perishing in a flood of things alien and past, of perishing of “history.” They never lived in proud isolation; on the contrary, their “cultivation” was for many years
25 a chaos of foreign—Semitic, Babylonian, Lydian, and Egyptian—forms and concepts, and their religion represented a veritable struggle among the gods of the entire Orient. This is similar to the manner in which today “German cultivation”
30 and religion represent an internally struggling chaos of all foreign lands and all prior history. But despite this, and thanks to that Apollonian imperative, Hellenic culture did not become an aggregate. The Greeks gradually learned how to *organize this chaos* by concentrating—in accordance with this Delphic doctrine—on themselves, that is, on their genuine needs, and by
35 letting those pseudoneeds die out. They thereby took posses-

sion of themselves again; they did not long remain the glutted heirs and epigones of the entire Orient; based on the practical interpretation of Apollo's imperative, they themselves became, after a difficult struggle with themselves, the happiest enrichers and increasers of that inherited treasure; they became the first cultured people, and hence the model for all future cultured peoples.

This is a parable for every individual among us: he must organize the chaos within him by concentrating on his genuine needs. His honesty, his sound and truthful character, must at some point rebel against the constant imitation—imitation of speech and imitation of learning—that he finds everywhere around him. He then will begin to grasp that culture can be something other than the *decoration of life*—that is, at bottom always only mere dissimulation and disguise, for all ornaments have the purpose of concealing what they adorn. In this way the Greek concept of culture—as opposed to the Roman—will be disclosed to him, the concept of culture as a new and improved *physis*, without interior and exterior, without dissimulation and convention, a concept of culture as the harmony of life, thought, appearance, and will. He thus will learn from his own experience that it was the higher power of *moral* nature that made the Greeks' victory over other cultures possible, and that every increase in truthfulness is always a necessary step toward the furthering of *true* cultivation—even though this truthfulness may sometimes do serious harm to that cultivatedness that is held in esteem at the time, even though it may hasten the downfall of an entire decorative culture.

Schopenhauer as Educator

When a traveler who had seen many lands and nations and several continents was asked what characteristic he discovered to be common to all of humanity, he replied: "They have a
5 tendency toward laziness." To many it will seem that his reply would have been more accurate and valid if he had said: "They are all fearful. They hide behind customs and opinions." At bottom, every human being knows perfectly well that he lives in the world just once, as a *unicum*, and that no coincidence,
10 regardless how strange, will ever for a second time concoct out of this amazingly variegated diversity the unity that he is. He knows this, but he conceals it like a bad conscience. Why? Out of fear of his neighbor who demands convention and who cloaks himself with it. But what is it that forces the individual
15 to fear his neighbor, to think and act like a part of a herd instead of taking pleasure in being himself? Modesty, perhaps, in a few rare instances. In most instances it is convenience, indolence—in short, that tendency toward laziness of which the traveler spoke. He is right: human beings are lazier than
20 they are fearful, and what they fear most are those hardships that unconditional honesty and nakedness would foist upon them. Artists alone despise this lethargic promenading draped in borrowed manners and appropriated opinions, and they expose the hidden secret, everyone's bad conscience, the principle that every human being is a one-of-a-kind miracle. They
25 dare to show us how every human being, down to each move-

ment of his muscles, is himself and himself alone; moreover, they show us that in the strict consistency of his uniqueness he is beautiful and worthy of contemplation, as novel and incredible as every work of nature, and anything but boring. When
5 the great thinker disdains human beings, it is their laziness he disdains, for it is laziness that makes them appear to be mass-produced commodities, to be indifferent, unworthy of human interchange and instruction. The human being who does not want to be a part of the masses need only cease to go easy on
10 himself; let him follow his conscience, which cries out to him: "Be yourself! You are none of those things that you now do, think, and desire."

Every young soul hears this cry night and day and trembles, for when it thinks of its true liberation, it has an inkling of the
15 measure of happiness for which it is destined from eternity. As long as it is shackled by the chains of opinions and fear, nothing can help it attain this happiness. And how bleak and senseless life can become without this liberation! There is no more desolate or repulsive creature in nature than the human being who
20 has evaded his genius and who then casts furtive glances left and right, behind himself, and all about. In the end we can no longer even take hold of a person like this, for he is all exterior without a kernel, a tattered, painted, puffed-up garment, a decked-out ghost that can arouse no fear, and certainly no pity.
25 And if it is correct to say that the lazy person kills time, then we must seriously be concerned that a time that stakes its salvation on public opinions—that is, on private lazinesses—will one day really be killed: by which I mean that it will be stricken from the history of the true liberation of life. Imagine how
30 great the revulsion of future generations will be when dealing with the legacy of a time ruled not by living human beings, but instead by publicly opining pseudo-human beings. This is why for some distant posterity our age will perhaps constitute the darkest and most unknown—because least human—chapter of
35 history. I walk through the new streets of our cities and think how a century from now none of these atrocious houses the

generation of public opinionators had built for themselves will be left standing, and how by then even the opinions of these house builders will have collapsed. How hopeful, by contrast, can all those people be who do not feel that they are citizens
 5 of this time; for if they were citizens of this time, they too would be helping to kill their time and would perish with it—whereas they actually want to awaken their time to life, so that they themselves can go on living in this life.

But even if the future were to give us no cause for hope—
 10 our curious existence in precisely this Now gives us the strongest encouragement to live according to our own standards and laws: the inexplicable fact that we live precisely today and yet had the infinity of time in which to come into being, that we possess nothing but this brief today in which to show why and
 15 to what purpose we have come into being precisely at this moment. We are accountable to ourselves for our own existence; consequently, we also want to be the real helmsmen of our existence and keep it from resembling a mindless coincidence. We have to approach existence with a certain boldness and will-
 20 ingness to take risks: especially since in both the worst and the best instances we are bound to lose it. Why cling to this clod of earth, to this trade; why heed what your neighbor says? It is so provincial to bind oneself to views that already a few hundred miles away are no longer binding. Orient and Occi-
 25 dent are chalk lines drawn before our eyes in order to mock our timidity. “I want to try to attain freedom,” the young soul tells itself; and it is supposed to be hindered in this simply because by chance two nations hate and wage war on each other, or because two continents are separated by an ocean, or be-
 30 cause a religion that did not even exist a few thousand years ago is now taught everywhere. “None of this is you yourself,” the young soul tells itself. No one can build for you the bridge upon which you alone must cross the stream of life, no one but you alone. To be sure, there are countless paths and bridges and
 35 demigods that want to carry you through this stream, but only at the price of your self; you would pawn and lose your self.

There is one single path in this world on which no one but you can travel. Where does it lead? Do not ask, just take it. Who was it who made the statement: "A man never rises higher than when he does not know where his path may lead him"?

5 But how can we find ourselves again? How can the human being get to know himself? He is a dark and veiled thing; and if the hare has seven skins, the human being can shed seven times seventy skins and still not be able to say: "This is really you, this is no longer outer shell." Besides, it is an agonizing, dangerous
10 undertaking to dig down into yourself in this way, to force your way by the shortest route down the shaft of your own being. How easy it is to do damage to yourself that no doctor can heal. And moreover, why should it be necessary, since everything —
15 our friendships and enmities, our look and our handshake, our memory and what we forget, our books and our handwriting — bears witness to our being. But there is only one way in which this crucial inquiry can be carried out. Let the young soul look back on its life with the question: What have you up to now truly loved, what attracted your soul, what dominated it while
20 simultaneously making it happy? Place this series of revered objects before you, and perhaps their nature and their sequence will reveal to you a law, the fundamental law of your authentic self. Compare these objects, observe how one completes, expands, surpasses, transfigures the others, how they form a
25 stepladder on which until now you have climbed up to yourself; for your true being does not lie deeply hidden within you, but rather immeasurably high above you, or at least above what you commonly take to be your ego. Your true educators and cultivators reveal to you the true primordial sense and basic stuff of
30 your being, something that is thoroughly incapable of being educated and cultivated, but something that in any event is bound, paralyzed, and difficult to gain access to. Your educators can be nothing other than your liberators. And that is the secret of all cultivation: it does not provide artificial limbs, wax noses,
35 or corrective lenses — on the contrary, whatever might provide these things is merely a parody of education. Instead, educa-

tion is liberation, removal of all weeds, rubble, and vermin that seek to harm the plant's delicate shoots, a radiance of light and warmth, the loving rush of rain falling at night; it is imitation and adoration of nature where nature displays its maternal
5 and merciful disposition; it is perfection of nature when it prevents nature's cruel and merciless onslaughts and turns them to good, when it drapes a veil over the expressions of nature's stepmotherly disposition and sad lack of understanding.

Certainly, there are other ways of finding oneself, of coming
10 to oneself out of the stupor in which we usually float as in a dark cloud, but I know of no better way than to reflect on one's own educators and cultivators. And hence today I want to remember the one teacher and taskmaster of whom I can be proud, *Arthur Schopenhauer*—so that subsequently I will be able
15 to recall others.

2

If I am to describe what an event that first encounter with Schopenhauer's writings was for me, I must linger briefly on an idea that in my youth occurred to me with more frequency
20 and urgency than almost any other. When in my younger days I used to indulge my wishes to my heart's content, I thought that fate would relieve me of the terrible effort and duty of educating myself: at exactly the right moment I would find a philosopher to be my educator, a true philosopher whom I
25 could obey without further reflection because I could trust him more than myself. At that time I asked myself: "According to what principles would he educate you?" And I pondered over what he would say to the two maxims of education that are in vogue today. The first of these demands that the educator
30 quickly recognize the peculiar strength of his pupils and then concentrate all his efforts and energies, all his sunshine, on this one spot in order to help bring this one virtue to proper maturity and fruition. The second maxim, by contrast, demands that the educator draw on and foster all existing abilities and
35 bring them into a harmonious relationship. But does that give

us ample reason forcibly to compel someone with a decided penchant for the goldsmith's art to take up music? Should we agree that Benvenuto Cellini's father was right when he repeatedly forced his son to play that "dear little horn," which the boy referred to as "that damned piping"? In the instance of natural talents that express themselves as vigorously and definitively as Cellini's, we cannot call this right; and perhaps the maxim of harmonious education can only be applied to those weaker natures in whom, to be sure, an entire swarming hive of needs and inclinations are present, but which, when taken both collectively and singly, do not amount to much? But where do we find such harmonious wholeness and many-voiced consonance in one single nature, where do we admire harmony more than in people like Cellini, in whom everything—all knowledge, desire, love, hate—strives toward a central point, a root force, and where precisely the compelling and dominating force of this living center forms a harmonious system of back-and-forth, up-and-down movements? And so perhaps these two maxims are not at odds with each other at all? Perhaps the one merely says that human beings should have a center, the other that they should also have a periphery? That educating philosopher of my dreams would, then, not only discover a central strength, but would also know how to prevent it from having a destructive impact on the other strengths. His educational task, as I imagined it, would rather be to transform the entire human being into a solar and planetary system with its own life and motion and to discover the laws of its higher mechanics.

But in the meantime I still had not found this philosopher, and I tried this and that; I discovered how wretched we modern human beings are when compared to the Greeks and Romans, even where the serious and rigorous understanding of educational tasks is concerned. You can run through all of Germany with a need such as this in your heart, even through all the universities, yet you will not find what you seek; after all, much simpler, more basic needs go unfulfilled here. For instance, any German who seriously wished to be educated in the art of

oratory or who intended to visit a school for writers would find nowhere either master or school; here people seem not yet to have recognized that oratory and writing are arts that cannot be acquired without most careful guidance and years of arduous apprenticeship. But nothing demonstrates more clearly and shamefully the arrogant self-satisfaction of our contemporaries than the half-stingy, half-mindless shabbiness of their demands with regard to educators and teachers. Even among our noblest and best-educated people almost anyone will suffice to serve as family tutor; and how common it is for some collection of eccentrics and antiquated devices to be called a college-preparatory school and thought good. And just consider what we settle for in the way of institutions of higher learning, of universities; what leaders, what institutions, when compared with the difficulty of the task of educating a human being to be a human being! Even the much-admired manner in which German scholars go about their scholarly pursuits demonstrates above all else that they think more of their scholarship than they do of humanity, that like a lost platoon they are trained to sacrifice themselves to scholarship, so as, in turn, to lure new generations into making the same sacrifice. The occupation with scholarship, when it is not guided and limited by any higher educational maxim, but instead is increasingly unfettered, adhering to the principle "the more the better," is certainly just as pernicious for the scholar as the economic doctrine of laissez-faire is for the morality of entire nations. Who recognizes nowadays that the education of the scholar, if his humanity is not to be sacrificed or choked off in the process, is an extremely difficult problem — and yet this difficulty is clearly visible if one pays attention to the countless examples of people whom a mindless and all too early devotion to scholarship has warped or deformed. But there is even more important — more important, more dangerous, and, above all, far more general — evidence for this absence of any higher education. If it is immediately clear why nowadays no orator, no writer can be educated — for the simple reason that there are no educators for

them; if it is almost as clear why nowadays a scholar is doomed to being warped and eccentric—because scholarship, that is, an inhuman abstraction, is supposed to educate him; if this is so, then we must finally ask ourselves: Where among our contemporaries can all of us—scholars and nonscholars, noble and humble—find our moral exemplars and people of distinction, visible embodiments of all creative morality in this age? What has actually become of all the reflection on moral questions that at all times was the occupation of every noble society? There are no longer such people of distinction, and there is no longer such reflection; the fact is that we are living off the inherited moral capital accumulated by our forefathers, a capital that we no longer know how to increase, but know only how to squander. In our society we either do not discuss such things at all, or discuss them only with a naturalistic amateurishness and inexperience that cannot help but arouse revulsion. Thus we have reached the point where our schools and teachers simply ignore a moral education or make do with mere formalities, and virtue is a word that no longer means anything to our teachers and pupils, an old-fashioned word that makes people smile—and it is worse if you do not smile, since that means you're a hypocrite.

The explanation of this faintheartedness and of this low watermark of all moral strengths is difficult and complex, and yet no one who takes into consideration the influence of victorious Christianity on the morality of our ancient world can overlook the counteraction of declining Christianity—and decline is its probable fate in our time. By means of the loftiness of its ideals, Christianity so surpassed the moral systems of antiquity and the naturalness equally prevalent in all of them that we became indifferent to and disgusted by that naturalness. But afterward, when better and loftier things could still be recognized, although no longer attained, we could no longer return to the good and lofty, to the virtues of antiquity, no matter how much we desired to do so. Modern human beings live in this vacillation between Christianity and antiquity, between an intimidated or hypocritical Christian morality and an equally

cowardly and inhibited turn to antiquity, and they suffer from it. The inherited fear of the natural and, on the other hand, a renewed fascination for the natural, the desire to find a firm footing somewhere, the impotence of a form of knowledge
5 that wavers between what is good and what is better—all this produces a disquiet, a confusion in the soul of modern human beings that condemns them to be unfruitful and joyless. Never was there a greater need for moral educators, and never was there less chance of finding them. Those times when doctors
10 are most needed, in instances of great epidemics, are the very times in which doctors are most at risk. For where are the doctors of modern humanity, people who themselves stand so solidly and robustly on their feet that they could lend support to others and lead them by the hand? A certain gloom and
15 apathy hangs over the best personalities of our day, an eternal discontent with the battle between dissimulation and honesty that is waged in their breasts, a restless lack of confidence in themselves—and this makes them wholly incapable of being simultaneously guides and taskmasters for others.

20 It was truly a flight into wishful thinking when I imagined I would find a true philosopher as educator, one who would elevate me above my inadequacies, to the extent that they were products of the age, and would teach me once again to be *simple*
and *honest* in thought as in life—in short, to be *unfashionable*
25 in the most profound sense of the word. For human beings today have become so multiple and complex that they cannot help but become dishonest the moment they want to speak at all, make assertions, and then act in accordance with them.

It was in such a state of need, distress, and desire that I first
30 encountered Schopenhauer.

I am among those readers of Schopenhauer who after having read the first page know with certainty that they will read every page and pay attention to every word he ever uttered. My faith
in him appeared immediately, and today it is just as complete
35 as it was nine years ago. To express it in a comprehensible, if yet immodest and foolish manner: I understood him as though

he had written expressly for me. That is why I never discovered a paradox in Schopenhauer, although I did now and again come across a minor error. For what are paradoxes other than assertions that do not inspire confidence because the author
5 himself made them without genuine confidence, because he used them to make himself appear brilliant, to seduce, and generally to create appearances? Schopenhauer never wants to create appearances, for he writes for himself, and no one likes to be deceived, least of all a philosopher who has made this
10 his law: Never deceive anyone, not even yourself! Not even with those polite social deceptions that are part and parcel of almost every conversation and that writers imitate almost unconsciously; even less so with the more conscious deceits performed on the stage of oratory and with the artificial means of
15 rhetoric. No, on the contrary, Schopenhauer speaks with himself; or, if one insists on imagining a listener, then one should imagine a son being instructed by his father. It is a sincere, blunt, good-natured declaration before a listener who listens with love. We lack writers of this sort. The powerful well-being
20 of the speaker encompasses us at the first sound of his voice; it is similar to the experience of entering a highland forest: we breathe deeply and suddenly have a sense of well-being again. We sense that here the air is always just as invigorating; here there is a certain inimitable uninhibitedness and naturalness of
25 the sort possessed by people who are at home in themselves, and who are masters, moreover, in a very wealthy home. This is the exact opposite of those writers who themselves are the ones most amazed if they manage to be witty and whose style thereby takes on a restless and unnatural quality. When Schopenhauer
30 speaks, we are likewise little reminded of the scholar who by nature has stiff and awkward limbs, whose chest is narrow and squared, and who has an embarrassed or stilted gait. By contrast, Schopenhauer's coarse and slightly bearlike soul teaches us not so much to mourn as to scorn the smoothness and
35 courtly grace of good French writers, and no one will discover in him that imitated, as it were silver-plated pseudo-Frenchness

in which German writers so freely indulge. Schopenhauer's way of expressing himself reminds me here and there a little of Goethe, but otherwise of no other German model whatsoever. For he understands how to express with simplicity something that is profound, without rhetoric something that is moving, and without pedantry something that is rigorously scholarly. From what German could he possibly have learned this? He also steers clear of Lessing's overly subtle, excessively supple, and—if I may say so—rather un-German style; and this is quite an accomplishment, since of all German writers of prose, Lessing is the most seductive stylist. The highest praise I can give to Schopenhauer's style is to apply to it his own statement: "A philosopher must be very honest if he refuses to avail himself of poetic or rhetorical devices." To be sure, in the age of public opinions the belief that honesty is anything at all, let alone a virtue, is relegated to those private opinions that are prohibited; and this is the reason why I am not praising Schopenhauer but merely characterizing him when I reiterate: he is honest, even as a writer. And so few writers are honest that we should really distrust all people who write. I know of only one other writer whom, as regards his honesty, I would set equal to or even above Schopenhauer: this is Montaigne. The joy of living on this earth has truly been increased by the fact that such a person wrote. At any rate, since my first encounter with this freest, most energetic of spirits, I have found it necessary to say of him what he said of Plutarch: "As soon as I cast a glance at him, I sprouted another leg or a wing." I would take my example from him if I were set the task of making myself feel at home on this earth.—

Aside from honesty, Schopenhauer has a second quality in common with Montaigne: a genuinely cheering cheerfulness. *Aliis laetus, sibi sapiens*. For there are two very distinct kinds of cheerfulness. The true thinker always cheers and refreshes, regardless of whether he gives expression to something serious or humorous, a human insight or a divine indulgence: without sullen gestures, trembling hands, teary eyes, but rather confi-

dently and simply, with courage and strength, perhaps somewhat cavalierly and harshly, but at any rate as a victor. And it is precisely this that cheers us most profoundly, most fervently: to view the victorious god amid all the monsters that he has conquered. On the other hand, that cheerfulness we sometimes encounter in mediocre writers and brusque thinkers makes us miserable upon reading them: something I experienced, for example, in the case of David Strauss's cheerfulness. One feels downright ashamed to have such cheerful contemporaries because they expose the nakedness of our age and the human beings who live in it for all of posterity to see. Such cheerleaders do not even perceive the sufferings and monsters that as thinkers they pretend to perceive and fight, and their cheerfulness provokes displeasure simply because it deceives, for it seeks to seduce one into believing that a victory has been won. For basically there is cheerfulness only where there is victory, and this is just as true of the works of true thinkers as it is of every work of art. Even if the subject is as horrifying and serious as the problem of existence, the work itself will have an oppressive and tormenting effect only if half-thinkers and half-artists have cast the haze of their own inadequacy over it. On the other hand, human beings can never experience anything better and more joyful than to be near one of those victorious people who, because they have thought the most profound things, cannot help but love what is most alive and, because they are wise, ultimately are disposed to what is beautiful. They truly speak; they neither stammer, nor do they simply parrot what others say. They truly move and live, not in the uncanny masquerade in which most human beings are accustomed to live, and this is why when we are near them we feel human and natural for once and would like to cry out with Goethe: "How magnificent and precious every living thing is! How suited to its condition, how true, how full of being."

I am describing only the first, as it were, physiological impression that Schopenhauer made on me, that magical outpouring of innermost strength from one natural being to

another that results from the first, slightest contact. And when in retrospect I analyze this impression, I find that it is composed of three elements: of the impression of his honesty, his cheerfulness, and his steadfastness. He is honest because he
5 speaks and writes to himself and for himself, cheerful because his thought has conquered the most difficult thing, and steadfast because he cannot be otherwise. His strength rises straight and easily upward, like a flame on a windless day, undisturbed, without trembling and flickering. In every instance he finds
10 his way without us even noticing that he had sought it; on the contrary, he runs along with such firmness and nimbleness, with such inevitability, that he seems to be propelled by a law of gravity. And anyone who has ever sensed what it means to discover among the tragelaphine humanity of the present day
15 a whole, harmonious, free, and uninhibited creature of nature that still turns on solid hinges will understand the joy and amazement I experienced upon discovering Schopenhauer; I had an inkling that I had found in him that long sought-after educator and philosopher. To be sure, I discovered him only in
20 the form of a book, and that was a great shortcoming. For that reason I struggled all the more to peer through the book and imagine the living person whose great testament I was reading and who promised to make only those his heirs who were willing and able to be more than just his readers: namely, his sons
25 and disciples.

3

I attach importance to a philosopher only to the extent that he is capable of setting an example. There is no doubt that by his example he is capable of drawing entire nations along behind
30 him; Indian history, which is virtually the history of Indian philosophy, provides proof of this. But the philosopher must supply this example in his visible life, and not merely in his books; that is, it must be presented in the way the philosophers of Greece taught, through facial expressions, demeanor, cloth-
35 ing, food, and custom more than through what they said, let

alone what they wrote. How far we in Germany are from this courageous visibility in our philosophical life; here the body is just beginning to be liberated after the spirit long seems to have been liberated, and yet it is only a delusion that the spirit
5 is free and autonomous if this achieved limitlessness—which at base is nothing other than creative self-limitation—is not demonstrated anew from dawn to dusk in every glance and every step. Kant clung to the university, submitted to governmental authority, sustained the appearance of religious faith,
10 put up with colleagues and students: hence it is quite natural that his example produced above all university professors and professorial philosophy. Schopenhauer wants to have little to do with the learned classes; he keeps to himself, strives for independence from state and society—this is his example, his
15 model—to begin with the most superficial aspects. But many degrees in the liberation of philosophical life are still unknown to the Germans, and they will not be able to remain so forever. Our artists live more boldly and honestly, and the most powerful example we have before us, that of Richard Wagner,
20 demonstrates that if genius wants to bring to light the higher order and truth that dwells within it, it must not be afraid to enter into the most hostile conflict with existing forms and systems. However, the “truth” about which our professors talk so much certainly seems to be an unpretentious creature from
25 which we have nothing disorderly or extraorderly to fear: a good-natured, easygoing creature who repeatedly assures all the established powers that it does not want to cause any trouble; after all, it is only “pure knowledge.” What I’m trying to say, in other words, is that philosophy in Germany must
30 increasingly forget about being “pure knowledge,” and this is precisely the example set by Schopenhauer the man.

But it is nothing short of a miracle that he was ever able to develop into this human example, for he was assailed both from without and from within by the gravest dangers, dangers that
35 would have crushed or shattered any weaker creature. There was, so it appears to me, a strong likelihood that Schopen-

hauer the man would perish and leave behind, under the best of circumstances, a residue of "pure knowledge," but even this could occur only under the best of circumstances; most likely neither man nor knowledge.

- 5 A modern Englishman portrays in the following manner the most general danger faced by unusual human beings who live in a society bound to the usual: "Unusual characters of this kind are at first cowed, then they turn melancholy, then sicken, and finally die. A Shelley could not have lived in England, and
10 a race of Shelleys would have been impossible." Our Hölderlin, our Kleist, and who knows how many others were ruined by their unusualness and could not endure the climate of so-called German cultivation, and only those constitutions made of iron, such as Beethoven, Goethe, Schopenhauer, and Wagner, are
15 able to stand up under it. But even they, too, exhibit in many features and wrinkles the effects of this utterly exhausting strain and pain: their breathing becomes labored, and their tone too easily tends to become violent. That experienced diplomat who had only briefly seen and spoken with Goethe said to his
20 friends: "Voilà un homme, qui a eu de grands chagrins!"—which Goethe translated as: "Here's another one who has had a pretty tough time of it." And Goethe adds to this: "If the traces of sufferings endured and deeds accomplished cannot be erased from our faces, then it is no wonder that everything that
25 remains of us and our aspirations bears the same traces." And this is Goethe, whom our cultivated philistines cite as the happiest of Germans in order to prove the proposition that it must be possible to attain happiness among them—with the ulterior implication that no one has any excuse for feeling unhappy and
30 alone among them. This is the reason why they have with great cruelty advanced the doctrine, and drawn its practical consequences, that anyone who is solitary harbors a secret guilt. Now, poor Schopenhauer also had such a secret guilt on his
35 conscience, namely, the guilt of valuing his philosophy more than his contemporaries. And, in addition, he was unfortunate enough to learn from none other than Goethe that in order to

save the life of his philosophy he would have to defend it at all costs against the indifference of his contemporaries. For there is a form of inquisitorial censorship in which the Germans, in Goethe's judgment, have particularly excelled: it is called inviolable silence. And this principle already accomplished so much that the greater part of the first edition of Schopenhauer's chief work had to be pulped. The threatening danger that his great deed would simply be undone by indifference produced in him a terrible, barely controllable disquiet; not one single significant adherent emerged. It saddens us to see him go hunting for the slightest sign that he had gained recognition, and there is something painfully gripping about his loud, even uproarious triumph at finally being read ("*legor et legar*"). All those traits that do not betray the dignity of the philosopher reveal the suffering human being who fears for his most noble possessions; he is tormented by the anxiety of losing his small fortune and perhaps not being able to retain his pure and truly classical attitude toward philosophy. Thus, due to his longing for wholly trusting and sympathetic human beings he frequently made mistakes, only then to return again and again with a melancholy gaze to his faithful dog. He was an absolutely solitary person; he did not have one single like-minded friend to console him — and there lies an infinity between one and none, just as there does between nothing and nothing. No one who has true friends knows what true loneliness is, even if the entire world confronts him as his enemy. — Oh, I'm well aware that you do not know what loneliness is. Wherever there have been powerful societies, governments, religions, public opinions — in short, wherever there was tyranny — the lonely philosopher was despised, for philosophy offers human beings an asylum into which no tyranny can force its way, the cave of inwardness, the labyrinth of the heart, and that annoys tyrants. Here the solitary ones take refuge, but here also lurks their greatest danger. These human beings who have fled inward for their freedom must also live in the external world, must be visible; by virtue of birth, domicile, education, nation, chance, and the importunity of others they

are bound by countless human ties; likewise, they are presumed to have countless opinions simply because these are the ruling opinions. Every expression that does not negate is taken as an affirmation; every gesture that does not destroy is interpreted as approval. These solitary ones who are free in spirit know—that in one thing or another they must constantly put on an appearance that is different from the way they think; although they want nothing but truth and honesty, they are entangled in a web of misunderstandings. And despite their keen desire, they cannot prevent a fog of false opinions, of accommodation, of halfway concessions, of indulgent silence, of erroneous interpretation from settling on everything they do. And so a cloud of melancholy gathers around their brow, for such natures hate the necessity of appearances more than death, and their persistent bitterness about this makes them volatile and menacing. From time to time they take revenge for their violent self-concealment, for their coerced constraint. They emerge from their caves with horrible expressions on their faces; at such times their words and deeds are explosions, and it is even possible for them to destroy themselves. Schopenhauer lived in this dangerous way. It is precisely such solitary people who require love, need companions in whose presence they can be as open and straightforward as they are when they are alone, companions in whose presence the strain of silence and dissemblance can cease. Strip them of these companions, and you produce a growing danger; Heinrich von Kleist was destroyed by this lack of love, and the most dreadful antidote against unusual people is to drive them so far into themselves that their reemergence causes a volcanic eruption. And yet now and again there is a demigod who is able to endure living under such dreadful conditions, and who lives triumphantly. And if you would like to hear his solitary songs, just listen to Beethoven's music.

This was the first danger that overshadowed Schopenhauer's development: isolation. The second is called: despair of truth. This danger accompanies every thinker whose starting point is Kantian philosophy, provided that in his sufferings and his de-

sires he is a strong and complete human being, not just a clattering machine that cogitates and calculates. But, of course, we all know very well the shameful implications of this presupposition; indeed, it seems to me as though Kant really penetrated
5 and radically transformed very few people at all. To be sure, the work of this quiet scholar, as we can read everywhere, is said to have unleashed a revolution in all fields of intellectual inquiry, but I just can't believe that. For I don't see any signs
10 of this in those human beings who first and foremost would have to have been revolutionized before entire fields of inquiry could have been revolutionized. However, should the moment ever arise in which Kant begins to have a popular effect, then we will become aware of it in the form of a corrosive and disintegrating skepticism and relativism. And only the most active
15 and noble spirits, those who could never endure living in a state of doubt, would experience a shattering and despair of all truth on the order of what Heinrich von Kleist, for example, experienced as an effect of Kantian philosophy. "A short while ago," he writes in his gripping manner, "I became acquainted
20 with Kant's philosophy—and I must now share with you one of his ideas, whereby I dare not fear that it will shatter you as deeply and painfully as it did me.—We cannot decide whether what we call truth is really truth, or whether it only appears to us to be such. If the latter is the case, then the truth we collect
25 here is nothing upon our death, and all our efforts to procure a possession that will follow us to the grave are in vain.—If the point of this thought does not pierce your heart, please do not smile about someone who feels himself deeply wounded by it in the innermost sanctum of his being. My sole, my supreme
30 aim has disappeared, and I have no other." Yes, and when will human beings once again feel things in such a natural way as Kleist did, when will they once again learn to measure the meaning of a philosophy in "the innermost sanctum of their being"? And yet this is necessary before we can gauge what,
35 after Kant, Schopenhauer can mean to us—the guide, that is, who guides us out of the cave of skeptical disgruntlement or of

critical renunciation up to the heights of tragic contemplation, the infinite nocturnal sky with its stars above us, and who himself was the first to take this path. His greatness lies in the fact that he dealt with the picture of life as a whole in order to interpret it as a whole, whereas the most sagacious intellects cannot be freed from the mistaken notion that one comes closer to this interpretation by meticulously examining the colors with which, and the material on which, this picture is painted—only to arrive at the conclusion, perhaps, that it is an intricately woven canvas painted with colors whose chemical composition is inexplicable. To understand the picture one must first divine the painter—Schopenhauer knew this. Now, however, the entire scholarly community in all fields of learning is occupied with understanding that canvas and those colors, but not the picture itself; in fact, we could say that only he who has closely observed the overall painting of life and existence will be able to make use of the individual fields of learning without doing harm to himself. For without the touchstone provided by such a total picture, these fields of learning are threads that have no end and merely serve to make our path through life more confused and labyrinthine. As I said, Schopenhauer's greatness lies in the fact that he pursues this picture the same way Hamlet pursues the ghost, without letting himself become distracted, as scholars are, or without getting himself entangled in a web of conceptual scholasticisms, as is the fate of uncontrolled dialecticians. The study of third-rate philosophers is only appealing because we thereby recognize that they immediately stumble over those places in the edifice of great philosophies where scholarly pro and con, where brooding, doubt, and contradiction, are permitted, and that they thereby evade the demand of every great philosophy, which as a totality always only says: "This is the picture of life; learn from it the meaning of your life." And conversely: "Just read your life and decipher on the basis of it the hieroglyphs of life in general." And Schopenhauer's philosophy should always first be interpreted in this way: individually, by the individual for himself alone,

in order to gain insight into his own misery and need, into his own limitations, in order to become acquainted with antidotes and consolations. These are: sacrifice of the ego, subjugation to the noblest intentions, above all to justice and compassion. 5 He teaches us to distinguish between the true and the merely apparent promoters of human happiness; how neither wealth, nor honor, nor erudition can lift the individual out of his profound depression over the worthlessness of his existence, and how striving after these things acquires meaning only through 10 a lofty and transfiguring overarching purpose: attaining power in order to come to the aid of the *physis* and provide a meager corrective for its stupidities and ineptitudes. At first, of course, only for oneself; but through oneself, ultimately for all. It is, to be sure, a form of striving that leads profoundly and heartily 15 to resignation, for what, and how much, can still be improved in the individual and in general!

If we apply these words to Schopenhauer, we touch on the third and most characteristic danger in which he lived and which lay hidden in the entire structure and skeleton of his 20 being. Every human being tends to discover in himself a limitation—of his talents as well as of his moral will—that fills him with longing and melancholy; and just as he longs to rise up out of his feeling of sinfulness to what is holy, so as intellectual being he bears a profound yearning for the genius 25 within himself. This is the root of all true culture, and if what I mean by this is the longing of human beings to be *reborn* as saints and geniuses, then I know that one does not have to be a Buddhist to be able to understand this myth. Wherever we find talent without this longing, as we do in scholarly circles 30 or also among so-called cultivated people, it arouses revulsion and disgust, for we sense that such human beings, with all their intelligence, do not further, but instead hinder an emerging culture and the production of genius—which is the aim of all culture. It is a condition of hardening, equivalent in value 35 to that habitual, cold, and self-proud virtuousness that is also farthest removed and remains far removed from true saintli-

ness. Schopenhauer's nature contained a peculiar and extremely dangerous duality. Few thinkers have sensed so intensely and with such incomparable certainty that genius was spinning its web within them, and his genius made him the supreme promise—that there would be no deeper furrow than the one his plowshare would cut into the soil of modern humanity. Thus he knew one half of his being to be satisfied and fulfilled, without desire, certain of its strength; thus he carried out his calling with the greatness and dignity of someone who victoriously consummated himself. In the other half he experienced a tumultuous yearning; we understand it when we hear that he turned away from the portrait of Rancé, the great founder of the Trappist monastery, with a pained expression on his face, uttering the words: "That is a matter of grace." For the genius yearns more profoundly for holiness because from his watchtower he sees farther and more clearly than any other human being, down into the depths of the reconciliation between knowledge and being, into the realm of peace and the negated will, over to the other shore of which the Hindus speak. But this is precisely the miracle: how inconceivably whole and unbreakable must Schopenhauer's nature have been if it could not be destroyed by this yearning, and yet was also not hardened. Each of us will understand this only in terms of the what and how much of his own being, and none of us will understand it completely, in all of its gravity.

The more one ponders the three dangers I have depicted, the more astonishing becomes the robustness with which Schopenhauer defended himself against them and how healthy and unbent he emerged from this struggle. To be sure, with many scars, and open wounds as well, and in a mood that may seem too caustic and sometimes all too pugnacious. Even the greatest human being is dwarfed by his ideal. But it is certain that Schopenhauer can be a model, despite all his scars and flaws. Indeed, it is tempting to say: precisely what was inconsummate and all too human in his being brings us close to him in the most human sense, for we see in him a sufferer and fellow suf-

ferer, and not one who suffers solely in the remote heights of genius.

Those three constitutional dangers that threatened Schopenhauer threaten us all. Each of us bears within himself a productive uniqueness as the kernel of his being, and when he becomes conscious of this uniqueness, a strange aura—the aura of the unusual—surrounds him. For most people this is something unbearable, because, as observed earlier, they are lazy, and because a chain of efforts and burdens is attached to that uniqueness. There is no doubt that for the unusual person, who is weighed down by this chain, life forfeits almost everything we desire of it in our youth: cheerfulness, security, lightness, honor. The fate of solitude is the gift he receives from his fellow human beings; regardless of where he lives, the desert and the cave are always with him. Now he must see to it that he does not let himself be subjugated, that he does not become oppressed and melancholy. And that is why he may surround himself with the images of good and courageous fighters of the sort that Schopenhauer himself was. But even the second danger that threatened Schopenhauer is not entirely rare. It happens now and again that nature equips someone with perspicacity; his thoughts tend to move in a dialectical two-step. How easy it is for him, by giving free rein to his talent, to perish as a human being and merely live a ghostly existence in the realm of “pure knowledge”; or, having grown accustomed to seeking the pro and con in things, how easy it is for him to become confused about truth itself, so that he must live without courage and confidence, denying, doubting, rankling, dissatisfied, in half-hearted hopefulness, in anticipated disappointment: “No dog would want to go on living like this!” The third danger is moral or intellectual hardening; the human being tears the bond that links him with his ideal; he ceases to be fruitful in this or that field, to propagate, and he becomes feeble or useless where culture is concerned. The uniqueness of his being has become an unpartable, unimpartable atom, a cold stone. And so one can just as easily be ruined by this uniqueness as by the fear of this

uniqueness, by oneself as by abandoning one's self, by yearning as by hardening, and to live at all means to be in danger.

Aside from these dangers in his constitution, to which Schopenhauer would have been exposed regardless of which century he lived in—he was also assailed by dangers specific to his *age*, and this distinction between constitutional dangers and the dangers of the age is essential if we are to understand what is exemplary and educational in Schopenhauer's nature. Let us imagine the philosopher's eye trained on existence; he seeks to establish its value anew. For it has always been the peculiar task of great thinkers to be legislators of the measure, mint, and weight of things. He cannot help but be severely hindered in this task if that humanity upon which he first sets his eyes is but a feeble, worm-eaten fruit! How much supplementary value he must add to the worthlessness of the present age in order to do justice to existence at all! If occupation with the histories of past or foreign peoples is of value, then it is of most value to the philosopher who seeks to pronounce a valid judgment on the entire fate of humanity—that is, not just on the average fate, but above all on the highest fate that can befall an individual human being or an entire people. But the present is importunate: it affects and conditions one's eye, even if the philosopher does not want it to; and in the final reckoning it is unintentionally overvalued. That is why the philosopher must evaluate his own age by contrasting it with others, and by overcoming the present for himself—even with regard to the picture he draws of life—overcome the present—that is, make it unnoticeable, paint over it, as it were. This is a difficult, indeed, scarcely achievable task. The judgment of ancient Greek philosophers about the value of existence says so much more than a modern judgment because the former had life in its sumptuous perfection before and around them, and because for them the sensibility of the thinker was not caught, as it is for us, between the desire for freedom, beauty, and greatness of life, and the drive for truth that asks only: "Of what value is existence at all?" It remains important for all ages to know

what Empedocles, who lived in the context of a Greek culture that evinced the most powerful and exuberant lust for life, said about existence; his judgment weighs very heavily, especially since it is not contradicted by a single counterjudgment
 5 made by any other great philosopher of the same time. He only expresses this most clearly, but basically they all say the same thing—at least if we open our ears and listen a little. As I said, a modern thinker will always suffer from an unfulfilled desire: he will demand that one first show him life, genuine, red-
 10 blooded, healthy life, so that he might then pass judgment on it. At least for himself he will think it necessary to be a living human being before he will believe himself capable of being a just judge. This is the reason why especially the modern philosophers are among the most powerful promoters of life, of
 15 the will to life, and why they long not only for release from their own, exhausted age, but for a culture, for a transfigured *physis*. But this longing is also their *danger*: within them the reformer of life and the philosopher—that is, the judge of life—are in conflict. Regardless of which one is victorious, it is a
 20 victory that will involve a defeat. Now, how is it that Schopenhauer avoided this danger?

If every great human being prefers to be viewed as the true child of his age and, at any rate, suffers more severely and with greater sensitivity from its ailments than do all the lesser human
 25 beings, then the struggle of such a great person *against* his age appears to be nothing but a senseless and destructive struggle against himself. But indeed, it only appears to be so, for in his age he struggles against what prevents him from being great, and for him that simply means: from being free and entirely
 30 himself. From this it follows that his hostility is fundamentally directed at something that is a part of himself, but that is not actually his true self, against the impure confusion and co-existence of uncombinable and eternally irreconcilable things, against the false fusion of what in this age is fashionable with
 35 his unfashionableness; and ultimately the alleged child of his age turns out to be merely its *stepchild*. Thus, from his earliest

youth Schopenhauer struggled against that false, vain, and unworthy mother, his age, and by banishing her from himself, as it were, he purified and healed his own being and recovered all the health and purity that were properly his. That is why Schopenhauer's writings should be used as mirrors of the age, and it certainly is not attributable to a flaw in the mirror if, when viewed in it, everything fashionable in this age appears only as a disfiguring sickness, as leanness and pallor, as sunken eyes and worn features, as the recognizable maladies of the stepchild. The longing for a strong nature, for healthy and simple humanity, was for him a longing for himself, and once he had conquered his age in himself, he could not help but perceive with amazement the genius that dwelled within him. The secret of his being had now been revealed to him, the intention of his stepmotherly age to conceal this genius from him was thwarted, the realm of transfigured *physis* was discovered. If at this moment he turned his fearless eye to the question: "Of what value is life at all?" then he no longer had to condemn a confused and pallid age and its hypocritically obscure life. He well knew that there were higher and purer things on this earth to discover and to achieve than such a fashionable life, and that anyone who knows and evaluates existence only in this ugly guise does it grave injustice. No, genius itself is now called upon to hear whether this, the supreme fruit of life, can perhaps justify life as such. The marvelous, creative human being is supposed to answer the question: "Do *you* affirm this existence from the bottom of your heart? Are you willing to be its advocate, its savior? For all it takes is one single truthful 'Yes!' from your mouth — and life, now facing such grave accusations, will be set free." How will he answer? — The answer given by Empedocles.

4

Let this last hint remain uncomprehended for the time being; I shall now turn to something very comprehensible, namely, to an explanation of how with Schopenhauer's help all of us

can educate ourselves *against* our age—since we have the advantage of truly *knowing* this age through him. That is, if this really is an advantage! In any event, a few centuries from now it may no longer be at all possible. I find the thought amusing
5 that some day soon human beings will be fed up with reading, and with writers as well, that some day the scholar will come to his senses, write his testament, and ordain that his corpse be burned along with his books, especially his own writings. And if the forests should ever become increasingly sparse, might
10 not the time come when libraries should be treated as firewood, straw, and kindling? After all, most books are the products of smoking brains, so they might just as well revert to smoke again. And if there was no fire in them, then they should be punished for this by fire. Thus it would be possible that a later
15 century would regard our era as a *saeculum obscurum*, because its products served to keep the furnaces burning longest. In that case, how fortunate we are to have been able to know this age of ours. After all, if it makes any sense at all for someone to occupy himself with his age, then it is in any event good fortune
20 if he can occupy himself with it as thoroughly as possible, so that he no longer has any doubts whatsoever about it. And this is precisely what Schopenhauer enables us to do.—

Of course, this good fortune would be a hundred times greater if this investigation were to reveal that a period as proud
25 and full of hope as our own had never existed. Now, at the moment there are in fact naive people in some corners of this earth—say, in Germany—who are ready to believe something of this sort, indeed, who in all seriousness declare that a few years ago the world underwent a correction, and that anyone
30 who might harbor grave and gloomy misgivings about existence is contradicted by the “facts.” For, in their minds, this is how things stand: the founding of the new German empire represents the decisive and devastating blow against all “pessimistic” philosophizing—and for them this is simply undeniable.
35 —Now, anyone who seeks to answer the question of what the philosopher as educator means in our age is forced to find

a retort to this extremely widespread opinion, an opinion that is particularly cultivated in our universities. And here is our retort: It is a shame and an affront that such nauseating flattery of the idols of the age can be expressed and repeated by so-called thoughtful and respectable people—proof that we no longer have any inkling of the gulf that separates the earnestness of philosophy from the earnestness of a newspaper. Such people have forfeited the last remnant not only of their philosophical, but also of their religious sensibilities, and have traded them away not so much for optimism as for journalism, the wit and dimwit of the day and the dailies. Any philosophy that believes that the problem of existence can be altered or solved by a political event is a sham and pseudophilosophy. Many states have been founded since the beginning of the world; this is an old story. How could a political innovation possibly be sufficient to make human beings once and for all into contented dwellers on this earth? But if there is anyone who truly believes that this is possible, he should make himself heard, for he truly deserves to become a professor of philosophy at a German university, like Harms in Berlin, Jürgen Meyer in Bonn, and Carrière in Munich.

Here, however, we are experiencing the consequences of that dogma that has of late been preached from all the rooftops, a dogma that asserts that the state is the highest aim of humanity and that a man can have no higher duty than service to the state. In this dogma I see a relapse not so much into paganism as into stupidity. It may be the case that a man who sees in service to the state his highest duty in fact knows no higher duty; but there are, nonetheless, other men and other duties—and one of these duties, one that I, at least, consider to be higher than service to the state, calls upon us to eradicate stupidity in all its manifestations, this one included. That is why I have concerned myself here with the type of men whose teleology points beyond the well-being of a state, that is, with philosophers, and with these only in respect to a world that, for its part, is quite independent of the well-being of the state: the world of culture.

Of the many interconnecting rings that constitute the human community, some are of gold and others of fool's gold.

How, then, does the philosopher view the culture of our age? Very differently, of course, than those philosophy professors who take satisfaction in their state. When the philosopher
5 thinks of the universal haste and accelerating tempo of decline, of the disappearance of all contemplation and simplicity, it almost seems to him as if he were seeing the symptoms of a total extirpation and uprooting of culture. The floodwaters of
10 religion are receding and leaving behind swamps or stagnant pools; nations are once again drawing away from each other in the most hostile manner and long to massacre each other. The various fields of learning, pursued without moderation and with an attitude of blind *laissez-faire*, are dissecting and
15 dissolving all firm beliefs; the educated classes and states are being swept away by a grandly contemptible monetary economy. Never has the world been more worldly, never has it been poorer in love and goodness. The educated classes are no longer lighthouses or havens in these agitated seas of secular-
20 ization; they themselves become more agitated, mindless, and loveless with each passing day. Everything stands in the service of approaching barbarism, contemporary art and science included. The cultivated person has degenerated into the greatest enemy of cultivation, for he employs lies to deny the general
25 malaise, and he thereby interferes with the work of the physicians. They become embittered, these poor decrepit rascals, if one speaks of their weakness and opposes their pernicious mendacity. They would only too gladly have us believe that they have outpaced all other centuries, and so they move about
30 with affected gaiety. But there is nevertheless something gripping about their manner of simulating happiness, since their happiness is so absolutely impossible to grasp. We are not even tempted to ask them, as Tannhäuser asks Bitterolf: "What pleasure have you ever enjoyed, poor thing?" For alas, we know
35 better, we know otherwise. A winter's day is upon us, and we live high up in the mountains, in peril and in need. Every joy

is short-lived, and every ray of sunshine that creeps down to us from the white mountains is pale. Then music sounds, an old man cranks a hurdy-gurdy, the dancers twirl—at the sight of this the wanderer is deeply moved; everything was so wild, so isolated, so bleak, so hopeless, and now suddenly there is a sound of joy, of pure, thoughtless joy! But already the early evening fog creeps in, the sound dies out, the wanderer's footsteps crunch in the snow; for as far as his eye can see, he perceives only the desolate and cruel face of nature.

10 However, if it is one-sided to stress in the picture of modern life only the faintness of its lines and the dullness of its colors, its other side is by no means more pleasing; if anything, it is only more disquieting. True, there are forces present, tremendous, but wild, primal, and completely pitiless forces. We
15 look upon them with anxious anticipation, as upon a cauldron full of witches' brew: at any moment it might spark and flash, announcing horrible apparitions. For a century now we have been anticipating radical upheavals, and if recently attempts have been made to oppose to this most profound of all modern
20 tendencies—the tendency to implode or explode—the constitutive force of the so-called nation-state, then for a long time to come this state will bring with it nothing but an increase in the general insecurity and apprehension. We are not deceived by the fact that individuals act as though they knew nothing of
25 these concerns; their disquiet demonstrates just how well aware of them they are. They think of themselves with a haste and exclusiveness with which human beings never before thought of themselves; they build and sow for their own day; and the pursuit of happiness is never greater than when the quarry must
30 be caught between today and tomorrow—because the day after tomorrow the hunting season may end forever. We live in the age of the atom, the age of atomic chaos. In the Middle Ages inimical forces were more or less held together and to some extent assimilated to one another by the church and the strong
35 pressure it exerted. When this bond tears and the pressure subsides, each of these forces rises up against the others. The Ref-

ormation declared many things to be *adiaphora*, to be domains in which religion should not hold sway; this was the price at which it bought its own existence—just as Christianity, confronted with the far more religious world of antiquity, had to
5 pay a similar price in order to guarantee its own existence. From this point on, the gulf has steadily widened. Today almost everything on earth is determined only by the crudest and most evil forces, by the egoism of the moneymakers and by military despots. In the hands of the latter, the state does indeed attempt,
10 as does the egoism of the moneymakers, to organize everything anew out of itself and provide a bond that will hold those inimical forces in check. That is, the state wants people to worship in it the very same idols they previously worshipped in the church. With what degree of success? This is something we have yet to
15 find out. But today, in any event, we still find ourselves in the ice-filled stream of the Middle Ages: it has begun to thaw and is rushing on with devastating power. Ice floe is piled upon ice floe, all shores are being flooded and threatened. The revolution—the atomic revolution—cannot possibly be avoided;
20 what are the smallest indivisible elements of human society?

There can be no doubt that humanity is almost more imperiled during the approach of such eras than it is during the collapse and the chaotic whirlwind itself, and that the fearful anticipation and greedy exploitation of the moment call forth
25 every form of cowardice and every selfish impulse of the soul, whereas a real crisis, and especially a great universal crisis, tends to make human beings better and more warm hearted. Given the dangers threatening our age, who, then, will pledge his services as sentinel and champion of *humanity*, to watch over
30 the inalienable, sacred treasures amassed by such diverse generations? Who will erect the *image of the human being* at a time when all others sense in themselves only the selfish worm and a bovine fear, and have for this reason fallen from that image into bestiality or even into robotic automatism?

35 There are three images of the human being that our modern age has set up, one after the other, and whose contemplation

will probably spur mortals on to a transfiguration of their own lives for quite some time: these are Rousseau's human being, Goethe's human being, and finally Schopenhauer's human being. Of these three, the first possesses the greatest fire and is assured of attaining the greatest popular effect; the second is made for only a few, for those who are contemplative thinkers in the grand style, and it is misunderstood by the masses. The third demands as its beholders the most active human beings: they are the only ones who will be able to look at it without harm, for it debilitates the contemplative and frightens off the masses. The first exerted a force that incited and still incites to violent revolutions, for in the instances of all socialist upheavals and tremors, it is always Rousseau's human being that is doing the shaking, like old Typhon beneath Mount Etna. Oppressed and half-crushed by arrogant classes and merciless wealth, ruined by priests and bad education, humiliated in his own eyes by ridiculous customs, the human being calls out in his time of need to "holy nature" and suddenly realizes that it is as remote from him as any Epicurean god. He has sunk so deep into the chaos of the unnatural that nature no longer hears his prayers. He derisively throws off all his fanciest finery—his arts and sciences, the advantages of his refined lifestyle—which only a short time earlier had seemed his most human possessions; he beats his fists against the wall in whose shadow he has degenerated, and he cries out for light, sunshine, forests, and mountains. And when he shouts: "Only nature is good; only the natural human being is human," he despises himself and yearns to transcend himself: a mood in which the soul is prepared to make frightful decisions, but in which it also summons from out of its depths the most noble and rare powers.

Goethe's human being is no such threatening power; indeed, in a certain sense he is actually the corrective and sedative for precisely those dangerous excitations to which Rousseau's human being is exposed. In his youth Goethe himself clung with all his loving heart to the gospel of the goodness of nature; his Faust was the supreme and boldest likeness of Rousseau's

human being, at least insofar as he portrayed his hunger for life, his discontentedness and longing, his acquaintance with the demons of the heart. But just look at what is produced by all these gathering clouds—certainly no lightning! And with this the
5 new image of the human being, the Goethean human being, is revealed. One might think that Faust is led through a life that is oppressed on all sides as a rebel and liberator, as the negating force composed of goodness, as the authentic religious and demonic genius of revolution, as it were; in this he stands in sharp
10 contrast to his thoroughly undemonic companion, despite the fact that he could not rid himself of this companion and hence simultaneously had to make use of and disdain the latter's skeptical malice and negation—as is in keeping with the tragic fate of all rebels and liberators. But we are mistaken if we expect
15 something of this sort; in this, Goethe's human being diverges from Rousseau's human being, for he hates all violence, every sudden leap—but that means: every action. Hence Faust the world liberator merely becomes a world traveler. All domains of life and of nature, all past ages, all arts, mythologies, and
20 sciences see the insatiable viewer fly past them; the deepest desire is aroused and then satisfied, even Helen does not hold his fascination very long—and then the moment for which his mocking companion has secretly been waiting must come. At some arbitrary place on earth the flight ends, his wings fall
25 off, Mephistopheles is at hand. When the German ceases to be Faust, there is no greater danger than that he will become a philistine and fall into the hands of the devil—and from this only heavenly powers can save him. Goethe's human being, as I said, is the contemplative human being in the grand style, who
30 manages to keep from dissipating on this earth only by gathering for his own nourishment everything great and memorable that ever existed, and so he lives, if yet only a life that leads from one desire to the next. He is not the active human being; on the contrary, if he enters at any point into the existing
35 orders of active human beings, we can be certain that nothing significant will come of it—just as nothing significant came

of Goethe's passion for the theater. Above all, we can be certain that no "order" will be overthrown. The Goethean human being is a conserving and conciliatory force—but one exposed to the danger, as I have said, of degenerating into a philistine, just as Rousseau's human being can easily become a Catilinarian. If the former had a little more muscle and natural wildness, all his virtues would be greater. It appears that Goethe was aware of the danger and weakness of his human being, and he hints at it in Jarno's words to Wilhelm Meister: "You are annoyed and bitter, and that is fine and good; but if for once you would only get really angry, that would be better still."

Thus, to be quite frank, it is necessary for us to get really angry for once in order for things to get better. And the image of Schopenhauer's human being ought to encourage us in this.

The Schopenhauerian human being voluntarily takes upon himself the suffering inherent in truthfulness, and this suffering serves to extinguish his individual will and to prepare the way for that complete revolution and reversal in his being whose achievement is the true meaning of life. This outspoken truthfulness appears to other human beings as an outpouring of malice, for they consider the preservation of their insufficiencies and lies to be a duty of humankind, and they believe that anyone who wrecks their games must be malicious. They are tempted to shout out to such a person what Faust said to Mephistopheles: "To the eternally active, healing, creative power you oppose the cold fist of the devil." And anyone who wanted to live in a Schopenhauerian manner would probably resemble Mephistopheles more than he would Faust—at least to myopic modern eyes, which always see in negation the mark of evil. But there is a kind of negating and destroying that is nothing other than the outpouring of that powerful longing for sanctification and salvation, and Schopenhauer appeared among us desanctified and truly secularized human beings as the first philosophical teacher of this principle. All existence that can be negated deserves to be negated, and to be truthful means to believe in an existence that could not possibly be negated and that is itself

true and without falsehood. That is why the truthful person senses that the meaning of his activity is metaphysical, something that is explicable only by the laws of another, higher life, one that is in the most profound sense affirmative — regardless
5 of how much everything he does appears as the destruction and violation of the laws of this life. In this respect, his actions cannot help but become constant suffering, but he knows, like Meister Eckhart, that “the creature that will bear you most swiftly to perfection is suffering.” I should think that anyone
10 who focused on giving his life such a direction would feel his heart expand, and that it would arouse in him the desire to become such a Schopenhauerian human being: that is, to be pure and remarkably composed with regard to himself and his own personal well-being, to be, in his pursuit of knowl-
15 edge, filled with a fierce, consuming fire and far removed from the cold and contemptible neutrality of the so-called scholarly human being, to be high above all sullen and irksome reflection, always sacrificing himself as the first victim of recognized truth, and profoundly permeated with an awareness of the sufferings that must necessarily result from his truthfulness. To be
20 sure, his own courage destroys his earthly happiness; he must be hostile to the human beings whom he loves, to the institutions from whose womb he has sprung; he cannot spare either human beings or things, even though he suffers with them in
25 their injuries; he will be mistaken for, and long considered to be, the ally of powers that he abhors; due to the human limitations of his insight, he will necessarily be unjust, no matter how hard he strives for justice. But he can encourage and console himself with the words that Schopenhauer, his great educator,
30 once used: “A happy life is impossible: the highest thing that a human being can attain is a *heroic life*. This sort of life is led by the person who, in whatever manner and for whatever reason, struggles against overwhelming odds for something that in some way will benefit all, who in the end is victorious, and who
35 receives for this little or no reward. So that in the end he finds himself turned to stone, like the prince in Gozzi’s *Re corvo*, but

in a noble stance and with a gesture of generosity. His memory remains and is celebrated like that of a hero; his will, mortified throughout his entire life by toil and trouble, lack of success, and the ingratitude of the world, is extinguished in Nirvana.”

5 Such a heroic life, complete with the mortification accomplished in it, has, of course, little to do with the inadequate conception of it held by those who sound off most about it, who celebrate festivals in memory of great people, and who believe that the great person is simply great, just as they are small,

10 as though greatness were a gift, as it were, designed for their own enjoyment, or as if it were produced by a mechanism and responded with blind obedience to this inner compulsion—so that those who have not received this gift or do not feel this compulsion have the same right to be small as the great person

15 has to be great. But to receive gifts or be compelled—these are contemptible words with which one tries to escape an inner admonition, they are insults for anyone who has listened to this admonition, that is, for the great human being. He is the last one to accept gifts or let himself be compelled—he knows just

20 as well as every small person how to make his life easy and how soft the bed is on which he could lie if he were to treat himself and his fellow human beings in a courteous and conventional manner, for all human arrangements are put together in such a way that they constantly distract one to the point that life is

25 not *felt*. Why does he so keenly desire the opposite, namely, to feel life, which means to suffer from life? Because he realizes that others would like to cheat him of himself, and that a kind of conspiracy exists to lure him out of his own cave. He resists this, pricks up his ears, and decides: “I want to remain my own

30 person!” It is a terrible decision; he grasps this only gradually. For now he must descend into the depths of existence with a series of unusual questions on his lips: “Why am I alive? What lesson is life supposed to teach me? How did I become what I am, and why do I suffer from being what I am?” He tor-

35 ments himself, and he sees that no one else torments himself in this way, but that instead the hands of his fellow human

beings reach out passionately for those fantastic events being played on the stage of politics, or how they themselves strut about in a hundred different disguises, as youths, young men, old men, fathers, citizens, priests, officials, and merchants, all
5 entirely preoccupied with their common comedy and not with themselves in the least. All of them would quickly answer the question: "What is the purpose of your life?" with the proud answer: "*To become* a good citizen, or scholar, or statesman." And yet *they are* something, something that can never become
10 something else. And why are they precisely this? And alas, why not something better? Anyone who conceives his life merely as a point in the evolution of a race or a state or a field of knowledge, and who therefore seeks to integrate himself completely into the history of becoming, into history, has not learned the
15 lesson taught to him by existence and must learn it at some other time. This eternal becoming is a deceitful puppet play over which human beings forget themselves, a true distraction that disperses the individual to the four winds, an endless and silly game that Time, the great child, plays for us and with us.
20 That heroism of truthfulness consists in one day ceasing to be its plaything. Everything that is in the process of becoming is empty, deceitful, flat, and worthy of our contempt; the riddle that the human being is supposed to solve can be solved only in being, in being what he is and not in being something else,
25 in the immutable. Now he begins to test how deeply he is rooted in becoming, how deeply in being — an enormous task arises before his soul: to destroy all becoming, to bring to light everything that is false in things. He, too, wants to know everything, but he wants this in a different way from the Goethean
30 human being, not for the sake of a noble delicacy so that he can preserve himself and take pleasure in the diversity of things; on the contrary, he himself is the first sacrifice that he offers. The heroic human being disdains his own prosperity or hardship, his own virtues and vices, and in general the measuring of
35 things according to his own standard; he expects nothing more of himself and wants to penetrate all things down to this foun-

dation that is without expectation. His strength lies in his self-oblivion, and when he thinks of himself, he measures the distance between himself and his lofty goal, and it seems to him as though he has nothing but an unsightly cinder heap behind and
 5 beneath him. The ancient thinkers sought happiness and truth with all their strength — but what must be sought can never be found: this is the malicious law of nature. But anyone who seeks truthlessness in all things and voluntarily allies himself with unhappiness will perhaps experience another miracle of disillu-
 10 sionment: something inexpressible approaches him, something of which happiness and truth are merely idolatrous imitations; the earth loses its gravity, the events and ruling powers of the earth become dreamlike, a transfiguring radiance spreads out around him as on summer evenings. To the viewer it seems as
 15 though he has only now begun to wake up and as if the cloudy wisps of a fading dream were just playing around him. These, too, will someday be dispersed: and then it will be day. —

5

But I promised, on the basis of my experience, to depict
 20 Schopenhauer as *educator*, and hence it is by no means enough for me to paint a picture, and an inadequate one, at that, of that ideal human being who, as his Platonic Idea, as it were, holds sway in and around Schopenhauer. But the most difficult task still remains: to describe how we can derive a new set of
 25 duties from this ideal, and how we can get in touch with such an ambitious goal on the basis of regulated activity: in short, to demonstrate that this ideal *educates*. Otherwise we might suppose that it is nothing but an enrapturing, indeed intoxicating, vision that grants us individual moments only to let us down all
 30 the more immediately afterward and deliver us over to an even deeper sense of disheartenment. It is also certain that we will *begin* our association with this ideal *in this way*, with these sudden alternations between light and darkness, intoxication and disgust, and that in this respect we are repeating an experience
 35 that has been around as long as there have been ideals. How-

ever, we should no longer remain standing on the threshold, but proceed quickly past the initial stage. And we must therefore ask, seriously and resolutely: Is it possible to bring that incredibly lofty goal so near to us that it will educate us while
5 drawing us upward?—so that in us those great words of Goethe will not be proved true: “The human being is born into a limited situation; he is capable of understanding simple, near, and definite goals, and he grows accustomed to using the means that are immediately available to him; but as soon as he goes
10 beyond these limits, he knows neither what he wants nor what he ought to do, and it makes no difference whether he is distracted by the multitude of objects or whether he is transported beyond himself by their loftiness and dignity. He is always unhappy when he is forced to strive for something with which he
15 cannot get in touch on the basis of a regulated, self-initiated activity.” This objection might appear to have a certain justification when raised against the Schopenhauerian human being: his loftiness and dignity are only able to transport us beyond ourselves, thereby transporting us once again outside any com-
20 munity of active people; the coherence of duties, the stream of life vanish. Perhaps someone may eventually accustom himself despondently to self-division and to living by a double standard, that is, to living in conflict with himself, uncertain both here and there, and hence becoming weaker and less fruitful by
25 the day, whereas someone else principally refuses to act in concert with others and scarcely even notices when others act. The dangers are always great when things are made too difficult for people and when they are unable to *fulfill* any duties: stronger natures can be destroyed by it; weaker natures—the more
30 numerous ones—sink into a contemplative laziness and ultimately even forfeit out of laziness their ability to contemplate.

Now, in reply to such objections I am willing to admit that our work here has barely just begun, and that based on my own experiences I perceive and know only one thing for sure: that
35 starting from that ideal image it is possible to impose upon you and me a chain of fulfillable duties, and that some of us

already feel the weight of this chain. However, before I can state without hesitation the formula under which I would like to subsume this new set of duties, the following preliminary observations must be made.

5 Human beings of greater profundity have always felt compassion with animals precisely because they suffer from life and yet do not possess the strength to turn the sting of suffering against themselves and understand their existence metaphysically; indeed, the sight of senseless suffering arouses profound
10 indignation. That is why at more than one place on this earth the conjecture arose that the souls of guilt-laden human beings were trapped inside the bodies of these animals, and that that suffering whose senselessness at first glance arouses indignation acquires sense and significance as punishment and penance
15 when viewed against the backdrop of eternal justice. It is truly a harsh punishment to live in the manner of an animal, subject to hunger and desires, and yet without arriving at any insight into the nature of this life, and we can conceive of no harsher fate than that of the beast of prey, who is driven through the
20 desert by its gnawing torment, is seldom satisfied, and this only in such a way that this satisfaction turns into agony in the flesh-tearing struggle with other beasts, or from nauseating greediness and oversatiation. To cling so blindly and madly to life, for no higher reward, far from knowing that one is punished or why one is punished in this way, but instead to thirst
25 with the inanity of a horrible desire for precisely this punishment as though it were happiness—that is what it means to be an animal. And if all of nature presses onward toward the human being, then in doing so it makes evident that he is necessary for its salvation from animal existence and that in him,
30 finally, existence holds before itself a mirror in which life no longer appears senseless but appears, rather, in its metaphysical meaningfulness. But consider carefully: where does the animal cease, where does the human being begin! That human being
35 who is nature's sole concern! As long as someone desires life as he desires happiness, he has not elevated his gaze above the

horizon of the animal, the only difference being that he desires with more awareness what the animal craves out of blind instinct. But for the greatest part of our lives this is the way it is for all of us: usually we do not transcend animality, we ourselves are those creatures who seem to suffer senselessly.

But there are moments *when we understand this*; then the clouds break and we perceive how we, along with all of nature, are pressing onward toward the human being as toward something that stands high above us. In this sudden brightness we gaze with a shudder around and behind us: here the refined beasts of prey run, and we run in their midst. The tremendous mobility of human beings on the great earthly desert, their founding of cities and states, their waging of wars, their ceaseless gathering and dispersing, their confused mingling, their imitation of one another, their mutual outwitting and trampling underfoot, their cries in distress and their joyous cheers in victory—all this is a continuation of animality, as if human beings were intended to regress and be cheated out of their metaphysical disposition; indeed, as if nature, having yearned and labored for human beings for so long, now recoiled from them in fear and preferred to return to the unconsciousness of instinct. Alas, nature needs knowledge, and it is horrified at the knowledge it actually needs; and so the flame flickers unsteadily, trembling, as it were, out of fear of itself, and seizes upon a thousand things before seizing upon that thing on whose account nature needs knowledge at all. All of us know in individual moments how the most extensive arrangements of our own lives are made only in order to flee from our true task; how we like to hide our heads somewhere, as though our hundred-eyed conscience would not find us there; how we hasten to sell our soul to the state, to moneymaking, to social life, or to scholarship just so that we will no longer possess it; how even in our daily work we slave away without reflection and more ardently than is necessary to make a living because it seems to us more necessary not to stop and reflect. Haste is universal because everyone is fleeing from himself; universal, too, is the timid concealment

of this haste, because we want to appear satisfied and deceive the most perceptive observers about our wretchedness; universal, as well, the need for new-sounding word bells with which life can be adorned and lent an air of noisy festivity. Everyone
 5 is familiar with the peculiar state in which unpleasant memories suddenly force themselves upon us and we make an effort to drive them out of our heads by means of violent gestures and sounds; but the gestures and sounds of common life indicate that all of us always find ourselves in such a state of
 10 fear of memory and of turning inward. What is it that assails us so often, what mosquito is this that refuses to let us sleep? Ghostly things are occurring around us, every moment of life wants to tell us something, but we do not want to hear this ghostly voice. When we are quiet and alone we are afraid that
 15 something will be whispered into our ear, and hence we despise quiet and drug ourselves with sociability.

As I said, now and again we realize all of this and are quite astonished at all this dizzying fear and haste and at the entire dreamlike state of our life, which seems to dread awaken-
 20 ing and whose dreams become all the more vivid and restless the closer it comes to this awakening. But we simultaneously feel that we are too weak to endure those moments of deepest communion very long and that we are not those human beings toward which all of nature presses onward for its own
 25 salvation. It is already no small achievement that we can at least sometimes manage to lift our heads enough to notice the stream in which we are so deeply submerged. And we do not accomplish even this—this coming to the surface and awakening for a fleeting instant—by means of our own strength. We
 30 have to be lifted up, and who are those who lift us up?

They are those *human beings, those no-longer-animals, the philosophers, artists, and saints*; with their appearance and by means of their appearance, nature, which never leaps, takes its only leap; and it is a leap of joy, for it feels that for the first time
 35 it has arrived at its goal, arrived at that place where it realizes that it must unlearn its goals and that it staked too much on the

game of living and becoming. With this recognition, nature is transfigured, and a gentle weariness of evening—what human beings call “beauty”—spreads across its face. What it now expresses with these transfigured features is the great *enlightenment* about existence, and the supreme wish that mortals can wish is to participate constantly and with open ears in this enlightenment. When we think about everything Schopenhauer, for example, must have *heard* over the course of his life, then we may in retrospect say to ourselves: “Oh, these deaf ears of mine, this dull head, this flickering reason, this shriveled heart; oh, how I despise all that I call mine! Not to be able to fly, but only to flap one’s wings! To be able to look up beyond oneself and not be able to climb up beyond oneself! To know and nearly set foot on the path that leads to the immeasurably unobstructed view of the philosopher, only to come staggering back after a few steps! And if that greatest of all wishes were fulfilled for only one single day, how willingly we would give the rest of life in exchange for it! To climb as high as any thinker ever climbed into the icy purity of the alpine air, to that place where there is no longer any fog or mist and where the fundamental nature of things expresses itself, stark and unbending, but with unavoidable clarity! Just thinking about this the soul becomes lonely and infinite; but if its wish were fulfilled, if its gaze were once to fall precipitously and radiantly on things, like a ray of light, if shame, anxiety, and desire were to die out—what words could possibly describe the soul’s state, that new and enigmatic emotion without commotion with which it then, like Schopenhauer’s soul, would settle over the huge hieroglyphs of existence, over the petrified doctrine of becoming—not as a night, but rather as a radiant crimson light that streams out over the entire world. And what a fate, on the other hand, to have enough of an inkling of the peculiar definition and blessedness of the philosopher to sense all the definitionlessness and unblessedness of the nonphilosopher, he who desires without hope! To know that one is a fruit on a tree

that cannot ripen because there is too much shade, and yet to see close by the sunshine one lacks!"

This would be torment enough to make such a misgifted person envious and malicious — if he were even capable of envy
5 and malice. But in all probability he will ultimately turn his soul in another direction so that it does not consume itself in vain longing, and it is at this point that he will *discover* a new set of duties.

Having said this, I am now in a position to supply an answer
10 to the question posed earlier: whether it is possible to get in touch with the great ideal of the Schopenhauerian human being on the basis of a regulated, self-initiated activity. One thing, above all, is certain: those new duties are not the duties of a solitary individual; on the contrary, through them one is inte-
15 grated into a powerful community, one that, to be sure, is not held together by external forms and laws, but by a fundamental idea. This is the fundamental idea of *culture*, insofar as it is capable of charging each of us with one single task: *to foster the production of philosophers, artists, and saints within us and around us,*
20 *and thereby to work toward the perfection of nature.* For just as nature needs philosophers for a metaphysical purpose, so, too, it also needs artists; for the purpose of its own self-enlightenment, so that it might finally be presented with a pure and finished image of what, in the tumultuousness of its own becoming, it
25 never has the opportunity to see clearly — in short, for the purpose of its own self-recognition. It was Goethe who observed, with arrogant profundity, that all of nature's experiments are of value only insofar as the artist eventually divines its stammerings, meets nature halfway, and gives expression to what
30 it actually intends with these experiments. "I have often said," he once exclaimed, "and I will say it over and over again, that the *causa finalis* of worldly and human affairs is dramatic literature. For otherwise this stuff is of absolutely no use." And hence nature ultimately needs the saint, whose ego has entirely
35 melted away and whose life of suffering is no longer — or almost

no longer — felt individually, but only as the deepest feeling of equality, communion, and oneness with all living things; the saint, in whom that miracle of transformation occurs that the game of becoming never hits upon, that ultimate and supreme
5 becoming human toward which all of nature presses and drives onward for its own salvation. There can be no doubt that all of us are related and connected to this saint, just as we are related to the philosopher and the artist. There are moments and, as it were, sparks of the brightest, most ardent fire in whose
10 light we no longer understand the word “I”; there, beyond our being something exists that in those moments becomes a here and now, and that is why we long with all our hearts for bridges connecting the here and the there. Of course, in our customary state of mind we can contribute nothing to the production
15 of the redeeming human being, and we therefore *hate* ourselves when we are in this state of mind, a hate that is the root of that pessimism that Schopenhauer had again to teach to our age, but that is as old as the longing for culture itself. Its root, but not its flower; its foundation, but not its roof; the beginning
20 of its course, but not its goal, for at some point we have to learn to hate something else, something more universal, something other than our individuality and its wretched limitations, its changeability and turmoil, in that heightened state in which we will also love something other than what we are now able
25 to love. Only after, in our present or in some future incarnation, we have been taken up into that most sublime order of philosophers, artists, and saints will a new goal be established for our love and our hate. In the meantime, we have our task and our sphere of duties, our hate and our love. For we know
30 what culture is. When applied to the Schopenhauerian human being, it requires that we continually pave the way for and promote the production of this human being by discovering what is hostile to its development and sweeping it aside — in short, that we tirelessly fight against everything that, by preventing
35 us from becoming such Schopenhauerian human beings ourselves, robbed *us* of the supreme fulfillment of our existence. —

6

At times it is harder to concede something than it is to understand it, and this is exactly what most people may experience when they reflect on the proposition: "Humanity should work
5 ceaselessly toward producing great individuals—this and only this should be its task." How gladly we would apply to society and its aims a lesson that can be derived from the observation of every single species of animal and plant life, namely, that the only thing that matters is the superior individual specimen, the
10 more unusual, more powerful, more complex, more fruitful specimen—how gladly, that is, if inculcated delusions about the aim of society did not put up stubborn resistance! In fact, it is easy to understand that the goal of any species' evolution is that point at which it reaches its limit and begins the transition
15 to a higher species; its goal is not a large number of specimens and their well-being, nor is it those specimens that are the last to evolve. On the contrary, its goal is precisely those seemingly scattered and random existences that arise here and there under favorable conditions. And it should be just as easy to understand
20 the demand that because humanity is capable of attaining consciousness of its aim, it must search out and produce those favorable conditions in which those great, redeeming human beings can come into being. But I can scarcely imagine all the objections that can be raised against this conclusion: according
25 to some people, that ultimate aim is supposed to lie in the happiness of all or of the majority; others think that it is to be found in the development of great communities; and regardless of how quickly someone decides to sacrifice his life to, say, a state, the same person would be slow and hesitant to do so if
30 it were an individual rather than a state that demanded this sacrifice. It seems absurd that one human being should exist for the sake of another human being; "No, rather for the sake of all others, or at least for as many as possible!" But come now, my dear Mr. Commonman, as if it were less absurd to have
35 numbers decide where it is a matter of value and significance!

For surely the question is: How can your life, the life of the individual, obtain the highest value, the deepest significance? How is it least wasted? Surely only by living for the benefit of the rarest and most valuable specimens, not for the benefit of
5 the majority, that is, for the benefit of those who, taken as individuals, are the least valuable specimens. And it is precisely this attitude that should be planted and cultivated in every young person, so that he comes to understand himself as a miscarried work of nature, as it were, but simultaneously as testimony to
10 the greatest and most amazing intentions of this artist. "In my case nature did a bad job," he should tell himself, "but I shall pay tribute to its great intention by being at its service so that it might someday be more successful."

When he arrives at this resolve, he places himself within the
15 circle of *culture*, for culture is the child of every individual's self-knowledge and of dissatisfaction with himself. Everyone who professes his faith in culture in effect says: "I see something beyond myself that is loftier and more human than I am; help me, all of you, to achieve it, just as I will help each of you who
20 makes the same recognition and suffers from it, so that finally that human being might once again come into being who senses himself to be full and infinite in knowledge and love, in perception and ability, and who in his entire being is bound to and bound up with nature, as judge and measure of all things."
25 It is difficult to transport someone into this state of fearless self-knowledge because it is impossible to teach love, for only in love does the soul not only gain a clear, analytical, and contemptuous perspective on itself, but also that desire to look beyond itself and to search with all its might for a higher self that
30 lies hidden somewhere. Thus, only he who has his heart set on a great human being thereby receives the *first sacrament of culture*; its symptoms are being ashamed of oneself without distress, hatred of one's own shriveled narrowness, sympathy with the genius that always raised itself above this our dullness and barrenness, presentience for all that is in the process of becoming
35 and is struggling, and the innermost conviction of encounter-

ing almost everywhere nature in its need, in the way it presses onward toward the human being, how it painfully senses that its work has once again miscarried, and how it is everywhere nonetheless successful in producing the most amazing outlines, features, and forms, so that the human beings among whom we live are like a field strewn with the most precious fragments of sculptures, everything calling out: "Come! Help us! Complete us! Put together what belongs together! We have an immeasurable longing to become whole!"

10 I called this complex of inner states the first sacrament of culture; now, however, I have to depict the effects of the *second* sacrament, and I am well aware that here my task is more difficult. For now the transition has to be made from inner events to the assessment of external events; our gaze must turn out-
 15 ward in order to rediscover in the great, turbulent world that desire for culture with which it is familiar from these former, inner experiences; the individual is supposed to use his own struggles and longing as the alphabet with which he can now spell out the aspirations of human beings. But he cannot stop
 20 here: from this stage he must ascend to the next higher stage; culture demands of him not only those inner experiences, not only the assessment of the external world that surrounds him, but ultimately and primarily action; that is, it demands that he fight for culture and oppose those influences, habits, laws, and
 25 institutions in which he does not recognize his goal: the production of genius.

The person who is capable of raising himself to the second stage realizes first of all *how extraordinarily scant and rare the knowledge of that goal is*, how universal, by contrast, the striving for culture is, and how unspeakably large are the amounts of energy that are expended in its service. We ask ourselves in amazement: "Is such knowledge perhaps not necessary at all? Does nature achieve its goal even if the majority of people misconceive the aim of their own exertions?" Anyone who is accus-
 30 tomed to holding the unconscious purposiveness of nature in high regard will perhaps have no difficulty in answering: "Yes,

indeed, that's the way it is! Let human beings think and speak about their ultimate goal in any manner they wish; in their dark drive they are yet well aware of the proper path." In order to be able to refute this statement, one has to have experienced
5 quite a bit, but anyone who is truly convinced that the goal of culture is nothing other than to promote the emergence of true *human beings*, and who recognizes that even today, despite all the pomp and circumstance of culture, the emergence of those human beings is hardly distinguishable from an incessant
10 cruelty to animals—such a person will believe it very necessary that a conscious intention finally take the place of that "dark drive." And this for a second reason in particular: namely, so that it will no longer be possible to enlist that instinct that is uncertain about its goal—that celebrated dark drive—for other
15 aims and to lead it onto paths on which that supreme goal, the production of genius, can never be accomplished. For there is a kind of *misused and exploited culture*—just take a look around you! And precisely those powers that today most actively promote culture have ulterior motives, and they do not engage in
20 intercourse with it for pure and unselfish reasons.

There is, first of all, the *selfishness of the moneymakers*, who require the assistance of culture, and who gratefully offer their assistance in return, whereby, of course, they would at the same time like to dictate the goal and standards of culture. From
25 this quarter comes that popular doctrine whose chain of conclusions goes something like this: a maximum of knowledge and education; hence a maximum demand; hence maximum production; hence maximum profit and pleasure—so runs the seductive formula. Those who subscribe to this formula define
30 cultivation as the insight with which one becomes thoroughly fashionable in one's needs and in their satisfaction, but with which one at the same time takes control over all the ways and means, so as to make money in the easiest possible way. This cultivation would have the goal of creating as many "current"
35 human beings as possible, in the sense that one speaks of a coin being "current," and, according to this view, the more

such "current" human beings a people possesses, the happier it will be. That is why the aim of modern educational institutions should by all means be to help make everyone as "current" as his own nature will allow, to educate everyone in such a way
5 that he can obtain the maximum measure of pleasure and profit from the degree of knowledge and learning he possesses. The individual must, so the demand goes, be able on the basis of such general education to appraise himself exactly, so that he will know what demands he can make of life. And finally, it is
10 claimed that there exists a necessary alliance between "intelligence and property," between "wealth and culture," and that, what is more, this alliance is a *moral* necessity. Any kind of education that makes people lonely, that sets goals that go beyond money and acquisition, that takes a great amount of time,
15 is despised; one is accustomed to disparaging such forms of education as "refined egoism," as "immoral cultural Epicureanism." Of course, according to the morality that holds sway here, it is precisely the opposite that is held in esteem: namely, a speedy education so that one quickly becomes a moneymaker,
20 yet one that is thorough enough to make it possible to become a moneymaker who can rake in immense sums. The human being is granted only as much culture as is in the interest of universal moneymaking and world commerce, but this much is also required of him: briefly put, "The human being has a
25 necessary claim to earthly happiness, and that is the reason — but the only reason — why education is necessary!"

Second, there is the *selfishness of the state*, which likewise desires the maximum dissemination and generalization of culture and has in its hands the most effective tools for satisfying its
30 desires. Provided that the state is confident that it is strong enough not only to liberate, but also to impose its yoke at the proper moment, provided that its foundation is stable and broad enough to support the entire edifice of cultivation, then it is the state alone, in its competition with other states, that
35 profits from the dissemination of cultivation among its citizens. Wherever there is talk these days of the "cultured state,"

it is viewed as being charged with the task of liberating the intellectual energies of a generation to the extent—but only to that extent—that they can serve and be of use to existing institutions. In this sense it is like a forest stream that is partially
5 diverted by means of dams and sluices so that its diminished energy can drive mills—whereas its full energy would be more dangerous than useful to the mill. This liberating is at the same time, and to a greater degree, a shackling. One need only remind oneself what has gradually become of Christianity under
10 the selfishness of the state. Christianity is certainly one of the purest manifestations of that drive for culture, and especially of that drive for the ever-renewed production of the saint, but since it was used in a hundred ways to drive the mills of state power, it gradually became sick to the very marrow, hypocritical
15 and dishonest, until it degenerated to the point of standing in contradiction to its original goal. Even its final event, the German Reformation, would have been nothing but a sudden and quickly extinguished flare-up if it had not borrowed fresh fuel and flames from the struggle and conflagration of the
20 nation-states.

Third, culture is demanded by all those who are conscious of an *ugly or boring content* and who want to disguise it behind what is called “*beautiful form*.” On the basis of what is external—through words, gestures, ornament, display, mannerisms—the
25 viewer is supposed to be forced to draw a false conclusion about the content, under the assumption that we usually judge the internal by the external. Sometimes it seems to me that modern human beings are infinitely bored with one another, and that they are ultimately forced to make themselves interesting with the aid of all kinds of art and artifice. So they
30 allow their artists to serve them up as piquant and spicy dishes, they douse themselves with all the spices of the Orient and the Occident, and, to be sure, they do then have a very interesting aroma indeed, one that combines all the smells of the
35 Orient and the Occident. They prepare themselves to please every palate; and there’s something for everyone, regardless of

whether he has a hankering for the fragrant or foul-smelling, for sublimity or peasantlike coarseness, for Greek or Chinese cuisine, for tragic drama or dramatized trash. The most celebrated chefs for these modern human beings who want to be
5 interesting and interested no matter what the cost are to be found, as we know, among the French, while the worst are to be found among the Germans. This provides greater solace for the latter than for the former, and we should not hold it against the French when they scoff at us for being uninteresting
10 and inelegant, and when the longing of some Germans for elegance and manners reminds them of the Indian who wishes to have a ring through his nose and clamors to be tattooed.

— At this point I cannot resist indulging in a digression. Since the last war with France many things in Germany have
15 changed or shifted, and it is obvious that we have also brought home with us some new wishes with regard to German culture. For many, that war was their first trip into the more elegant half of the world; what better way for the victor to appear unprejudiced than by not disdaining to learn some culture from those
20 he has vanquished! Craftspeople, in particular, are constantly being encouraged to compete with our cultivated neighbor; the German house is to be furnished and decorated in a way similar to the French house; by means of an academy founded along the lines of the French model, even the German language is
25 supposed to acquire “sound taste” and rid itself of the dubious influence exerted upon it by Goethe—according to a recent pronouncement by the Berlin academician Dubois-Reymond. For some time now our theaters have been pursuing discreetly and with dignity the very same objective; even the elegant Ger-
30 man scholar has already been invented—and we can certainly expect that everything that up to now refused to submit to that law of elegance—German music, tragedy, and philosophy—will now be written off as un-German.— But truly, it would not be worth lifting a finger on behalf of German culture if the
35 German saw the culture he still lacks but still intends to acquire as nothing but arts and artifices—including all the ingenuity

of the dance master and the wallpaper hanger — which are intended only to prettify life, or if in his language he sought only to pay attention to academically sanctioned norms and a certain tone of general gentility. But the last war and the personal
5 comparison with the French hardly seems to have called forth any loftier aspirations; on the contrary, I am often seized by the suspicion that the German is now anxious to escape those ancient obligations imposed upon him by his wonderful talent, his peculiar natural inclination for seriousness and profundity.
10 For once he would prefer to play the role of the buffoon or the ape; he would prefer to learn those arts and manners that make life entertaining. But I can conceive of no greater insult to the German spirit than to treat it as though it were so much wax, so that one day it might be able to be molded into the shape of ele-
15 gance. And if it is unfortunately true that a large proportion of Germans would like to be shaped and formed in this manner, then until they have finally listened to us we should not cease to tell them: “That ancient German spirit no longer dwells in you. To be sure, it is hard, harsh, and resistant, but it is made
20 of the most precious material, one with which only the greatest sculptors are permitted to work, because they alone are worthy of it. By contrast, you are made of a soft, doughy material; make out of it whatever you choose, create with it elegant puppets and interesting idols — Richard Wagner’s words will still
25 remain true: “The German is awkward and clumsy when he tries to be genteel; but he is sublime and superior to all when he catches fire.” And elegant people have good reason to beware of this German fire, for otherwise it might devour them some day, along with all their puppets and idols made of wax. — Of
30 course, one could derive the inclination for “beautiful form” that is getting the upper hand in Germany from different and deeper sources: from that haste, that breathless seizing of the moment, that impatience that plucks all fruits from the branch when they are still too green, from the rat race and chasing
35 that now cuts furrows into people’s faces and places its tattoo, as it were, upon everything they do. The tortured slaves of the

three M's, Moment, Majority Opinion, and Modishness, they storm about in indecent anxiety as though they were under the influence of a potion that no longer lets them breath easily. The resulting lack of dignity and propriety makes itself all too
5 painfully evident, so that now a deceitful elegance becomes necessary to disguise the disease of this undignified haste. For this is how the modish greed for beautiful form is connected with the ugly content of the contemporary human being: the former is supposed to conceal, the latter supposed to be concealed. To be cultivated now means not to let others notice
10 how wretched and base one is, how predatory in striving, how insatiable in acquiring, how selfish and shameless in enjoying. When I point out to people the absence of a German culture, I have frequently met with the objection: "But this absence is
15 wholly natural, for up to now the Germans have been too poor and modest. Just let our fellow countrymen become rich and self-confident for once, and then they will also have a culture!" Even though faith is supposed to bring happiness, *this particular* kind of faith makes me unhappy, because I sense that the
20 German culture in whose future one thereby expresses faith—a culture of wealth, of polish, and of genteel dissimulation—is the most hostile antithesis to that German culture in which I have faith. To be sure, anyone who has to live among Germans suffers horribly under the infamous drabness of their lives
25 and their senses, under their formlessness, their dumbness and numbness, their coarseness in delicate relations, and even more under their envy and a certain furtiveness and uncleanliness of character. He is pained and insulted by their inveterate pleasure in the false and counterfeit, in the badly imitated, in the translation of good foreign things into bad native ones. But if we
30 now add to this their worst afflictions—that feverish restlessness, that pursuit of success and profit, that overestimation of the moment—it arouses one's unmitigated indignation to think that all these diseases and weaknesses can never principally be
35 cured, but always only cosmetically covered over—by just such a "culture of interesting form"! And this from a people that

produced *Schopenhauer* and *Wagner*! And is supposed to continue producing such people in the future! Or are we merely deceiving ourselves in the most pitiful way? Perhaps the aforementioned men no longer offer any guarantee whatsoever that
5 strengths such as theirs are still present in the German mind and spirit? Is it possible that they are just exceptions, the last sprigs and offshoots, as it were, of qualities that were once considered German? At this point I must confess that I am baffled, and I therefore return to the course of my general observations,
10 from which my troubling doubts have often enough sought to distract me. I have not yet enumerated all those powers that promote culture without, however, being able to realize its goal, the production of genius. I already named three: the selfishness of the moneymakers, the selfishness of the state, and
15 the selfishness of all those who have reason to disguise and conceal themselves behind form. I cite, fourth, *the selfishness of scholarship* and the peculiar nature of its servants, the *scholars*.

Scholarship is to wisdom what virtuousness is to holiness: it is cold and dry, it has no love, and it has no deep feeling of inadequacy and longing. Scholarship is just as beneficial to itself
20 as it is harmful to its servants, insofar as it imposes on them its own character and thereby ossifies their humanity. As long as culture is understood to be the promotion of scholarship, it passes by the great suffering human being with cold and pitiless
25 indifference, because everywhere scholarship looks it always sees only problems of knowledge, and because in the world of scholarship, suffering is actually something irrelevant and incomprehensible, which is to say, at most just another problem.

But just let someone first accustom himself to translating
30 every experience into a dialectical game of question and answer and into a purely intellectual matter; it is amazing how short a time it takes for a human being involved in such activity to wither up, for him to be reduced to a rattling skeleton. Everyone knows and perceives this; how, then, is it possible that, in
35 spite of this fact, our young people by no means turn away in horror from such skeletal human beings, but instead go right

on sacrificing themselves blindly, indiscriminately, and recklessly to scholarly pursuits? This simply cannot stem from the supposed "drive for truth": for how could there possibly ever be a drive for cold, pure, inconsequential knowledge! On the contrary, the true driving forces at work in the servants of scholarship are revealed only too clearly to the impartial eye, and it is highly recommended that we finally begin to examine and analyze scholars, now that they themselves have grown accustomed to laying bold hands upon and dissecting everything in the world, no matter how venerable. If I am to speak my mind frankly, then I have to say this: the scholar consists of a confused tangle of very different impulses and stimuli; he is a thoroughly impure metal. First there is a strong and constantly growing curiosity, the search for intellectual adventures, the constantly stimulating power of the new and rare as opposed to the old and boring. Add to this a certain playful drive to dialectical discovery, the hunter's joy in foxily cunning trains of thought, so that it is not actually truth that is sought, but the act of seeking itself, and the primary pleasure lies in slyly stalking, surrounding, and skillfully killing one's prey. Add to this the drive to contradiction; the personality seeks to feel and be felt, in opposition to all others. Struggle becomes a pleasure, and personal victory is the goal, whereas the struggle for truth is just a pretext. The scholar also contains a generous admixture of the drive to discover *certain* "truths," motivated by his servility to certain ruling people, classes, opinions, churches, or governments, since he senses that he will profit from placing "truth" on their side. The following qualities also occur in the scholar with less regularity, but still of ten enough. First, integrity and a sense for simplicity—qualities that are to be highly esteemed if they prove to be more than inflexibility and inexperience in the art of dissimulation, since this latter, after all, requires a certain amount of cleverness. In fact, wherever cleverness and flexibility are especially obvious, one is well advised to be wary and harbor doubts about the upstandingness of the person's character. On the other hand, even that integrity is for

the most part of little value and is rarely fruitful for scholarship, since it is devoted to the customary and is only accustomed to telling the truth in the instance of simple matters or in *adiaphoris*, for in such cases telling the truth is more in keeping with
5 indolence than concealing it is. And because everything new makes a certain relearning necessary, whenever possible integrity pays tribute to old opinions and accuses those who herald the new of lacking a *sensus recti*. No doubt, integrity objected to the Copernican doctrine because it knew that it had com-
10 mon sense and habit on its side. The hatred of philosophy, which is by no means rare among scholars, is above all hatred of long chains of reasoning and the artificiality of proof. Indeed, every generation of scholars basically establishes an unconscious limit for *permissible* sagacity; whatever transcends this
15 limit is called into question and is almost enough to make one call the offender's integrity into question. — Second, keenness of sight for whatever is close by, combined with intense myopia for whatever is remote and general. The scholar's field of vision is usually quite small, and he must press his eyes right up
20 close to the object he is viewing. If he wants to proceed from one point of investigation to another, he must shift his entire visual apparatus to that point. He dissects a picture into nothing but blotches of color, like someone who uses opera glasses to see the stage better, but who then only sees now a head,
25 now a bit of clothing, but never focuses on anything taken as a whole. He never sees these individual blotches in connection, but instead only infers their interrelation; that is why he has no strong impression of anything general. For example, because he is incapable of viewing it as a whole, he judges a piece of
30 writing based on a few sections or sentences or errors; he would be tempted to maintain that an oil painting is nothing but a wild mass of splotches. — Third, the sobriety and conventionality of his nature in his likes and dislikes. This trait serves him especially well in the study of history, since it makes it possible for him to track down the motives of human beings from
35 the past in terms of those motives with which he is already

familiar. A mole feels most at home in a molehill. Here he is protected from any artificial and extravagant hypotheses; if he is persistent, he digs up all the common motives of the past, because he believes he is from the same common stock. To be
5 sure, this is precisely the reason why he is for the most part incapable of understanding and valuing what is rare, great, and uncommon, that is, what is important and essential. — Fourth, poverty of feeling and aridity. This makes him capable even of performing vivisections. He has no inkling of the suffering
10 that goes hand in hand with certain kinds of knowledge, and hence is not afraid of venturing into regions that would make others shudder. He is cold, and that makes him seem slightly cruel. Some people also consider him bold, but he is no bolder than the mule, which is immune to vertigo. — Fifth, low self-
15 esteem, even modesty. Even when banished to some wretched corner, scholars have no sense of having made sacrifices or of wasted effort; they often seem to sense in their innermost depths that they are creatures meant only to crawl, never to fly. This quality makes them even seem pathetic. — Sixth, loyalty to their teachers and mentors. Scholars want with all their
20 heart to help them, and they know quite well that they can best do this with the truth. For they are grateful to them because they know that it is only on account of their teachers that they themselves have been admitted into the hallowed halls of
25 scholarship, into which they would never have gained entrance on their own. Any teacher who can open up a field of study in which even inferior minds are able to work with some success will quickly become a famous man; that's how large the swarm will be that crowds around him. Of course, each of these loyal
30 and grateful scholars is simultaneously also a misfortune for the master, because all of them imitate him, and as a result all his faults appear disproportionately large and exaggerated due to the fact that they are exhibited in such insignificant individuals; on the other hand, the opposite is the case with his virtues,
35 which, when exhibited in these same individuals, appear correspondingly small. — Seventh, routine plodding along that path

onto which the scholar has been pushed, a sense of truth stemming from lack of thought, in keeping with the force of habit. Such natures are compilers, commentators, makers of indexes and herbaria; they study and carry out research in a single field
5 for the simple reason that it never occurs to them that there might be other fields. Their diligence has something of the monstrous stupidity of gravity, which is why they often accomplish so much. — Eighth, flight from boredom. Whereas the true thinker longs for nothing more than leisure, the com-
10 mon scholar flees from it because he does not know what to do with it. He finds his comfort in books: that means, he listens to other people thinking and thereby manages to keep himself entertained throughout the long day. He chooses in particular those books that somehow arouse his personal involvement,
15 that stir him a little by invoking his likes and dislikes; in other words, books that have to do with the scholar himself, or with his class, his political or aesthetic or even only his grammatical convictions. As long as he has his own scholarly discipline, he will never be lacking in means for his own entertainment and
20 in flyswatters effective against boredom. — Ninth, the motive of breadwinning — that is, at bottom, the famous “borborygmus of the empty stomach.” Truth is served if it is capable of leading directly to a higher income and a higher position, or at least capable of winning the favor of those who have bread and
25 honors to confer. But it is exclusively *this* truth that is served, and this is why a line can be drawn between those profitable truths that the multitude serves, and the unprofitable truths to which only the rare few, whose motto is not *ingenii largitor venter*, are devoted. — Tenth, respect for one’s fellow scholars,
30 fear of their disrespect — a rarer but loftier motive than the previous one, yet still quite common. All the members of the guild zealously keep each other under surveillance so that truth, on which so much depends — bread, office, honor — is accurately baptized in the name of its discoverer. Each scholar pays due
35 tribute to another for the truth he discovered, and he demands payment in kind if he himself should ever discover a truth. Un-

truth and error are noisily exploded in order to decrease the number of competitors, but sometimes real truth is exploded, so that, at least for a short while, there is once again room for stubborn and impudent errors. For here, as elsewhere, there is no lack of "moral idiocies," which are otherwise called mischievous pranks. — Eleventh, the scholar out of vanity, a somewhat rarer variation. If possible, he wants to have a field all to himself and therefore chooses curiosities, especially if they involve unusual expenditures, travel, excavations, and numerous connections in diverse countries. He is usually content with the honor of being gaped at as a curiosity himself, and he would not dream of winning his bread by means of his scholarly studies. — Twelfth, the scholar just for the fun of it. He amuses himself by seeking out and resolving the knotty little problems of scholarship—whereby, so as not to lose the feeling of having fun, he must not exert himself too much. This is why he fails to go into things very deeply, and yet he oftentimes perceives things that the laboriously crawling eye of the bread-and-butter scholar never sees. — If, thirteenth and finally, I also designate the drive for justice as a motive of the scholar, then someone might object that this noble drive, which, indeed, must already be conceived metaphysically, is much too difficult to distinguish from others and remains incomprehensible and vague to the human eye, which is the reason why I add this final number with the pious wish that this drive might be more common and effective among scholars than it appears to be. For if only one single spark from the fire of justice falls on the soul of the scholar, this is enough to set his life and aspirations ablaze and consume them in its purifying fire, so that he can no longer find any peace and is forever expelled from that tepid or icy mood in which ordinary scholars do their daily work.

Now just imagine all these elements, or most of them, or even just a few, vigorously blended and scrambled together: what we get is the emergence of the servant of truth. What is amazing here is how in the service of a fundamentally extrahuman and suprahuman enterprise—pure, inconsequen-

tial, and hence passionless knowledge—a host of very human drives and petty passions have been mixed together to form a chemical compound, and how the result, the scholar, appears so transfigured in the light of that supraterrrestrial, lofty, and
5 thoroughly pure enterprise, that one completely forgets the measuring and mixing that was necessary in order to produce him in the first place. And yet there are moments in which we are forced to think of and remember just this, namely, in precisely those moments in which we raise the question of
10 the scholar's significance for culture. Any perceptive observer will notice that the scholar is by nature *unfruitful*—a consequence of the process that produces him!—and that he has a certain natural hate for fruitful human beings. This explains why geniuses and scholars have always been at odds with each
15 other. The latter seek to kill nature, to dissect and understand it; the former seek to augment nature with new living nature, and so there is a conflict of convictions and activities. Wholly happy ages neither knew nor needed the scholar; wholly sick and sullen ages have valued him as the supreme and most dig-
20 nified human being and assigned him the highest rank.

Now, as to how things look with regard to the health and sickness of our age—who is physician enough to know that! What is certain is that in very many things the scholar is valued too highly even today and can therefore have a harmful effect,
25 especially on the emerging genius. The scholar has no heart with which to feel the genius's distress, he talks about him in a cold, cutting voice and dismisses him all too easily with a shrug of his shoulders, as if he were something strange and perverse for which he has neither time nor interest. In the scholar, then,
30 no awareness of the goal of culture can be found.—

But what have we learned from all these observations? That everywhere where culture now seems to be promoted most energetically the goal of culture remains unknown. No matter how loudly the state proclaims all that it has done for culture,
35 it promotes culture only in order to promote itself and is incapable of comprehending any goal that stands higher than

its own welfare and existence. What the moneymakers want when they incessantly clamor for education and cultivation is ultimately nothing but money. When those who proclaim the need for form credit themselves with accomplishing the actual
5 work of culture and tell us, for instance, that all art belongs to them and must serve their needs, then all this does is simply make manifest that in affirming culture they are merely affirming themselves: in short, that they, too, are caught up in a misunderstanding. We have already said enough about the scholar.
10 All four of these powers, then, are just as zealous in thinking about how they can serve *themselves* with the aid of culture as they are dull and devoid of ideas when their self-interest is not aroused. And that is why the conditions for the emergence of genius have *not improved* in modern times, and the aversion to
15 originality has increased to such an extent that Socrates would not have been able to live among us and, in any case, would not have reached the age of seventy.

At this point let me call to mind the thesis I developed in the third section: that our entire modern world by no means
20 appears to be so solid and permanent that one could prophesy an eternal life for its concept of culture. It is even likely that the next millennium will arrive at a few new ideas that would cause the hair of those living today to stand on end. *The belief in the metaphysical significance of culture* would in the end not be so
25 terrifying; the same cannot be said, however, for some of the conclusions that might be drawn from it for education and our educational system.

To be sure, a wholly unconventional mode of reflection is required in order to be able to look away from and beyond
30 our present educational institutions to those other institutions of a wholly alien and different sort that perhaps the second or third generation already will consider necessary. Whereas the efforts of present-day higher education produce either scholars, or state officials, or moneymakers, or cultivated philistines,
35 or finally, as is usually the case, a combination of all four, those institutions that are yet to be invented would clearly have a

more difficult task—not more difficult in and of itself, since it would in any event be the more natural, and, in that sense, easier task. And can there be something more difficult than, for instance, going against nature in the way that we now do
5 when we train young people to be scholars? But the difficulty for human beings lies in relearning and setting a new goal for themselves, and it will take unspeakable effort to replace the fundamental principles of our present educational system—which has its roots in the Middle Ages and imagines the medi-
10 eval scholar as the goal of perfected education—with a new fundamental principle. Now is the time to face these antitheses, for some generation or other must begin the battle in which a future generation will some day be victorious. Even today the individual who has understood that new fundamen-
15 tal principle of culture has arrived at a crossroads. If he chooses to travel the one path, he will be welcomed by his age, there will be no lack of laurels and rewards, powerful parties will support him, equal numbers of like-minded people will stand behind him and in front of him, and when the man in front
20 sounds the battle cry, it will echo through all the ranks. Here the first duty is “fighting in rank and file”; the second duty, to treat all those who refuse to join the rank and file as enemies. The second path will bring him into contact with fewer traveling companions; this path is more difficult, steeper, and
25 more tortuous. Those who travel the first path make fun of him because the going is rougher and more dangerous, and they try to lure him over to their side. If the two paths should happen to cross, he will be maltreated, pushed aside, or isolated by cautious avoidance. Now, what is the meaning of a
30 cultural institution to these two different kinds of travelers? To that tremendous crowd that presses toward its goal along that first path it means institutions and laws by means of which it is brought into line and advances, and by which all the solitary rebels—all those who look to higher, more distant goals—are
35 banished. For this second, much smaller group, an institution would, to be sure, have to serve a wholly different purpose;

it seeks the protection of a firm organization in order to prevent itself from being swept away and dispersed by that other, larger swarm, in order to prevent its individuals from vanishing due to premature exhaustion or even from being diverted
5 from their great task. These individuals must complete their work—that is the meaning of their solidarity—and all those who take part in the institution must strive, through continuous purification and mutual care, to pave the way in themselves and around themselves for the birth of genius and the maturation
10 of his work. Many people, even those with only second- and third-rate talent, are destined to assist in this task; and only by subordinating themselves to such a destiny do they arrive at the feeling that they are living for a duty and for a goal, living a life that has significance. But today it is precisely these talents
15 who are diverted from their course and alienated from their instincts by the seductive voices of that modish “culture.” This temptation is directed at their selfish impulses, at their weaknesses and vanities; it is precisely to them that the spirit of the age whispers with ingratiating zeal: “Follow me and do not
20 go over there! For there you will be only servants, assistants, tools, overshadowed by higher natures, never happy with your own peculiar nature, manipulated by strings, placed in chains as slaves, indeed, as automatons. Here with me you will enjoy, as masters, your own free personality, your talents can shine
25 on their own, you yourselves shall stand in the front ranks, a tremendous following will throng around you, and the call of public opinion will surely delight you more than noble approval bestowed upon you from out of the cold, ethereal heights of genius.” Even the best succumb to such enticements, and, at
30 bottom, in such instances the decisive factor is hardly the rarity and strength of one’s talent, but rather the influence of a certain fundamental heroic disposition and the degree of internal kinship and affinity with genius. For there *are* human beings who feel it to be *their own* distress when they see genius struggling laboriously and in danger of destroying itself, or when its
35 works are indifferently shoved aside by the shortsighted self-

ishness of the state, the shallowness of the moneymakers, the arid self-satisfaction of the scholars. And so I, too, hope that there are a few people who understand what I seek to achieve with this account of Schopenhauer's fate, and to what end, in my view, Schopenhauer as educator must actually *educate*. —

7

But putting aside for the moment all thoughts of a distant future and a possible upheaval in our educational system, we must ask: What *present* conditions would we have to wish or, if need be, provide for an emerging philosopher so as to make it possible for him to breathe at all and, in the most favorable case, attain an existence like that of Schopenhauer — something that is by no means easy, but at least possible? What would, furthermore, have to be done in order to make it more likely that he would have an effect on his contemporaries? And above all, what obstacles would have to be removed so that his model might have its full effect, so that the philosopher might once again educate philosophers? At this point our observations move in the direction of practical and objectionable matters.

Nature always seeks to work for the common good, but it does not know how to find the best and most skillful ways and means to accomplish this purpose: this is nature's great sorrow, the cause of its melancholia. Given nature's own pressing need for redemption, it is certain that by producing the philosopher and the artist it sought to make existence intelligible and meaningful for human beings; but how uncertain, how weak and feeble is the effect that it usually achieves with philosophers and artists! How rarely nature has any effect whatsoever! Nature's failure is particularly obvious with regard to its use of the philosopher for the common good; its means seem to be nothing but groping experiments, ideas it has happened upon by chance, so that countless times it fails to achieve its objective and most philosophers do not serve the common good. Nature's procedure seems to be wasteful; yet it is not wastefulness out of wanton extravagance, but rather out of inexperi-

ence. We must assume that if nature were a human being, it would never cease to be annoyed with itself and its own ineptitude. Nature shoots the philosopher, like an arrow, into the midst of humanity; it does not take aim, it simply hopes that its arrow will hit something. In doing this, it makes countless mistakes and gets annoyed. It is just as wasteful in the realm of culture as it is in planting and sowing. It accomplishes its purposes in a general and inefficient manner, expending much too much energy. The relationship between the artist, on the one hand, and his connoisseurs and fans, on the other, is like the relationship of heavy artillery to a flock of sparrows. Only a simpleton would create an avalanche in order to move a little snow, or kill a human being in order to swat the fly on his nose. The artist and philosopher bear witness against the purposiveness of nature in its means, despite the fact that they provide the most splendid evidence for the wisdom of nature's purposes. They strike only a few, and are supposed to strike all—and even these few are not struck with the full force of the barrage that the philosopher and the artist fire from their guns. It is sad to have to assess art as cause and art as effect in such vastly different ways: how immense it is as cause; how lame, how hollow in its effect! The artist creates his work according to nature's will for the good of other human beings; there can be no doubt about this. Nevertheless, he knows that none of these other human beings will ever understand and love his work in the way that he himself understands and loves it. This high and singular degree of love and understanding is thus necessary, given nature's inept execution, in order to produce a lower degree; something greater and nobler is employed as a means to bring about something lesser and ignoble. Nature does not manage its budget well: its expenditures far exceed what it brings in, and despite all its wealth, it will someday drive itself into ruin. Nature's household budget would have been more sensible if it had followed the rule of cutting expenditures and increasing profits a hundredfold—if, for example, there were only a handful of artists of lesser powers, but a large receptive

and responsive audience composed of people who are stronger and more powerful than the artists themselves. In this case the effect of the work of art would be a resonance a hundred times its cause. Or at the very least we ought to expect cause and effect to be equally strong; but nature falls far short of this expectation! Oftentimes it seems as if an artist, and sometimes even a philosopher, only lives *by chance* in his age, as a recluse, or as a wanderer who has strayed off and been left behind. Just try for once to feel with all your heart how great—how thoroughly great, and great in everything—Schopenhauer is, and how small, how absurd his effect! Nothing can be more humiliating for an honest person of the present age than to recognize the chance position that Schopenhauer occupies in this age and what powers and nonpowers are responsible for curtailing his effect. At first and for quite some time—to the lasting shame of our literary age—the obstacle was a lack of readers, and then, when the readers came, the inadequacy of his first public supporters. Even more important, it seems to me, was the growing indifference of modern human beings to books, which they simply refuse to take seriously any longer. Eventually, a further danger was added, one that stemmed from the multiple attempts to try to adapt Schopenhauer to this feeble age, or even to apply him like a strange and pungent spice, a kind of metaphysical pepper, as it were. In this way he gradually won renown and fame, and I believe that at present there are already more people who know his name than know Hegel's. And yet despite this he remains a recluse; despite this he has had no effect. His literary opponents and yapping denigrators are least responsible for having interfered with his effect; first, because there are few people who can even stand to read them, and second, because they lead those who can stand to read them directly to Schopenhauer. For who would let a muledriver prevent him from mounting a fine horse, no matter how much the driver extols his mule at the expense of the horse?

Now, anyone who has recognized the unreason characteristic of the nature of this age will have to devise means to

come to its aid; his task will be to introduce Schopenhauer to the free spirits and to those who profoundly suffer from this age, to gather them together and produce by means of them a current strong enough to overcome that ineptitude
5 that nature commonly evinces in its utilization of the philosopher, an ineptitude it evinces once again today. Such people will realize that the very same obstacles that prevent a great philosophy from having an effect also stand in the way of the production of a great philosopher. That is why they might
10 define their aim as paving the way for the rebirth of Schopenhauer, that is, of philosophical genius. However, what from the very beginning opposed the effect and dissemination of his teachings, and what ultimately seeks to thwart by any means possible the rebirth of the philosopher, is, in short, the perversity of contemporary human nature. That is why all those
15 human beings destined for greatness must waste incredible amounts of energy just to save themselves from this perversity. The world they now enter is shrouded in lies; these do not necessarily have to be religious dogmas, but only such
20 misguided notions as “progress,” “general education,” “nationalism,” “modern state,” “cultural struggle.” Indeed, it can be claimed that all general expressions today bear an artificial and unnatural veneer, and this is the reason why a more illuminated posterity will accuse our age of being severely twisted
25 and deformed—regardless of how loudly we may boast about our good health. According to Schopenhauer, the beauty of antique vases derives from the fact that they express in such a naive manner exactly what they are meant to be and accomplish; the same can be said of all the other articles the ancients
30 produced. We have the sense that if nature were to create vases, amphoras, lamps, tables, chairs, helmets, shields, armor, and so on, they would look just like this. Conversely, anyone who witnesses how today almost everyone has a hand in the arts, the state, religion, education—not to mention, for obvious reasons,
35 our “vases”—discovers people who express themselves with a certain barbarous arbitrariness and exaggeration. And

nothing interferes more with the emergent genius than an age in which such outlandish concepts and such freakish needs are in vogue. These are the leaden forces that, invisibly and inexplicably, so often weigh down the hand of the genius when he
5 wants to guide his plow—with the result that even his loftiest works, because they have had to force their way violently upward, must to a certain degree also bear the traces of this violence.

If I now turn to those conditions with whose help—in the
10 most favorable case—a born philosopher might at least avoid being crushed by the fashionable perversity of the times, I notice something peculiar: in part they are nothing other than the same general conditions in which Schopenhauer himself grew up. To be sure, there was no lack of countervailing con-
15 ditions: for example, the perversity of the age came terribly close to him in the guise of his vain aesthete of a mother. But the proud and free republicanism in the character of his father saved him, as it were, from his mother and gave him the very first thing that a philosopher needs: unbending and
20 rugged manliness. This father was neither a civil servant nor a scholar; he often traveled with his son in foreign countries, all of these bringing great advantages to someone destined to know human beings, not books, and to revere truth, not gov-
25 ernments. At times he became either numbed or overly sensitive to national limitations; he lived no differently in England, France, and Italy than he did at home, and he felt no small affinity with the spirit of Spain. On the whole he did not consider it an honor to have been born a German; and I am not sure that
30 he would have changed his mind under the new political conditions. As is well known, he believed that the only purpose of the state was to provide protection from internal enemies, protection from external enemies, and protection from the protectors, and that to ascribe to the state any purpose other than protection could easily endanger its true purpose. That is why
35 —to the horror of all so-called liberals—he bequeathed his entire fortune to the widows of those Prussian soldiers who had

fallen in 1848 in the struggle to maintain order. It is likely that from now on it will more and more become a sign of intellectual superiority if someone is able to understand the state and its duties in simple terms; for anyone who has the *furor philosophicus* will have no time whatsoever for the *furor politicus* and will wisely refrain from reading the newspapers every day, and above all from serving in a party, although he will not hesitate for a single moment to take up his position if his fatherland is threatened by a real danger. All states in which people other than politicians must concern themselves with politics are badly organized and deserve to perish from this abundance of politicians.

Another thing in Schopenhauer's favor was the fact that he was not destined and educated from the outset to be a scholar; instead, he actually worked for some time, if with reluctance, in a merchant's office and throughout his youth, at any rate, breathed the freer air of a large trading house. A scholar can never become a philosopher; even Kant was not capable of doing this, and instead remained to the very end, despite the innate urge of his genius, in a veritable state of chrysalis. Anyone who thinks that by saying this I am doing Kant an injustice does not know what a philosopher is, for a philosopher is not merely a great thinker, but also a genuine human being. And when has a scholar ever become a genuine human being? Anyone who lets concepts, opinions, past events, or books come between himself and things—in other words, anyone who is destined for history in the broadest sense—will never see things for the first time and never himself be something that is seen for the first time. But these two traits must be intertwined in the philosopher, because he must draw most of his own instruction from out of himself, and because he serves himself as a likeness and compendium of the entire world. If someone views himself through the opinions of other people, then it is no wonder that he also never discovers anything in himself but other people's opinions! And this is how scholars are, live, and see. Schopenhauer, by contrast, had the indescribable good

fortune of not only seeing genius close up inside himself, but also outside himself, in Goethe. By means of this double reflection he was instructed and attained wisdom from the ground up about all scholarly aims and about culture. Thanks to this
5 experience, he knew how the free and strong human being, for which every artistic culture longs, ought to be constituted. Given such vision, how could he possibly ever experience much pleasure in dealing with so-called "art" in the scholarly or hypocritical manner of the modern human being? After all, he had
10 glimpsed something far higher: a horrible, supraworldly scene of judgment in which all of life, even the highest and most perfected life, was weighed in the balances and found wanting: he had seen the saint as the judge of existence. It is impossible to determine at what age Schopenhauer must already have had
15 this vision of life that he later attempted to describe in all of his writings. It can be proved that the youth — and one is tempted to believe that perhaps even the child — had already seen this tremendous vision. Everything that he later acquired from life and books, as well as from all the fields of scholarship, pro-
20 vided him little more than the means and the color with which to express it. Even Kantian philosophy served him primarily as an extraordinary rhetorical instrument by means of which he believed he was able to express that vision more clearly, just as Buddhistic and Christian mythology sometimes served for
25 him the same purpose. For him there was only one task and a hundred thousand ways of accomplishing it, one meaning and innumerable hieroglyphs with which to express it.

It must be counted among the most marvelous conditions of his existence that he was truly able to devote his life to such
30 a task, in keeping with his motto *vitam impendere vero*, and that he was never oppressed by any of the vulgar necessities of life. The splendid manner in which he thanked his father for this is well known. Whereas in Germany, the theoretical human being usually fulfills his vocation to pursue knowledge at the
35 expense of the purity of his character — as a "deferential bum," greedy for honor and position, circumspect and pliable, obse-

quious to influential people and his superiors. Unfortunately, Schopenhauer managed to offend numerous scholars simply because of the fact that he failed to resemble them.

8

5 With this I have cited some of the conditions under which, despite the harmful counterforces, philosophical genius can at least come into being in our times: free manliness of character; early knowledge of human nature; no scholarly education; freedom from the narrowness of patriotism; exemption from
 10 the need to be a breadwinner; no ties with the state—in short, freedom and nothing but freedom, that same wonderful and dangerous element in which the Greek philosophers flourished. Anyone who wants to reproach him, as Niebuhr reproached Plato, with being a bad citizen is welcome to do so, provided
 15 he himself is a good citizen; in that case he will be right, and so will Plato. Someone else will interpret that great freedom as presumption; he is also right, because he himself would not know what to do with such freedom, and it would indeed be very presumptuous for him to desire it for himself. This free-
 20 dom is really a heavy burden of guilt, and it can only be atoned for by great deeds. Truly, every ordinary son of the earth has the right to look with resentment upon someone who is privileged in this way, but may some god preserve him from the fate of himself being so privileged—that is, from having such
 25 a terrible obligation. He would immediately die of his freedom and his loneliness and would become a fool, a malicious fool, out of boredom.—

Perhaps some father will be able to learn something from what has been said thus far and apply it in some fashion to the
 30 private education of his son, although it surely cannot be expected that fathers would want to have philosophers as sons. It is likely that in all ages fathers have bristled most at the thought of their sons being philosophers, as at the thought of the greatest perversity. Socrates, as we know, fell victim to the wrath of
 35 the fathers for the “corruption of youth,” and it was for pre-

cisely these reasons that Plato thought the establishment of an entirely new state necessary in order that the emergence of the philosopher not be dependent on the unreason of fathers. It now almost looks as if Plato had really accomplished something. For today the modern state regards the promotion of philosophy to be one of *its* tasks and seeks at all times to bless a number of people with that “freedom” that we understand to be the essential condition for the genesis of the philosopher. Historically, Plato has been amazingly unfortunate; as soon as a system arose that essentially conformed to his proposals, it always proved upon closer inspection to be an ugly changeling, the real child having been exchanged for that of a hobgoblin. This is true, for example, of the priestly state of the Middle Ages when compared to Plato’s dream of a state ruled by the “sons of the gods.” Now, the modern state is clearly farthest away from appointing philosophers as rulers—“Thank God for that!” every Christian will say. But even the promotion of philosophy, as understood by the state, would have to be examined to see whether the state understands it *Platonically*, that is, to see whether it takes it seriously and sincerely, as if it were its supreme task to produce new Platos. If ordinarily the philosopher appears by chance in his age—is then the state now truly charged with the task of consciously translating this chance into necessity and coming to nature’s aid in this, as well?

Unfortunately, experience teaches us better—or worse: it says that with regard to those who were by nature great philosophers, nothing stood more in the way of their emergence and propagation than the bad philosophers supported by the state. This is an embarrassing subject, isn’t it? The same subject, as we know, to which Schopenhauer first directed his attention in his famous treatise on university philosophy. I am returning to this subject because people have to be forced to take it seriously, that is, to let themselves be moved to some action. And I deem futile every word that does not contain such a call to action. It is good, in any case, to demonstrate once more Schopenhauer’s eternally valid propositions, especially as they

relate to our closest contemporaries, since some good-natured person might believe that in the wake of his fierce accusations everything in Germany has taken a turn for the better. Even in this point, as minor as it is, Schopenhauer's work has not yet
5 been completed.

When examined more closely, that "freedom" with which, as I have said, the state now blesses a few people for the good of philosophy is not freedom at all, but merely a post that feeds the person who occupies it. Thus, today the promotion of phi-
10 losophy consists in the fact that the state makes it possible for at least a number of people to *live* from philosophy by being able to make it into a breadwinning occupation. By contrast, the ancient sages of Greece were not salaried by the state, but in-
15 stead were at most honored just once, as was Zeno, by a golden crown and a grave in the Ceramicus. In general, I cannot say whether truth is served by pointing out how someone can make
a living from philosophy, because in such instances everything depends on the manner and goodness of the individual per-
20 son who chooses this path. I can well imagine a degree of pride and self-esteem that causes one human being to say to his fellow human beings: "Take care of me, since I have better things to do: namely, taking care of you." In the instances of
Plato and Schopenhauer, such greatness of disposition and ex-
25 pression would not be out of place; which is why they, of all philosophers, could be university philosophers, much as Plato served as court philosopher for a time, without lowering the
dignity of philosophy. But even Kant was respectful and obse-
quious, as we scholars tend to be, and displayed no greatness in his treatment of the state, so that he, at any rate, would not be
30 in a position to defend academic philosophy if it should ever come under attack. Even if there are natures capable of defend-
ing it— such natures as Plato or Schopenhauer— I still fear one thing: they will never have the opportunity to do so, because
no state would ever dare to privilege such human beings by
35 placing them in such positions. But why? Because every state is afraid of them and will always privilege only those philosophers

of whom it is not afraid. Of course, it also sometimes happens that the state is afraid of philosophy as such, and it is precisely when this is the case that it will seek all the more to win philosophers over so as to give the appearance that it has philosophy on its side—because it then has those people on its side that go by the name of “philosopher” and yet from whom it has little to fear. But were someone to appear who really acted as though he wanted to measure everything, including the state, by the standard of truth, then the state—because above all else it affirms its own existence—would be justified in banishing such a person and treating him as an enemy, just as the state banishes and treats as an enemy any religion that sets itself above the state and wants to act as its judge. Thus, if someone can put up with being a philosopher supported by the state, he must also put up with being viewed by the state as someone who has given up pursuing truth into every nook and cranny. At least as long as he is privileged and employed, he must recognize something higher than truth—the state. And not merely the state, but at the same time everything the state demands for its own well-being: for example, a particular form of religion, social order, and military organization—upon each of these is written a *noli me tangere*. Has any university philosopher ever realized the full extent of his obligations and limitations? I don’t know. But if someone ever did make this realization and still remained a servant of the state, he was, in any case, a poor friend of truth. And even if he never did make this realization—well, it seems to me that even then he would still be no friend of truth.

This is the most general objection; to be sure, for contemporary human beings, being what they are, it is the weakest and least relevant objection. Most will be content to shrug their shoulders and say: “As if anything great and pure had ever been able to live or survive on this earth without making concessions to human baseness! Would you prefer that the state persecute philosophers instead of salarizing them and taking them into its service?” Without yet answering this last question, let me merely add that at present philosophy’s concessions to the

state are quite extensive. First, the state selects its own philosophical servants, and it selects just as many as it needs for its institutions. By doing so, the state lends itself the appearance of being able to distinguish between good and bad philosophers, and, what is more, it assumes that there will always be enough *good* philosophers to fill all of its professorial chairs. The state is not only the authority in matters of quality, but in matters of quantity as well. Second, the state forces those it has selected to take up residence in a specific place, among specific people, and for a specific activity; they are supposed to teach, every day and at fixed hours, each and every student who seeks instruction. Question: Can a philosopher actually commit himself with good conscience to having something to teach every day? And to teaching it to anyone who wants to listen? Must he not pretend to know more than he actually knows? Must he not speak before an unknown audience about matters he can only safely discuss with his closest friends. And, moreover, is he not then robbing himself of his most glorious freedom, the freedom to follow his genius whenever and wherever it calls him?—by committing himself to think publicly at fixed hours about a predetermined subject. And this before youths, at that! Is not such thinking emasculated, as it were, from the start? What if one day he simply felt: “I just cannot think today; no intelligent ideas are occurring to me.”—And yet nevertheless he would have to stand up and act as though he were thinking!

Someone will object: “But he is not supposed to think at all, but only to rethink things and think them through, and above all to be a scholarly connoisseur of all previous thinkers, about whom he will always be able to relate something that his students do not yet know.”—Precisely this is the third extremely dangerous concession that philosophy makes to the state when it obliges itself to exist, first and foremost, as scholarship, and above all as knowledge of the history of philosophy. By contrast, for the genius who, similar to the poet, views things purely and with love and cannot penetrate deeply enough into them, this rummaging about in the countless perverse opinions

of others is about the most repulsive and unwelcome business imaginable. Scholarly history of the past was never the business of a true philosopher, neither in India nor in Greece, and if a professor of philosophy concerns himself with such matters, he must accept the fact that the best thing that will ever be said of him is "He is a competent philologist, antiquarian, linguist, or historian," but never "He is a philosopher." And, as I noted, this is the best thing that will be said, for most of the scholarly works done by university professors would be judged by a philologist to be poorly done, without scientific rigor, and despicably tedious. Who, for example, can rescue the history of Greek philosophy from the soporific haze cast over it by the scholarly but not all too scientific, and, alas, all too tedious works of Ritter, Brandis, and Zeller? I for one would rather read Diogenes Laertius than Zeller, because at least the spirit of ancient philosophy is alive in the former, whereas in the latter neither this spirit nor any other spirit is alive. And finally, why in the world should the history of philosophy be of any concern to our youths? Is the confusion of opinions supposed to discourage them from having opinions of their own? Are they supposed to join in the celebration over how amazingly far we have come? Are they perhaps even supposed to learn to hate or despise philosophy? We are tempted to believe the latter to be the case when we know how students must torture themselves preparing for their examinations in philosophy, cramming into their poor brains the maddest and most caustic ideas of the human mind, along with those that are greatest and most difficult to comprehend. The only possible criticism of any philosophy, and the only one that proves anything, is trying to see if one can live by this philosophy, and this has never been taught at any university. The only thing taught there is the critique of words about words. And now just imagine a youthful mind, without much experience in life, in which fifty systems expressed in words and fifty critiques of these systems are crammed next to each other and confused—what a wasteland, what a jungle, what a mockery of an educa-

tion in philosophy! But, in point of fact, it is not an education in philosophy at all, but instead an education in how to take a test in philosophy; the usual result being, as is well known, that the person tested—oh, only too tested!—admits to him-
5 self with a sigh of relief: “Thank God I am not a philosopher, but only a Christian and a citizen of my state!”

What if precisely this sigh of relief were the state’s objective and “education in philosophy” were only a weaning from philosophy? Just ask yourself.—If this is really the way things
10 stand, then there is just one thing to fear: that our youth will finally figure out to what end philosophy is actually being misused. Is the supreme goal, the production of philosophical genius, nothing but a pretext? Is perhaps the real goal the prevention of its production? Has its meaning been twisted into
15 its opposite? Well, then, woe to the entire complex of political and professorial cunning!—

And might something of this sort already be in the air? I don’t know; but in any event university philosophy has fallen into universal disrepute and suspicion. This is tied in part to the
20 fact that at the moment an especially weak generation holds the professorial chairs, and if Schopenhauer were to write his treatise on university philosophy today, he would no longer need a cudgel, but would be victorious with a mere reed. They are the heirs and successors of those pseudothinkers whose warped
25 heads he battered; they act in such an infantile and dwarflike manner that they remind one of the Indian proverb: “Human beings are born according to their deeds: stupid, deaf, dumb, deformed.” According to their “deeds,” these fathers deserved just such successors, as the proverb has it. That is why there can
30 be absolutely no doubt that the young people at our academies will soon be able to get along without philosophy as it is taught at the universities, just as already today men outside the academies are getting along without it. Just recall your own student days; I, for example, was totally indifferent to the academic
35 philosophers, and I saw them as people who cooked things up by drawing on the results of other learned disciplines, who read

newspapers and visited concerts in their leisure time, and who were treated with politely disguised contempt even by their academic colleagues. They were credited with knowing very little, and with never being at a loss for an obscure phrase with which to disguise this lack of knowledge. They therefore loved to linger in those dimly lit places that a person with keen sight cannot tolerate for long. One of them complained about the natural sciences: "Not one of them can fully explain to me the simplest process of becoming, so why should they matter to me in the least?" A second one says of history: "History has nothing to say to people who have ideas."—In short, they always found reasons why it was more philosophical to know nothing than to learn something. But if they ever did let themselves in for learning, then their secret motive was always to escape the learned disciplines and establish an obscure empire in some crevice or dark cranny. Thus they stayed ahead of the learned disciplines only in *that* sense in which wild game stays ahead of the hunters who pursue it. Recently they have begun to take pleasure in maintaining that they are actually only the border guards and watchmen of the learned disciplines; to this end they are served especially well by Kantian doctrine, which they are intent on making into an idle skepticism to which soon no one will even pay any attention. Only here and there does one of them ascend to the level of a little metaphysics, with the usual results: dizziness, headaches, and nosebleeds. After this journey into mist and clouds has miscarried so many times, after having repeatedly been grabbed by the hair and dragged back down by some rough, hardheaded disciple of true scholarship, their faces take on the habitual expression of touchiness and of someone caught in a lie. They have completely lost their blithe confidence, so that none of them lives in the least for the sake of his philosophy. At one time some of them believed themselves able to invent new religions or replace old ones with their systems; nowadays they have lost all this arrogance and are mostly just pious, shy, and muddled people, never brave like Lucretius and outraged at the afflictions that oppress humankind. We can

no longer even learn logical thinking from them, and based on an accurate assessment of their own strengths they have discontinued the otherwise common exercises in disputation. No doubt, the individual learned disciplines are today more logical, cautious, modest, inventive—in short, more philosophical—than are the so-called philosophers, so that everyone will agree with that impartial Englishman, Bagehot, when he says of today's system builders: "Who is not almost sure beforehand that they will contain a strange mixture of truth and error, and therefore that it will not be worthwhile to spend life in reasoning over their consequences? The mass of a system attracts the young and impresses the wary; but cultivated people are very dubious about it. They are ready to receive hints and suggestions, and the smallest real truth is ever welcome. But a large book of deductive philosophy is much to be suspected. Unproved abstract principles without number have been eagerly caught up by sanguine men and then carefully spun out into books and theories which were to explain the whole world. But the world goes totally against these abstractions, and it must do so since they require it to go in antagonistic directions." If in former times the philosopher, especially in Germany, was so deeply sunk in reflection that he was constantly in danger of hitting his head on every beam, nowadays they have with them an entire swarm of flappers, like Swift relates about the Laputans, who occasionally give them a gentle blow to the eyes or elsewhere. Sometimes these blows are a little too hard, and then these dreamers forget themselves and strike back, something that always greatly embarrasses them. "Don't you see the beam, you nitwit?," the flapper then cries out—and often the philosopher actually sees the beam, and then he calms down again. These flappers are the natural sciences and history; they have gradually intimidated the German dream and thought industry, which for a long time was confused with philosophy, to such an extent that those thought merchants are only too happy to cease trying to walk on their own. However, whenever they fall unawares into the arms of their flappers or try to tie a

line on them so they themselves can be led around by the nose, then these flappers immediately cause the most frightful flap—as if they wanted to say: “The last thing we need is some such thought merchant polluting the natural sciences or history for us! Get him out of here!” Then they stagger back once more to their own uncertainty and helplessness; they want at all costs to get their hands on a little smidgen of natural science—in the form, say, of empirical philosophy, like the Herbartians—and most definitely on a smidgen of history as well—then, at least, they can publicly give the impression of being occupied with the business of scholarship, although privately they wish that all philosophy and scholarship would go to the devil.—

But even if we admit that this swarm of bad philosophers is ridiculous—and who will not admit that—to what extent are they also *harmful*? To answer briefly: to the extent that they make philosophy into something ridiculous. As long as this state-sponsored pseudophilosophy remains on the scene, every great effect of a true philosophy will be thwarted or at least hampered, and for no reason other than that the curse of the ridiculous, which the representatives of this great cause have called down upon themselves, will fall upon the cause itself. This is why I consider it a requirement of culture that it eliminate from philosophy every form of state and academic recognition and completely relieve both the state and the academy of the—for them insoluble—task of distinguishing between true and sham philosophy. Let philosophers go on proliferating wildly, deny them any hope of employment and assimilation in civil occupations, stop enticing them with salaries. Better still: persecute them, look unfavorably upon them—then you will behold miracles! Then they will scatter and seek a roof here and there, those poor sham philosophers; one will take refuge in a parsonage, another in a schoolhouse, a third will hide away in the editorial office of a newspaper, a fourth will write textbooks for girls’ finishing schools, the most intelligent one among them will take up the plow, the most vain one will become a courtier. Suddenly everything is empty, all of them have flown

the coop, for it is easy to liberate yourself from bad philosophers: you just have to stop privileging them. And that, in any case, is more advisable than public, state-supported patronage of any philosophy whatsoever, no matter what it might be.

5 The state is never interested in truth, but rather always only in that truth that is useful to it or, more precisely, in everything that is useful to it, be it truth, half-truth, or error. Hence, an alliance between the state and philosophy only makes sense if philosophy can promise to be absolutely useful to the state, that
10 is, to place the interests of the state above truth. To be sure, it would be magnificent for the state if it could both have truth at its service and on its payroll; yet the state itself knows very well that it is part of truth's very *nature* never to serve, never to take payment. Hence, what the state has is always only false
15 "truth," a person wearing a mask; and this person can unfortunately not accomplish what it so desires from genuine truth: the legitimation and sanctification of the state. When a medieval prince wanted to be crowned by the pope but could not attain papal assent, he usually appointed an antipope to per-
20 form this service. That may be tolerable up to a certain point, but it is not tolerable when the modern state appoints an anti-philosophy from which it seeks its own legitimation, for true philosophy still stands in opposition to it—indeed, now more than ever. I believe in all seriousness that it is more useful for
25 the state not to concern itself with philosophy at all, not to desire anything at all from it, to ignore it as long as possible, as something to which it is indifferent. If the state ceases to treat philosophy with indifference, if philosophy becomes aggressive and dangerous to it, then the state may persecute it.—
30 Since the state can have no other interest in the university than having it educate submissive and useful citizens, it should have misgivings about putting this submissiveness, this usefulness, into question by demanding from its young men that they be examined in philosophy. Of course, given their idle and incom-
35 petent minds, the specter of an examination might just be the best way to scare them away from their studies once and for all,

but this gain cannot outweigh the harm such forced drudgery would call forth in these reckless and restless youths. They become acquainted with forbidden books, begin to criticize their teachers, and perhaps eventually even recognize the purpose
5 of university philosophy and those examinations—not to mention the misgivings this occasions in young theologians, with the result that they have become an endangered species in Germany, like the ibex in Tyrol. —I am well aware of the objection the state was able to raise against this entire argument as long
10 as the beautiful green crop of Hegelianism was growing in all the fields: but now that this harvest has been destroyed in a hailstorm and all the silos stand empty, now that none of the hopes attached to it have been fulfilled—it is no longer objection to, but rejection of philosophy that is in order. Today we
15 have the power; in those days, in Hegel's time, one wanted to have power—that makes a big difference. The state no longer needs to be sanctioned by philosophy; as a result, philosophy has become dispensable for the state. If it ceases to maintain its professorships, or—as I predict for the near future—main-
20 tains them in only a halfhearted and perfunctory manner, this will be to the state's advantage—but it seems even more important to me that the university come to see in this its own advantage. At the very least I would think that an institution concerned with genuine scholarly pursuits would have to be-
25 lieve that it would benefit from its liberation from a community of third- and fourth-rate scholars. Besides, the reputation of the universities has fallen into such disrepute that the exclusion of disciplines for which academics themselves have no high regard would be highly desirable. For nonacademics have good
30 reasons for a certain general disrespect for the universities; they charge that they are cowardly, saying that the small ones are afraid of the large ones and the large ones afraid of public opinion; that in all matters of higher culture they do not lead, but instead limp slowly along behind; that they no longer maintain
35 the essential, fundamental orientation of those learned disciplines held in high regard. Philological studies, for instance,

are being pursued more vigorously than ever before, without anyone regarding a rigorous education in the skills of writing and oratory to be necessary. Indian antiquity opens its gates, and specialists on the subject have about as much of a relationship to India's most immortal works, its philosophies, as a beast has to a lyre—despite the fact that Schopenhauer believed the acquaintance with Indian philosophy to be one of the greatest advantages that our century has over others. Classical antiquity has become one antiquity among others, and no longer strikes us as either classical or exemplary—as is demonstrated by its disciples, who are truly not exemplary human beings. What has happened to the spirit of Friedrich August Wolf, about whom Franz Passow was able to say that he appeared to be a genuinely patriotic, genuinely humane spirit, one who, if need be, possessed enough power to set an entire continent in ferment and in flames—what has happened to this spirit? By contrast, the spirit of journalism has increasingly pervaded our universities, and not uncommonly under the name of philosophy. A slick, showy delivery, constantly spouting quotations from *Faust* and *Nathan the Wise*, adhering to the language and opinions of our disgusting literary journals, most recently even with babble about our sacred German music, even the demand for professorial chairs dedicated to the study of Goethe and Schiller—all of these symptoms demonstrate that the spirit of the university is beginning to confuse itself with the spirit of the age. Thus it seems to me of immense importance that a higher tribunal be established outside the universities, a tribunal that would oversee and judge these institutions with regard to the education they promote. And as soon as philosophy withdraws from the university and thereby purges itself of all unworthy deference and obscurities, it will not be able to be anything other than just such a tribunal. Divorced from the power of the state, without salary or honors, it will fulfill its task, free both from the spirit of the age and from the fear of this spirit—in short, as the judge of the so-called culture that surrounds it, living just as Schopenhauer lived. In this way the philosopher might

also be able to be of benefit to the university by refusing to be an integral part of it and instead observing it from a certain dignified distance.

But finally—what does the existence of a state, the promotion of universities matter to us, when what is at stake is above all the existence of philosophy on earth! Or—so as to leave absolutely no doubt as to what I mean—when the emergence of a philosopher on earth is infinitely more important than the continued existence of a state or a university. To the same degree that servility to public opinion and the threat to freedom grow, the dignity of philosophy can increase; it was at its apex during the upheavals that shook the declining Roman republic and in the imperial age, when the words “philosophy” and “history” became *ingrata principibus nomina*. Brutus provides better proof of the dignity of philosophy than does Plato; he lived in an age in which ethics ceased to be a collection of platitudes. If philosophy is not very well respected at present, then just ask yourself why no great general and statesman embraces it—for the simple reason that when he sought philosophy out, it appeared to him in the guise of a feeble phantom, that scholarly wisdom and circumspection characteristic of the professorial chairholder. In short, because at one time philosophy became for him something ridiculous. But it should be something terrible for him, and those people who are destined to seek power ought to know what streams of heroism have their source in philosophy. Let an American tell them about the significance of a great thinker who arrives upon this earth as the center of tremendous powers. “Beware,” says Emerson, “when the great God lets loose a thinker on this planet. Then all things are at risk. It is as when a conflagration has broken out in a city, and no man knows what is safe, or where it will end. There is not a piece of science but its flank may be turned tomorrow; there is not any literary reputation, not the so-called eternal names of fame, that may not be revised and condemned. The things which are dear to men at this hour are so on account of the ideas which have emerged on their mental horizon, and which

cause the present order of things, as a tree bears its apples. *A new degree of culture would instantly revolutionize the entire system of human pursuits.*" Now, if such thinkers are dangerous, then it is only too obvious why our academic thinkers are not dangerous, 5 for their thoughts grow as peacefully in the soil of tradition as any tree ever bore apples. They do not inspire fear, they do not cause upheavals, and to all their hustle and bustle we can only raise the same objection that Diogenes raised when a philosopher was praised: "What great accomplishments does he have 10 to show for himself, since he has practiced philosophy for such a long time and never yet *disturbed* anyone?" Indeed, the epitaph of university philosophy should read: "It never disturbed anyone." And yet, to be sure, this is praise more befitting an 15 old woman than a goddess of truth, and it comes as no surprise if those who know that goddess only as an old woman are hardly men themselves and hence are justifiably ignored completely by men of power.

But if this is the way matters stand in our age, then the dignity of philosophy has been trampled under foot; it appears 20 that philosophy itself has become something ridiculous or irrelevant, so that all its true friends feel obligated to testify against this confusion, and at the very least to demonstrate that it is only those false servants and undignitaries of philosophy who are ridiculous or irrelevant. Better yet, let them prove 25 through their actions that love of truth is something terrible and powerful.

Schopenhauer proved this—and will continue to prove it more and more with each passing day.

Richard Wagner in Bayreuth

I

For an event to be great, two things must come together: the great sensibility of those who create it, and the great sensibility of those who experience it. In and of itself no event is
5 great, even if entire constellations disappear, nations perish, vast states are founded, and wars are waged with tremendous forces and tremendous losses; the breath of history has blown away many such things as though they were nothing but snow-
flakes. But it also may happen that a powerful human being
10 strikes a blow that falls without effect on an unyielding stone: a brief, sharp report, and nothing more. History is able to record next to nothing about events that are blunted, as it were, in this way. Hence, everyone who sees an event approaching is
15 overcome by concerns about whether those who experience it will actually be worthy of it. Whenever we act, whether in the smallest or the greatest matters, we reckon with and aim for this correspondence between an action and its reception; and the person who wishes to give something must see to it that he
find takers able to appreciate the significance of his gift. This
20 is the reason why even the individual action of a great human being is itself not great if it is brief, blunted, and unfruitful, for in that moment in which he accomplished this action, he must at any rate have lacked the profound insight that it was necessary at precisely that moment. He did not take precise
25 enough aim, did not recognize and choose the proper time;

chance took control of him, whereas greatness and an eye for necessity have always been closely allied.

We are justified in leaving to those who have doubts about Wagner's eye for the necessary the concerns and doubts about whether what is now occurring in Bayreuth is occurring at the proper moment and is necessary. To those of us who are more confident, it necessarily seems that he has just as much faith in the greatness of his action as in the great sensibility of those who are supposed to experience it. All of those in whom this faith is placed, the many or the few, should feel pride—for Wagner himself told us in his dedicatory address of 22 May 1872 that this faith is not placed in all, that it is not placed in the entire age, and not even in the entire German people as they are presently constituted, and there is no one among us who would dare offer the consolation of contradicting him in this matter. "I had only you," he said at that time, "the friends of my particular art, of my most personal works and creations, to whom I could turn in search of sympathy for my plans; only from you could I obtain the support needed to present this work, pure and undistorted, to those who demonstrated a serious interest in my art, despite the fact that until now it could be presented to them only in impure and distorted form."

Without doubt, in Bayreuth even the spectator is a spectacle worth seeing. A wise, observant spirit traveling from one century to the next in order to compare remarkable cultural movements would have much to see in Bayreuth; he would have to sense that here he has suddenly happened into warmer water, much like someone who comes upon the warm current of a hot spring while swimming in a lake. This water must be rising up from other, from deeper sources, he tells himself; the surrounding water, which doubtless comes from a much shallower source, cannot account for it. Thus, all those who attend the Bayreuth Festival will be felt to be unfashionable people: they have their home elsewhere than in the fashions of the present time, and they seek their explanation and justification elsewhere, as well. It has become progressively clearer to me that

everything Wagner does and thinks is accessible to the “cultivated person,” to the extent that he is wholly and completely the product of the present age, only in the form of parody— And what has not already been parodied?—and that such a
5 person prefers to let himself be illuminated about the event at Bayreuth solely by means of the very unmagical lantern of our jeering journalists. And we are lucky if it stops at parody! For in parody a spirit of alienation and hostility is discharged that could seek—and at times has sought—to be vented by com-
10 pletely different ways and means. That cultural observer would be struck by the unusual acrimony and tension inherent in these oppositions. That an individual could create something thoroughly new over the course of a common human life may well arouse the indignation of all those who swear by the doctrine of
15 gradual development as though it were some kind of moral law; being slow themselves, they demand slowness. And then they see someone who is very fast, do not know how he does it, and get angry at him. There were no portents, no transitions, no intermediary stages that pointed to an enterprise such as that
20 of Bayreuth; no one but Wagner himself knew the long road to this goal or even the goal itself. It is the first circumnavigation of the world in the realm of art, whereby, so it seems, it was not a new art, but art itself that was discovered. As a result, all prior modern arts, either because they are isolated and stunted or be-
25 cause they are luxury items, have more or less lost all value, and as long as they are not able to shine with new meaning, even the uncertain, barely cohesive memories of a true art that we moderns inherited from the Greeks can only lie dormant. For many things the final hour has come; this new art is prophetic
30 of more than just the imminent demise of the arts. Its admonishing hand will seem very disquieting to the whole of contemporary cultivation as soon as the laughter over its parodies falls silent; may the levity and laughter go on yet for a little while!

By contrast, we, the disciples of resurrected art, will have
35 both the time and the inclination for seriousness, for profound, holy seriousness! All the rhetoric and noise that contemporary

cultivation has produced about art—we now cannot help but sense this to be shamelessly importunate. Everything obliges us to silence, to the five-year silence of the Pythagoreans. Who among us did not dirty his hands and his heart on the repulsive
 5 idolatry of modern cultivation! Who was not in need of purifying waters, who did not hear the voice that admonished him: “Silence and purity! Silence and purity!” Only insofar as we listen to this voice are we bestowed with the great insight with which we must view the event at Bayreuth, and the *great future*
 10 of this event depends solely upon this insight.

When on that day in May 1872, in pouring rain and under dark skies, the cornerstone was laid on that hill in Bayreuth, Wagner rode back to the city with some of us; he was silent and for a long time turned his gaze inward with a look that would
 15 be impossible to describe in words. On this day he began his sixtieth year; everything he had accomplished previously was but a preparation for this moment. We know that in moments of extraordinary danger or when making important decisions about their lives, people compress all their experiences in an
 20 infinitely accelerated process of introspection and are able to perceive once again with uncommon sharpness the nearest and most distant things. What might Alexander the Great have seen in that moment in which he had Europe and Asia drink from one and the same cup? But what Wagner inwardly saw on that
 25 day—how he had become what he is, what he will be—that is something that we, those closest to him, are also able to see to a certain degree. And only from this Wagnerian perspective will we ourselves be able to understand the greatness of his deed—and with this understanding vouch for its *fruitfulness*.

30

2

It would be strange if what a person does best and most loves doing were not also visible in the entire manner in which he fashions his life; on the contrary, in the case of people of outstanding talent life must not only become, as is true for every-
 35 one, the reflection of their character, but also above all the

reflection of their intellect and their own peculiar abilities. The life of the epic poet will have something of an epic quality—as is the case, incidentally, with Goethe, whom the Germans are unjustly accustomed to perceiving primarily as a lyric poet—
5 while the life of the dramatist will take dramatic form.

The dramatic quality in Wagner's development is wholly unmistakable from that moment in which the ruling passion attains self-awareness and takes possession of his entire being. From that moment on the groping and straying, the wild proliferation of secondary offshoots is at an end; the most tangled
10 paths and transformations, the often quixotic trajectory of his plans, is now governed by a single inner law, a will that makes them explicable, however strange these explanations will often sound. However, there was also a predramatic phase
15 in Wagner's life, his childhood and youth, and these cannot be passed over without stumbling upon paradoxes. He does not yet seem to be heralded as *himself*, and those things that now, in retrospect, might be understood as heralds, prove upon closer inspection to be a desultory collection of traits that tend
20 more to arouse misgivings than they do hopes: a restless, irritable spirit, a nervous haste in seizing upon a hundred different things, a passionate pleasure in almost pathologically intense states of mind, abrupt swings from moments of most heartfelt serenity to states of turbulence and noise. He was not limited
25 by any hereditary or family commitments to a particular artistic direction: he felt as at home in painting, poetry, acting, and music as he did in being educated for a future career as a scholar; a superficial glance might lead one to believe that he was born to be a dilettante. The small world under whose influence
30 he grew up was not the sort of home that one would wish upon an artist. He was touched no less by the dangerous desire to toy with intellectual pursuits than by the obscurity associated with the many-faceted knowledge that is characteristic of university towns. His feelings were easily aroused, but remained
35 satisfied only in shallow ways; wherever the boy looked, he saw himself surrounded by an amazingly pretentious if enterpris-

ing society to which the colorful world of the theater stood in ludicrous, the soul-ravishing sound of music in incomprehensible, contrast. Now, to the observer who draws comparisons, it is striking how rare it is for modern human beings, if they
5 have been endowed with great talent, to possess the quality of naiveté, the simple sense of their own singularity and selfhood—indeed, how little they are able to possess it. On the contrary, those rare people who, like Goethe and Wagner, are able to attain naiveté at all possess it more in their adulthood
10 than in their childhood and youth. Especially the artist endowed with an unusual measure of innate mimetic ability is sure to be overcome by the impotent diversity of modern life as by a violent childhood illness; as a boy and a youth he will resemble more an old man than his own true self. Only one
15 man, a man who discovered his own youth only late in life, was capable of producing that marvelously rigorous archetype of youth, Siegfried in the *Ring of the Nibelungen*. Just as Wagner's youth came late, so did his adulthood, so that at least in this respect he is the very opposite of a precocious being.

20 As soon as he achieves his intellectual and moral manhood, the drama of his life begins. And how different he now looks! His nature seems to be simplified in a terrible way, torn between two drives or two sides. Below there rages the rapid current of a violent will that seeks out, as it were, all paths, crevices, and ravines to bring itself to light and that desires power.
25 Only an entirely pure and free strength could direct this will onto the path of goodness and helpfulness; coupled with a narrow spirit, the limitless, tyrannical desire of such a will could have spelled doom, and in any event it soon had to find a path
30 leading out into the open, to bright air and sunshine. A powerful striving that is constantly confronted with its own failure arouses anger; sometimes circumstances, the inevitability of fate, and not one's own lack of strength, are to blame for inadequacy. But someone who, in spite of this inadequacy, cannot
35 stop striving becomes, as it were, embittered, and hence irritable and unjust. He may, perhaps, look to others to find the

cause for his failure; indeed, he may even hold the entire world responsible, treating it with impassioned hatred. He may even turn to indirect and underhanded means or resort to violence, and this is precisely how good people turn savage in the pursuit of salutary aims. Even among those who were only chasing after their own moral purification, among hermits and monks, we find such people who have reverted to savagery, sickened through and through, hollowed out and eaten away by failure. The spirit that spoke to Wagner was a spirit full of love, one whose mildly persuasive voice overflowed with kindness and tenderness, a spirit that abhors violent actions and self-destruction and that wishes to see no one in fetters. This spirit descended upon Wagner and consolingly covered him with its wings; it showed him the way. We now want to have a look at the other side of Wagner's nature; but how shall we describe it?

The characters an artist creates are not the artist himself, but obviously the series of characters to which he devotes himself with innermost love does indeed say something about the artist himself. Now call to mind Rienzi, the Flying Dutchman and Senta, Tannhäuser and Elisabeth, Lohengrin and Elsa, Tristan and Marke, Hans Sachs, Wotan and Brünnhilde: they are all connected by an underground stream of moral nobility and grandeur that progressively flows ever clearer and purer—and here we stand, if with shy reticence, before an innermost development in Wagner's soul. In what other artist can we perceive anything similar of a similar dimension? Schiller's characters, from *The Robbers* to *Wallenstein* and *Tell*, follow a similar path of ennoblement and likewise say something about the development of their creator, but in the case of Wagner, the scale is much larger, the path longer. Everything participates in and expresses this process of purification, not only the myth, but the music as well. The *Ring of the Nibelungen* contains the most moral music I know: for example, in the scene in which Brünnhilde is awakened by Siegfried. Here Wagner achieves such a loftiness and sanctity of mood that we cannot help but think of the glowing ice- and snow-covered peaks of the Alps: so pure,

solitary, inaccessible, unimpassioned, and bathed in the light of love are the heights nature attains here; clouds and storms, indeed, even the sublime, lie far below. Looking back on *Tannhäuser* and *The Flying Dutchman* from this perspective, we sense
5 how Wagner the human being developed: how he started in darkness and restlessness, how he stormily sought satisfaction, strove for power and intoxicating pleasure, often recoiled in disgust, how he sought to throw off his burden, desired to forget, deny, renounce—the entire stream plunged at times into
10 this, at times into that valley and channeled its way into the darkest ravines.—Then, in the night of this half-subterranean raging, a star with a sad glow appeared high above his head; he named it for what he recognized it to be: *Fidelity, selfless Fidelity!* Why did this star shine more brightly and purely than anything else? What secret does the word “fidelity” hold for his
15 entire being? For the image and problem of fidelity is stamped upon everything he thought and wrote; in his works we find an almost complete set of all possible forms of fidelity, among them instances of the most marvelous and rarest sort: fidelity of
20 brother to sister, friend to friend, servant to master, Elisabeth to Tannhäuser, Senta to the Dutchman, Elsa to Lohengrin, Isolde, Kurwenal, and Marke to Tristan, Brünnhilde to Wotan’s innermost wish—and this is only the beginning. It is Wagner’s most personal and most fundamental experience, something
25 he venerates as a religious mystery. It is this experience that he expresses with the word “fidelity,” this experience that he never tires of projecting outside himself in a hundred different figures, all presented in the fullness of his gratitude with the utmost splendor that he possesses and is capable of giving—
30 that marvelous experience and knowledge that the one side of his being remained faithful to the other, preserved fidelity out of free, selfless love; that the creative, innocent, bright side remained faithful to the dark, uncontrollable, and tyrannical one.

3

In the interrelation of these two most profound forces, in the submission of the one to the other, lay the great necessity through which alone he could remain whole and himself. At the same time it was the only thing that was not within his own power, that he had to observe and accept, while he watched how he was continually threatened anew by the temptation to infidelity and the horrible dangers it represented for him. Here there flows a superabundant source of suffering for someone who is developing: uncertainty. Each of his urges strove to reach the immeasurable; all the talents that make existence enjoyable sought to break away and find individual satisfaction. The greater their number, the greater the tumult, the more hostile their confrontation. What is more, chance and life provoked him to acquire power, glory, and the most ardent pleasure; he was tortured even more often by the merciless necessity of having to live at all; everywhere he turned there were fetters and pitfalls. How is it possible to remain faithful, to remain whole under such circumstances?—This doubt overcame him often and expressed itself in the manner in which artists experience doubt: in artistic figures. Elisabeth can do nothing but suffer, pray, and die for Tannhäuser; she saves this inconstant and immoderate man with her fidelity—but not for this life. The life of every true artist who is thrown into our modern times is full of danger and despair. He can achieve honor and power by many means; peace and satisfaction are repeatedly offered to him, but only in the form familiar to modern human beings, a form in which they cannot help but become a suffocating effluvia for the honest artist. His dangers lie in these temptations, as well as in the withstanding of these temptations, in his disgust with the modern ways of attaining pleasure and prestige, in the rage that turns against all the self-seeking contentment characteristic of contemporary human beings. Try to imagine him assuming an official position—just as Wagner had to fill the post of concertmaster in city and court theaters. Try to ap-

prehend how the most serious of artists attempts forcefully to impose seriousness upon modern institutions that are principally structured around frivolity and demand frivolity; how he succeeds in part, but on the whole always fails; how disgust overtakes him and he seeks to flee; how he fails to find the place to which he might flee and must constantly return to the gypsies and outcasts of our culture and count himself among them. Tearing himself away from one situation, he rarely finds a better one, and sometimes he sinks to a state of direst need. This is the manner in which Wagner moved from city to city, associate to associate, and country to country, and we can scarcely fathom the nature of the unreasonable demands and surroundings that he constantly had to endure over certain periods of time. A heavy atmosphere surrounds the greater part of Wagner's life up to this point; it seems as though he was no longer inspired by general hope, but merely hoped from one day to the next, and although he did not despair, neither did he believe. He may of ten have felt like a wanderer who walks the entire night, with a heavy burden and profoundly exhausted, and yet aroused by lack of sleep. A sudden death did not appear to him at this time as something horrifying, but rather as a seductive, attractive apparition. Burden, path, and night all suddenly disappear!—That sounded seductive. A hundred times he threw himself into life anew with that short-winded hope and left all apparitions behind. But in the way he did this there was almost always a lack of moderation, the symptom of the fact that he did not believe deeply and firmly in that hope but was only intoxicated by it. The conflict between his desire and his usual inability or half-ability to satisfy it tortured him like thorns; provoked by continual deprivation, if his needs were ever satisfied for once, his imagination lost itself in excesses. His life became ever more complex, but the expedients and means for escape that he, the dramatist, discovered were also bolder, more inventive, even if they were nothing but dramatic makeshifts, sham motives designed to deceive for a moment, but only for a moment. He had these at hand with light-

ning speed, but they were exhausted just as quickly. Viewed close up and entirely without emotion, Wagner's life—to recall a thought expressed by Schopenhauer—has a great deal that is reminiscent of a comedy, indeed, of a remarkably grotesque comedy. How the awareness of this, the admission that
5 entire stretches of his life were consumed by grotesque indignity, must affect an artist who more than any other can breathe freely only in the atmosphere of the sublime and the ultrasublime—that gives every thinking person food for thought.

10 Amid such activities, only the most precise portrayal of which can evoke the degree of compassion, horror, and admiration that it deserves, there evolves a *talent for learning* of a sort that is wholly extraordinary even among Germans, the true nation of learners, and from this talent sprang a new danger,
15 one that was even greater than the danger of a rootless, seemingly unstable life, driven hither and thither by a restless illusion. Wagner evolved from an experimenting novice into a consummate master of music and of the stage, an innovator and contributor with regard to all fundamental technical mat-
20 ters. No one will dispute any longer that his claim to fame lies in having provided the supreme model for all art on a grand scale. But he developed into much more, and in order to develop in this way he was spared no more than anyone else the task of acquiring by means of learning the highest forms of cul-
25 ture. And the way he did this! It is a pleasure to see this. From all sides it grows on and in him, and the larger and heavier the edifice becomes, the greater becomes the tension on the arch of his ordering and dominating thought. Yet, nevertheless, it has rarely been so difficult for someone to find access to knowledge
30 and proficiency, and he often had to improvise such access. Wagner, the renewer of the simple drama, the discoverer of the place of the arts in a true human society, the poetic elucidator of past views of life, the philosopher, the historian, the aesthetician and critic; Wagner, the master of language, the mytholo-
35 gist and mythic poet, who was the first to draw a ring around this marvelous, ancient, enormous structure and carve into it

the runes of his mind—what an abundance of knowledge he had to gather together and encompass in order to be able to become all this! And yet the weight of all this did not crush his will to act, nor did the attractions of its individual aspects
5 lead him astray. In order to gauge the singularity of such behavior, take, for example, the great countermodel of Goethe, who both as a learner and a knower appears to be a great river system with many branches, a system, however, whose entire energy does not flow into the sea, but that loses and disperses
10 at least as much energy along its meandering course as it discharges in its delta. True, a being such as Goethe possesses and creates more peace of mind; he is surrounded by a mildness and noble wastefulness, whereas the force and direction of Wagner's current can perhaps frighten people and frighten
15 them off. But let those who are so inclined be afraid; we others want to become all the more courageous by being able to see with our own eyes a hero who, even in regard to modern cultivation, "has not learned to be afraid."

He also never learned to be placated by history and philosophy by drawing on all the enchanting gentleness and resistance
20 to action that they induce. Neither the creative nor the militant artist was diverted from his course by learning and cultivation. As soon as his creative power takes possession of him, history becomes malleable clay in his hands; then he suddenly has a
25 different relationship with it than the scholar, one that more closely resembles the relationship the Greeks had to myth, the relationship one has to things one shapes or poeticizes. Of course, it is one of love and a certain timid reverence, but not without the sovereign privilege of the creative artist. And precisely because history for him is more pliant and mutable than
30 any dream, he can poetically infuse the individual event with the typical aspects of entire ages and thereby achieve in his representation a truth that the historian can never achieve. Where else has medieval chivalry taken on as much body and soul as
35 in *Lobengrin*? And won't the *Meistersinger* tell future generations about the nature of the German spirit; indeed, more than tell

about it, won't it be one of the ripest fruits of this spirit that always seeks reform instead of revolution, and that in spite of the solid foundation of its contentment has not forgotten that noblest form of discontent, the rejuvenating deed?

5 And Wagner's engagement with history and philosophy drove him to precisely this kind of discontent: in them he not only found his weapons and armor; rather, here he came above all to feel the inspiring breeze that blows from the graves of all great fighters, all great sufferers and thinkers. There is no
10 more effective tool for distancing oneself from the contemporary age in its entirety than the use one makes of history and philosophy. To the former, as it is commonly conceived, appears to have fallen the task of giving modern human beings, who run panting and under great exertion toward their goal, a
15 chance to catch their breath, so that they might for a moment feel unharnessed, as it were. What Montaigne as a single individual means to the spiritual agitation of the Reformation, an achieving of serenity with itself, a peaceful being-for-itself and relaxation—and this is certainly how his best reader, Shake-
20 speare, saw him—this is what history now means to the modern spirit. If for a century the Germans have devoted themselves especially to the study of history, then this demonstrates that they are the retarding, inhibiting, pacifying force of the modern world—something that in the minds of some people
25 might accrue to their credit. However, on the whole it is a dangerous symptom when the spiritual struggle of a people is directed predominantly toward the past, a sign of enervation, of regression and weakness, so that they then are dangerously vulnerable to every fever to which they are exposed, for in-
30 stance, to the political fever. In contradistinction to all reform and revolutionary movements, our scholars of today represent just such a condition of weakness in the history of the modern spirit; they have not set themselves the proudest task, but for that they have secured themselves a certain kind of peaceful
35 happiness. To be sure, every freer, more manly step takes us beyond them—although by no means beyond history itself! His-

tory contains wholly different forces, and it is precisely these that people such as Wagner intuit: history just needs to be written for once with a much more serious, rigorous sensibility, created out of the depths of a powerful soul, and above all no longer optimistically, as has always been the case until now—
5 in other words, it must be done differently than it has hitherto been done by German scholars. All their works have an aura of the prettified, submissive, and self-satisfied about them, and they are satisfied with the course of events. It already means a lot if one of them lets it be known that he is satisfied only because things could have turned out worse; most of them believe instinctively that things are just fine the way they just happened to turn out. If history were no longer simply a disguised Christian theodicy, if it were written with more justice and passion,
10 then it would truly be least capable of serving the function it serves today: as an opiate against everything subversive and revitalizing. The situation is similar in the case of philosophy: all that most people want to learn from it is a rough—a very rough!—understanding of things so that they then can adapt themselves to them. And even in its most noble representatives its tranquilizing and comforting power is so strongly exaggerated that those who are indolent and quietistic are led to believe that they are seeking the same thing philosophy seeks. By contrast, it seems to me that the most important question in
20 all of philosophy is the extent to which things possess an unalterable nature and form, so that, once this question has been answered, we can with relentless courage set about the *improvement of that aspect of the world recognized as being alterable*. This is also taught by the true philosophers through their actions, in that they work toward the improvement of the very alterable insights of human beings instead of keeping their wisdom to themselves. It is also taught by the true disciples of true philosophies, who, like Wagner, know how to derive from them an enhanced resolution and determinacy of will, but no sleeping
25 potions. Wagner is most like a philosopher where he is most energetic and heroic. And it is precisely as a philosopher that

he not only passed through the fire of different philosophical systems without being afraid, but through the mist of knowledge and scholarship, as well, and all the while he remained faithful to his higher self, which demanded of him *collective actions of his many-voiced being*, and which commanded him to suffer and learn in order to accomplish those actions.

4

The history of the development of culture since the Greeks is actually quite short if we consider only the actual true distance covered, leaving out periods of stagnation, regression, hesitation, and straying. The Hellenization of the world—and what made this possible, the Orientalization of the Hellenic, the twofold task of Alexander the Great—is still the last great event, and the old question whether it is at all possible to assimilate an alien culture is still the problem with which modern human beings are struggling. It is the rhythmic interplay of these two factors that in particular has determined the course of history to date. Here Christianity, for example, appears as a bit of Oriental antiquity that human beings thought through and pursued, with excessive diligence, to its logical conclusion. With the waning of its influence, the power of Hellenic culture once again waxes; we are experiencing phenomena that are so odd that they would inexplicably float in the air if we were not able to span a vast expanse of time and link them to Greek analogies. Thus there are such affinities and kinships between Kant and the Eleatics, between Schopenhauer and Empedocles, between Aeschylus and Richard Wagner, that we are almost tangibly admonished about the extremely relative nature of all conceptions of time. It almost seems as though some things are simply interconnected, and time is but a cloud that makes it difficult for our eyes to perceive their interconnection. The history of the exact sciences, in particular, gives the impression that today we have the most immediate affinities with the Greek Alexandrian world, as though the pendulum of history is once again swinging back to that point at which it

first began its swing into enigmatic distance and dissipation. The picture of our contemporary world is by no means a new one, and those who know history must increasingly have the feeling that they are recognizing the features of an old familiar
5 face. The spirit of Hellenic culture is infinitely dispersed in our present-day world: while forces of all sorts press upon us and we offer in exchange the fruits of modern science and modern accomplishments, the image of the Hellenic once again dawns
10 in pale contours, still far off and ghostly. The earth, which up to this point was sufficiently Orientalized, now yearns once more for Hellenization; anyone who wants to assist the earth in this, of course, is in need of speed and winged feet so as to bring together the most manifold and distant points of knowl-
15 edge, the most distant continents of talent, so as to traverse and rule the entirety of this enormously expansive domain. Hence, now a series of *counter-Alexanders* have become necessary, people who have that most powerful strength, the ability to consolidate and connect, to pull together the most distant threads and prevent the fabric from fraying. Not to cut the
20 Gordion knot of Greek culture, as Alexander did, so that its ends flutter in all corners of the world, but instead *to bind it back together after it has been cut*—that is now the task. I recognize in Wagner just such a counter-Alexander: he spellbinds and joins together what was isolated, weak, and indolent; he possesses,
25 if I may employ a medical term, an *astringent* power; and it is to this extent that he belongs to the great forces of culture. He has mastered the arts, the religions, and the histories of various nations, and yet he is the opposite of a polyhistorian, of a spirit that merely pulls things together and organizes them, for
30 he helps shape and breathe life into those things that he pulls together; he is a *simplifier of the world*. We will not be confused by such a notion if we compare this most general task imposed on him by his genius with that much narrower and more immediate task that we tend first and foremost to associate with
35 the name of Wagner. We expect from him a reformation of the theater: assuming that he were to succeed in this, what

would thereby be accomplished toward that loftier and more distant task?

Well, the modern human being would thereby be changed and reformed: in our modern world one thing is so intimately
5 connected with another that anyone who pulls out just one nail causes the entire edifice to shudder and collapse. Although it may seem an exaggeration to make such a claim about Wagner's reform, the same can be said of any true reform. It is absolutely
10 impossible to produce the highest and purest effect of performing art without at the same time introducing innovation everywhere, in mores and government, in education and commerce. Having become powerful in one area—namely, in this
15 instance, in the realm of art—love and justice must expand further in accordance with the law of their inner necessity and not fall back again to the emotionlessness of their former chrysalis. Even just to comprehend the extent to which the position of
our arts with regard to life is a symbol of the degeneration of
20 this life, the extent to which our theaters are an affront to those who have built and who support them, we must be able to relearn everything anew and come to look upon the usual and the
commonplace as something that is very unusual and complex. A strange obscuring of judgment, a poorly concealed mania for
amusement, for entertainment at any price, pedantic considerations, pomposity, and playing at the earnestness of art on the
25 part of the performers; brutal greed for profit on the part of the owners; the hollowness and thoughtlessness of a society that thinks of the people only in terms of how they can be beneficial or dangerous to this society itself, a society that attends theater
performances and concerts without ever being reminded of its
30 obligations—all this taken together constitutes the oppressive and pernicious atmosphere characteristic of the conditions of contemporary art. But if someone ever grows accustomed to this atmosphere, as our cultivated people have, then he probably believes that it is necessary for his health and feels ill if
35 some constraint or other forces him to do without it for a time. There is really only one way to convince ourselves quickly

how vulgar, indeed, how peculiarly and intricately vulgar our theatrical institutions are: we only need compare them to the onetime reality of the Greek theater! Of course, assuming we knew nothing about the Greeks, our conditions would perhaps
5 be wholly unassailable, and we would consider objections of the sort that Wagner was the first to raise in a grand style to be the daydreams of people who are at home in never-never land. "Given how human beings are," someone might say, "such art is sufficient and appropriate—and they have never been different!" — They have certainly been different, and even today there
10 are human beings for whom all the previous institutions have not been sufficient—this is precisely what the fact of Bayreuth proves. Here you encounter prepared and dedicated spectators, the emotionality of people who are at the peak of happiness and who feel that their whole being is condensed in this happiness so as to be strengthened for further and higher aspirations. Here you encounter the most devoted self-sacrifice of the artist and the drama of all dramas, the victorious creator of a work that itself is the aggregate of a plenitude of victorious artistic
15 deeds. Doesn't it almost seem like magic to be able to encounter such a phenomenon in the present day? Mustn't those who are permitted to participate in it and observe it already be transformed and rejuvenated, so that they now, in turn, can transform and rejuvenate other areas of life? Haven't we found
20 a haven from the desolate vastness of the sea? Aren't the waters tranquil here?—Mustn't anyone who returns from the depth and solitude that hold sway here to the wholly different shallows and marshes of life perpetually ask himself, like Isolde: "How did I ever endure it? How can I go on enduring it?" And
25 if he cannot stand to selfishly conceal his happiness and his unhappiness within himself, then from this moment onward he will seize every opportunity to bear witness to it in actions. "Where are those who suffer under the present institutions?" he will ask. "Where are our natural allies with whom we can fight
30 against the rampant and oppressive proliferation of present-day cultivatedness?" For at present we have only one enemy—at

present!— none other than those “cultivated people” for whom the word “Bayreuth” signifies one of their most profound defeats—they did not participate, they furiously opposed it, or else they displayed that even more effective form of deafness
5 that has now become the weapon of choice brandished by its most circumspect opponents. But precisely because they could not destroy the essence of Wagner himself or obstruct his work by their hostility and malice, we know one more thing: they have revealed that they are weak and that the opposition of
10 those who have been in power so far will not withstand many more attacks. The time is rife for those who wish to conquer and to triumph powerfully; the greatest empires stand waiting, a question mark has been added to the names of the property-holders, insofar as property exists. Thus, for instance, the edi-
15 fice of education has been found to be rotting, and everywhere we find individuals who have already quietly left the building. If only those who are already profoundly dissatisfied with this edifice could be incited to public declarations and open outrage! If only they could be robbed of their despondency!
20 I know: if we were to subtract the tacit contribution of these natures from the yield produced by our entire education system, this would cause a severe bloodletting, one that perhaps would weaken the system itself. From among the scholars, for instance, the only ones who would remain true to the old regimen
25 would be those infected by political delusions and the literary dilettantes of all sorts. The repulsive structure that now derives its strengths from its reliance on the spheres of violence and injustice, state and society, and sees its advantage in making these more and more evil and ruthless is weak and exhausted
30 without this reliance; we need only properly despise it for it to collapse into so much rubble. Anyone who fights for love and justice among human beings has little to fear from it, for his actual enemies will stand before him only when he has concluded his battle against their vanguard, present-day culture.
35 For us, Bayreuth signifies the morning consecration on the day of battle. One could do us no greater injustice than to as-

sume that for us it is a matter of art alone, as if it were to function as a medicine and narcotic with which we could cure ourselves of all other miserable conditions. In the image of that tragic work of art at Bayreuth, we witness precisely this
5 struggle of these individuals against everything that confronts them as a seemingly invincible necessity: against power, rule of law, tradition, convention, and the whole order of things. These individuals can live in no more beautiful way than by preparing themselves to die and sacrificing themselves in the
10 battle for justice and love. The gaze with which the mysterious eye of tragedy looks at us is not a debilitating or paralyzing spell. Although tragedy does indeed demand stillness as long as it is looking at us—for art does not exist only for the purpose of the battle itself, but also for the intervals of quiet be-
15 fore and during the battle, for those moments when looking backward and ahead we understand the symbolic, those moments when with the feeling of mild fatigue a refreshing dream comes to us. Day and battle dawn together, the sacred shadows disperse and art is once again far from us, but its comfort
20 accompanies us the entire day. Everywhere else the individual finds only his personal inadequacy, his partial or complete incapacity; whence should he draw the courage to fight if he has not previously been consecrated to something that is suprapersonal! The greatest suffering that exists for the individual, the
25 lack of a knowledge shared by all human beings, the lack of certainty in ultimate insights, and the disparity in abilities: all this makes him need art. We cannot be happy as long as everything around us is suffering and inflicts suffering on itself; we cannot be moral as long as the course of human events is determined
30 by violence, deceit, and injustice; we cannot even be wise as long as all of humanity has not entered the competition for wisdom and led the individual to life and knowledge in the wisest possible manner. How could a person endure this threefold feeling of inadequacy unless in his fighting, striving, and per-
35 ishing he was capable of recognizing something sublime and meaningful, unless he learned from tragedy to take pleasure in

the rhythm of great passion and in the sacrifices it demands? To be sure, art is no teacher or educator for immediate action; the artist is never an educator or adviser in this sense; the objects for which the tragic heroes strive are not things worth striving
 5 for in and of themselves. As in a dream, as long as we feel transfixed by the spell of art, the value of things is altered: those things that, while we are under art's spell, we deem so worthy of being aspired to that we agree with the tragic hero when he chooses to die rather than to renounce them—in real life such
 10 things are rarely deserving of the same value and effort. That is why art is precisely the activity of the human being in repose. The battles art shows are simplifications of the real battles of life; its problems are abbreviations of the infinitely complicated equation of human acting and willing. But the greatness and
 15 indispensability of art lies precisely in the fact that it arouses the *semblance* of a more simple world, of an easier solution to the riddles of life. No one who suffers from life can do without this semblance, just as no one can do without sleep. The more difficult our knowledge of the laws of life becomes, the more
 20 ardently we desire that semblance of simplification, even if only for brief moments—the greater becomes the tension between the universal knowledge of things and the intellectual-moral capacity of the individual. Art exists *so that the bow does not break*.

The individual should be consecrated to something supra-
 25 personal—that is what tragedy seeks; the individual is supposed to forget the terrible anxiety that death and time cause him, for even in the briefest moments, in the tiniest atom of his lifetime he can encounter something sacred that abundantly compensates him for all his fighting and need—this is what
 30 it means *to have a tragic disposition*. And even if all of humanity should have to perish—who could doubt this!—it has been charged, as its supreme task for all future generations, with the goal of growing together into oneness and commonality so that it can confront its impending doom *as a whole* and with
 35 a *tragic disposition*. This supreme task comprises all the ennoblement of the human being; its ultimate rejection would produce

the bleakest picture imaginable to a friend of humanity. This is how I feel! There is only one hope and one guarantee for the future of what is human: it consists in *preventing the tragic disposition from dying out*. A cry of unequaled woe would resound
5 across the earth if human beings were ever to completely lose this disposition, and, on the other hand, there is no more blissful pleasure than to know what we know—how tragic thought has once again been born into the world. For this is a wholly
suprapersonal and universal pleasure, a rejoicing of humanity
10 at the guaranteed cohesion and continuation of all that is fundamentally human.—

5

Wagner placed contemporary life and the past under an intellectual searchlight strong enough to penetrate into uncom-
15 monly distant regions: that is why he is a simplifier of the world, for the simplification of the world has always meant that the gaze of the intellect has once again mastered the incredible manifoldness and desolateness of an apparent chaos and has combined into a unity what previously was irreconcil-
20 ably disconnected. Wagner accomplished this by discovering a relationship between two things that appear to live alien and cold to each other in separate spheres: between *music and life* as well as between *music and drama*. Not that he invented or was the first to create these relationships; they exist and actually
25 lie at everyone's feet, just as every great problem resembles a precious stone that thousands pass by without noticing until someone finally picks it up. What does it mean, Wagner asks himself, that precisely an art such as music has emerged with such incomparable strength in the life of contemporary human
30 beings? We need not think poorly of this life to see a problem here; no, if we consider all the great forces that are peculiar to this life and visualize the image of a powerfully striving existence that fights for *conscious freedom* and *independence of thought*—then the appearance of music does, indeed, seem to be an
35 enigma. Must we not say: music simply *could* not emerge from

this age! But then, what is its existence? A chance accident? Certainly, a single great artist could also be an accident, but the appearance of a series of great artists of the sort evident in the history of modern music, an event paralleled only once before, in the age of the Greeks, leads us to believe that necessity and not chance holds sway here. Precisely this necessity is the problem to which Wagner gives an answer.

Wagner was the first to recognize a state of distress that extends as far as the civilization that binds nations together: everywhere in this civilized world *language* is diseased, and the pressure of this monstrous sickness weighs on the whole of human development. Because language always had to climb up to the very last rungs it could reach, so that, removed as far as possible from the powerful emotions that it was originally able to express with great simplicity, it might grasp the opposite of emotion, the realm of thought—because of this excessive overreaching, language has exhausted itself over the brief time period of modern civilization. As a result, it is no longer able to accomplish what it exists for in the first place: to enable suffering human beings to communicate with one another about their most basic necessities of life. In their time of need, human beings can no longer divulge themselves by means of language, that is, they cannot truly communicate their thoughts; in this obscurely sensed circumstance, language has everywhere become an autonomous force that now clasps human beings in its ghostly arms and pushes them in directions in which they do not really wish to go. As soon as they seek to communicate with one another and join together to accomplish a task, they are seized by the madness of general concepts, indeed, by the pure sounds of words, and as a result of this inability to communicate their thoughts, the creations of their collective sensibility bear the mark of this mutual misunderstanding, insofar as they do not accord with their true needs but only with the hollowness of those tyrannical words and concepts. Thus, humanity adds to all its sufferings its suffering under *convention*, that is, agreement in words and actions without agreement in

feelings. Just as in the decline of any art form a point is reached where its pathologically proliferating techniques and forms attain a tyrannical power over the young souls of artists and enslave them, so today, during the decline of languages, we have become the slaves of words. Under this pressure no one is capable of revealing himself or speaking without inhibitions, and only very few are able to preserve their individuality while doing battle with a form of education that does not believe it necessary to prove its success by catering to clear feelings and needs, but rather by enmeshing the human being in the web of "clear concepts" and teaching him to think correctly. As if there were any value whatsoever in making someone into a being who thinks and reasons correctly if he has not first been made into someone who feels correctly. When now, the music of our German masters resounds in a humanity so severely crippled, what is it that actually resounds? Nothing other than *correct feeling*, the enemy of all convention, of all artificial alienation and unintelligibility between human beings. This music is the return to nature, while at the same time it is purification and transformation of nature, for the need for such a return emerged in the soul of the most loving human beings, and *what rings out in their art is nature transformed into love*.

Let's take this as one of Wagner's answers to the question: What is the meaning of music in our age? He also has a second answer. The relationship between music and life is not simply that of one type of language to another type of language, it is also the relationship of the complete auditory world to the entire visual world. However, taken as a phenomenon for the eye and compared with previous phenomena of life, the existence of modern human beings evinces an unspeakable poverty and exhaustion, and this despite the unspeakable variety of colors that can satisfy only the most superficial glance. Just look a little more closely and analyze the impression produced by this violently agitated play of colors: is the whole not like the shimmer and sparkle of innumerable little stones and fragments borrowed from previous cultures? Isn't all of it unhar-

nious pomp, imitated movement, presumptuous superficiality? A cloak made of motley rags for someone who is naked and freezing? A seeming dance of joy expected of someone who is suffering? Expressions of exuberant pride flaunted by one who
5 is deeply wounded? And in between them, disguised and concealed only by the speed of movement and the turmoil—gray impotence, gnawing dissatisfaction, laboring boredom, dishonest misery! The phenomenon of the modern human being has become nothing but semblance; he himself is not visible
10 in the image he now presents; instead, he is hidden. And the residue of inventive artistry still preserved in a nation—for instance, among the French or Italians—is devoted to this aesthetic game of hide-and-seek. Wherever “form” is demanded today—in society and entertainment, in literary expression, in
15 commerce between states—this word automatically implies a pleasant appearance, the exact opposite of the true concept of form as a necessary formation that, precisely because it is necessary and not arbitrary, has nothing to do with “pleasant” and “unpleasant.” But even where among civilized nations form is
20 not expressly demanded, we still do not possess that necessary formation; rather, we are only not as satisfied with the pursuit of pleasant appearance, although we are just as eager to achieve it. How *pleasant* appearance sometimes is, and why everyone must be pleased that modern human beings are at least making
25 an effort to foster semblances, is sensed by everyone, to the extent that he himself is a modern human being. “Only the galley slaves know themselves,” Tasso says, “but we politely *misconstrue* others, in the hope that they, in turn, will misconstrue us.”

Now, it is in this world of forms and desired misconstrual
30 that these souls filled with music appear—to what purpose? They move in time to a grand, free rhythm, with noble honesty, with a passion that is suprapersonal; they glow with the powerfully calm fire of the music that issues into the light from an unfathomable depth within them—all this to what purpose?
35 By means of these souls music expresses the longing for its natural sister, *gymnastics*, as its own necessary formation in the

realm of the visible: by seeking and longing for it, music becomes the judge of the entire mendacious world of spectacle and semblance characteristic of the present. This is Wagner's second answer to the question: What is the meaning of music in this age? "Help me," thus he calls out to all who can hear, "Help me discover that culture that my music, as the rediscovered language of genuine emotion, foretells. Reflect on the fact that the soul of music wishes to form a body for itself, that through you it seeks its path to visibility in motion, action, institution, and morality!" There are people who understand this call, and their number is constantly increasing; they also understand as though for the first time what it means to found a state on music—something that the ancient Greeks not only understood but also demanded of themselves. And these same understanding people will condemn the state just as unconditionally as most people already condemn the church. The path to such a new and yet not unprecedented goal will lead us to acknowledge the reasons for the shameful deficiencies in our education and the actual cause of our inability to lift ourselves out of our state of barbarism: our education lacks the moving and forming soul of music. On the contrary, its demands and institutions are the product of an age in which that music in which we now place such significant trust was not yet even born. Our education is the most backward structure of the contemporary world, and it is backward with regard to precisely that single new educational force that distinguishes present-day human beings from those of prior centuries—or at least could distinguish them, if they would only cease to be so mindlessly contemporary and spurred onward by the whip of the moment! Because until now they have not permitted the soul of music to take up residence in them, they have also had no inkling of gymnastics in the Greek and Wagnerian sense of this word. And this, in turn, is the reason why their visual artists are condemned to hopelessness as long as they continue to be willing, as they are now, to dispense with music as their guide to a new world of spectacle. The abundance of talent

that might evolve is irrelevant; it comes too late or too soon, or at any rate, at the wrong time; for it is superfluous and ineffectual, since even the perfected and supreme creations of earlier times, which serve present-day visual artists as models, are superfluous and almost totally ineffectual and can scarcely place one stone upon another. Because in their introspective gaze they see no new figures before them but always only the old ones behind them, they serve history but not life, and they are dead before they have died. But could anyone who senses within himself true, fruitful life—which at present means nothing other than music—possibly be seduced into further hope for even one single moment by anything that exhausts itself in figures, forms, and styles? Such a person is beyond all vanities of this sort, and he no more thinks of finding artistic miracles outside his world of sound than he expects to find great writers in our exhausted and colorless language. Rather than lending an ear to any empty promises, he endures, directing his profoundly dissatisfied gaze at our modern nature: may he be full of bitterness and hate if his heart lacks the warmth for compassion! Even malice and ridicule are better than abandoning himself to a deceptive contentedness and a quiet drunkenness in the manner of our “art lovers”! But even if he is capable of more than negating and ridiculing, if he can love, show compassion, and assist, he *must* nonetheless first negate in order to blaze a path for his helpful soul. In order for music one day to arouse devotion in many people and give them intimate knowledge of its supreme intentions, we first have to put an end to the entire pleasure-seeking trafficking in so sacred an art. The foundation upon which our artistic entertainments, theaters, museums, and concert societies rest is none other than that “art lover,” who must be banished. The state favor that has been showered on his wishes must be transformed into disfavor; public opinion, which places inordinate value on providing training in precisely this type of love of art, must be swept away by a better opinion. In the meantime, we must even consider the *avowed enemy of art* to be a true and useful ally,

since that to which he declares himself hostile is nothing other than art as conceived by our “art lover”; indeed, he knows of no other kind of art! May he, in any case, charge to the account of this art lover the senseless waste of money spent on
5 the building of his theaters and public memorials, the engaging of his “famous” singers and actors, and the maintaining of his wholly fruitless art academies and painting collections—not to mention all the energy, time, and money that every household squanders on the education of supposed “aesthetic interests.”
10 Here there is no hunger and no satiety, but instead always only a dull game of pretending at both, conceived as a vain exhibition designed to mislead the judgment of others. Or even worse, since art is taken relatively seriously here, they demand of it even the production of some sort of hunger and desire, and
15 they see its task as precisely this artificial production of excitement. Almost as if they were afraid of being destroyed by their own disgust and apathy, they conjure up all the evil demons in order to have themselves chased like wild animals by these hunters. They thirst for suffering, anger, hatred, passion, sudden
20 terror, breathless tension, and they summon the artist to be the one who conjures up this ghostly chase. In the spiritual economy of our cultivated people today, art is either an utterly spurious or a humiliating, degrading need, either a nothing or an evil something. The artist, the better and less common one,
25 as though caught up in an intoxicating dream, fails to see this, and he hesitatingly repeats in an uncertain voice ghostly, beautiful words that he thinks he hears from very remote places but cannot perceive distinctly enough. On the other hand, the artist of the modern stamp is full of contempt for the dreamlike
30 groping and talk of his nobler colleague and drags along with him on a leash the entire howling pack of bastardized passions and atrocities so that he can set them loose at will on modern human beings; they prefer to be hunted, wounded, and torn to pieces rather than to have to live with themselves in solitude.
35 With themselves!—this thought sends shockwaves through the modern soul, it is *its* fear and ghastly anxiety.

When I see in populous cities how thousands pass by with expressions of numbness or haste on their faces, I continually say to myself: they must be dispirited. But for all these people art exists only so that they will become even more dispirited, 5 even more numb and mindless, or even more hasty and desirous. For they are incessantly driven and drilled by *false feeling*, and it prevents them from admitting to themselves their own wretchedness. If they wish to speak, convention whispers something into their ears, causing them to forget what it was 10 they actually wanted to say; if they want to communicate with one another, their reason is paralyzed as if by magic spells, so that they call their unhappiness happiness and willfully collaborate in their own misfortune. In this manner they are wholly transformed and reduced to will-less slaves of false feeling.

6

I want to demonstrate on the basis of just two examples how perverted feeling has become in our age and how the age itself has no awareness of this perversity. Previously people looked down with honest superiority upon those who traffic in money, 20 even though they were in need of them; it was admitted that every society has to have its bowels. Now they are the dominant power in the soul of modern humanity, the group most coveted. Previously people were especially admonished not to take the day, not to take the moment, too seriously, and the 25 *nil admirari* and concern for the matters of eternity were recommended; now there is only one form of seriousness left in the human soul, that concerned with the news conveyed by newspaper or telegraph. "Use the moment, and pass judgment on it as quickly as possible in order to derive use from it!"— 30 We are tempted to believe that there is also only one virtue left to contemporary human beings: the virtue of presence of mind. Unfortunately, it is in truth more like the omnipresence of a filthy, insatiable greed and an all-intrusive curiosity that has taken possession of everyone. Whether *mind* is at all 35 *present* today—we shall leave the examination of this question

to those future judges who someday will run modern humanity through their critical sieve. But this age is clearly vulgar; this we can already recognize today, since it venerates the things that former, noble ages despised. But despite the fact that it
5 has appropriated the entire wealth of past wisdom and art and struts about in this most priceless of all garments, it nevertheless displays an uncanny self-consciousness of its own vulgarity in the fact that it does not use this cloak for warmth, but only to deceive others about itself. The need to disguise and conceal
10 itself appears to this age more urgent than the need to keep from freezing. Thus, present-day scholars and philosophers do not use the wisdom of India and Greece so as to attain wisdom and peace within themselves; their work is merely supposed to provide the present with a deceptive reputation
15 for wisdom. Researchers in natural history are concerned with portraying the bestial outbreaks of violence and cunning and revenge characteristic of the present-day interaction between states and human beings as immutable laws of nature. Historians are anxiously eager to prove the proposition that every
20 age has its own form of justice, its own conditions—in order to prepare the basic principles for the defense of our age in the future trial it will have to face. Our theories of the state, of the nation, of economy, trade, and justice—all these now have that *preparatory apologetic* character. Indeed, it seems as though
25 whatever mind is still functioning without being used to drive the great mechanism of accumulation and power has the sole task of defending and excusing the present.

Against what accusers? We ask this in astonishment. Against our own bad conscience.

30 And with this, the task of modern art suddenly becomes clear: to stupefy or intoxicate! To drug or deaden. To make one's conscience unconscious, one way or the other! To help the modern soul escape its feeling of guilt—at least for a moment—rather than help it return to innocence! To defend the
35 human being against himself by forcing him to remain silent and by plugging his ears!—Those few people who have experi-

enced just once this most humiliating task, this terrible degradation of art, will forever be filled with misery and pity—but also with a new, overpowering longing. Anyone who would seek to liberate art, to restore its desecrated sanctity, would first
5 have to liberate himself from the modern soul; only as someone who himself was innocent could he discover the innocence of art, and hence he has to perform two tremendous acts of purification and consecration. If he were successful in this and were to speak to human beings with his liberated art from out
10 of a liberated soul, only then would he face the gravest danger, the most vicious battle: human beings would rather tear him and his art to shreds than admit that they must shrink before it in humiliation. It would be possible for the redemption of art, which provides the only ray of hope in the modern age, to
15 remain an event for a few solitary souls, whereas the majority would continue to stare into the flickering and smoking fire of their art; they do not *want* light, but only blindness; indeed, they *hate* light—when it is cast on themselves.

Hence they avoid the new bringer of light, but he pursues
20 them, compelled by the love from which he is born, and he wants to compel them. “You *must* pass through my mysteries,” he calls to them, “you need to experience their purifying and disruptive power. Dare to do it for the sake of your own salvation, and leave behind you for once that dimly illuminated bit
25 of nature and life that is all you seem to know. I will lead you into a realm that is just as real; after you have returned from my cave to your daylight, you yourselves shall decide which life is more real, which, in fact, is daylight and which is cave. Inner nature is far richer, far more powerful, blissful, and ter-
30 rible; you do not know it, given the way you usually live. Learn how to become nature again yourselves, and then let yourselves be transformed with and in nature by the magic of my love and fire.”

It is the voice of *Wagner's art* that speaks to human beings in
35 this manner. That we, children of a pitiful age, are the first to be permitted to hear its sound shows just how worthy of pity

this age must be. And it shows, moreover, that true music is a piece of fate and primal law, for it is absolutely impossible to infer the fact that it is resounding at precisely this time from an empty, meaningless accident. A Wagner who appeared by accident would have been crushed by the overpowering force of the other element into which he was thrown. But the development of the true Wagner is governed by a transfiguring and legitimizing necessity. His art, viewed in its genesis, is the most magnificent spectacle, regardless of how painful its evolution might have been, for everywhere it manifests reason, law, and purpose. Caught up in the pleasure of this spectacle, the viewer will praise this painful evolution itself, and he will delight in the fact that everything must evolve for the good and profit of primordially determined nature and talent, regardless of the difficulty of the trials through which it had to pass. He will delight in the fact that every danger makes it more courageous, every victory more reflective, and that it is nourished by poison and misfortune and nevertheless remains healthy and strong. It is stimulated and goaded by the ridicule and antipathy of the surrounding world; if it goes astray, it returns home from this error and straying with the most marvelous booty; if it sleeps, "it sleeps merely to restore its strength." It steels its own body and makes it more robust; it does not feed off life, however long it lives; it rules over the human being like a winged passion and permits him to fly at precisely that moment when his foot is exhausted by plodding through sand or chafed by treading on stones. It cannot help but proclaim that everyone should collaborate in its work, it is not stingy with its gifts. Rejected, it gives more lavishly; misused by those to whom it has given, it adds to its gifts the most precious treasure it possesses — and as both the oldest and the most recent experiences tell us, never were the recipients wholly worthy of the gift. This is why primordially determined nature, by means of which music speaks to the world of visual phenomena, is the most enigmatic thing under the sun, an abyss in which strength and goodness are united, a bridge between self and nonself. Who is capable of

clearly naming the purpose for which it exists, even if we are able to guess that purposiveness from the manner of its evolution? But a blissful presentiment may permit us to ask: Could the greater really exist only for the sake of the lesser, the greatest talent for the sake of the smallest, the supreme virtue and sanctity for the sake of the frailest? Did true music have to resound because human beings *were least deserving of it but most in need of it*? Immerse yourself just once in the boundless wonder of this possibility: if from this perspective we look back on life, then it radiates—no matter how dim and obscured it may previously have appeared. —

7

Nothing else is possible: the viewer who gazes upon a nature such as Wagner's must involuntarily be thrown back from time to time on himself, on his own insignificance and frailty, and he asks himself: "What does this nature want from you? Why do *you* actually exist?" — He probably will be at a loss for an answer and be riveted by astonishment and bewilderment at his own being. Perhaps he may be content with having experienced this; perhaps he may even hear an answer to that question in the fact that he *feels alienated from his own being*. For it is with this feeling that he participates in Wagner's most powerful expression of life, in the nucleus of his strength, that demonic *transferability* and self-renunciation of his nature that can impart itself to others just as well as it can impart others to itself, and that finds its greatness in this give-and-take. Even as the viewer seems to succumb to Wagner's outpouring and overflowing nature, he takes part in its energy and hence becomes powerful, as it were, *through him* and *against him*. And everyone who examines himself closely knows that even observation demands a mysterious antagonism, the antagonism of looking things in the face. If his art permits us to experience everything that a soul experiences when, in its wanderings, it empathizes with other souls and their destinies and learns to view the world through many eyes, so we are also able, from our position of estrange-

ment and remoteness, to see him himself after we have experienced him himself. We then feel with utter certainty: in Wagner everything visible in the world wants to deepen itself and intensify its inwardness by becoming audible, and it searches for its lost soul. At the same time, in Wagner everything audible in the world wants to emerge and rise up into light as a phenomenon for the eye, it wants, as it were, to assume bodily form. His art always leads him in two directions, out of the world as auditory drama into an enigmatically related world as visual drama and vice versa: he is constantly forced—and the viewer with him—to retranslate visible motion into soul and primal life and, on the other hand, to see the hidden fabric of the inner world as a visual phenomenon and to give it the semblance of a body. All this is the essence of the *dithyrambic dramatist*, this term understood so broadly that it includes at once the actor, the poet, and the composer—and this term must necessarily be drawn from the single perfect manifestation of the dithyrambic dramatist prior to Wagner, from Aeschylus and his fellow Greek artists. If one has tried to derive the most magnificent developments from inner constraints or deficiencies—if for Goethe, for instance, literature was a kind of compensation for his thwarted desire to be a painter; if we can speak of Schiller's dramas as a kind of displaced populist oratory; if Wagner himself seeks to attribute the Germans' promotion of music to, among other things, the fact that, lacking the impetus of a naturally melodic singing voice, they were forced to conceive music with the same profound seriousness with which the people of the Reformation conceived Christianity—if, in a similar manner, we wanted to link Wagner's development with such an inner constraint, then we would probably have to assume that he had a natural theatrical gift that had to renounce the most traditional, most trivial means of attaining satisfaction, and that discovered its compensation and salvation in the merging of all the arts to form a great theatrical revelation. But then we would have to be able to say with equal justification that the most powerful musical nature, in its despair over

having to speak with semi- and nonmusicians, forcibly broke down the barriers to the other arts, in order finally to express itself a hundred times more clearly and to compel comprehension, broad populist comprehension. Now, regardless of how
5 we might imagine the development of the primal dramatist, in his maturity and perfection his constitution is without all constraints or deficiencies: the genuinely free artist, who cannot help but think simultaneously in all arts, who mediates and conciliates between apparently separate spheres, who restores
10 to the artistic faculty a unity and totality that cannot be divined or inferred, but only demonstrated through actions. But the person who witnesses this action will be overwhelmed as by the most uncanny, alluring magic; he suddenly stands before a power that suspends the resistance of reason, indeed, that
15 makes everything he has hitherto experienced appear unreasonable and incomprehensible. Transported beyond ourselves, we swim in an enigmatic and fiery medium, no longer understand ourselves, fail to recognize the familiar; we no longer possess a criterion for judgments; everything governed by laws, every-
20 thing fixed begins to move, every object shines with new colors and speaks to us in new signs. Confronted with this mixture of violent rapture and fear, one would have to be Plato to be able to be as decisive as Plato was and tell the dramatist: "We seek a man who as a result of his wisdom would be able to be-
25 come everything that is possible and imitate all things, a man whom, when he enters our republic, we would honor as something sacred and miraculous, anoint his head with myrrh, and crown with a garland of wool—but then seek to persuade to move to some other city." Perhaps someone who lives in Plato's
30 republic can and must bring himself to say something of this sort; the rest of us, however, who do not live in this republic, but instead in states of an entirely different sort, crave and demand that the magician come to us, even though we are afraid
35 of him—precisely so that our state, and the evil reason and power that it embodies, might for once appear negated. A condition of humankind—of its societies, customs, organization,

and institutions as a whole—that could do without the mimetic artist is perhaps no absolute impossibility, and yet this “perhaps” is among the most daring ever expressed, and it essentially amounts to a “very improbable.” The only person who should be free to speak of it is one who could intuitively anticipate and create the supreme moment of all future times, and who then, like Faust, would immediately have to—and have reason to—be stricken with blindness. — For *we* have no reason for this blindness, whereas Plato, for instance, after gazing at the Hellenic ideal, was justified in being blind to all of Hellenic reality. The rest of us, however, need art precisely because we have *learned to see in the face of reality*, and we need the universal dramatist so that he might release us, if only for a matter of hours, from the horrible tension that the seeing human being now senses between himself and the tasks that have been imposed upon him. With him we climb up the highest rungs of sensation and believe that it is only here that we are once again in free nature and in the realm of freedom. From this perspective we see, as if in vast mirages, ourselves and those who share in our struggles, triumphs, and demise as something sublime and meaningful; we take pleasure in the rhythm of passion and in its sacrifice, we hear with every powerful step of the hero the dull echo of death, and when close to death we understand the supreme stimulus to life. — Thus transformed into tragic human beings, we return to life in a mood of peculiar comfort, with a new sense of certainty, just as if we had returned from great perils, excesses, and ecstasies to the limitedness of home: to that place where we can treat each other with consideration, or at least more nobly than before. For everything that here appears to be serious and necessary, as a race to a goal, resembles, when compared with the course that—even if only in a dream—we have traveled, nothing but strangely isolated fragments of those total experiences that we became aware of with horror. Indeed, we will encounter danger and be tempted to take life too lightly, precisely because in art we have conceived it with such uncommon seriousness—to allude to a

remark Wagner made about the course of his own life. For if already to us, who only experience but do not create the art of this dithyrambic drama, the dream seems almost more real than waking reality, how much more must the artist himself sense
5 this opposition! He himself stands amid all the clamoring calls and intrusions of the day, the necessities of life, society, state— as what? Perhaps as though he were the only wakeful person, the only one with a sense for the true and the real, surrounded by confused and tormented sleepers, by nothing but dreamers
10 and sufferers. At times, he himself probably feels as though he is suffering from chronic insomnia, as though he must now spend his life, which has become clear and conscious overnight, with sleepwalkers and ghostly, earnest beings, so that everything that seems to others to be ordinary seems uncanny
15 to him, and he himself feels tempted to confront the impression left by this phenomenon with arrogant derision. But how peculiarly hybrid this feeling becomes when the clarity of his shuddering arrogance is coupled with a wholly different urge, the yearning to descend out of the heights into the depths, the
20 loving longing to return to earth, to the happiness of community—and then, when he thinks of everything that he, as solitary creator, must do without, as if, like a god descending to earth, he were supposed to “lift up to heaven in fiery arms” all that is weak, human, and lost in order finally to find love and
25 not just devotion, and to renounce himself utterly in love! But it is precisely the hybrid form he assumes here that is the actual miracle in the soul of the dithyrambic dramatist, and if any part of his being could ever be grasped with words, then this would have to be it. For the creative moments of his art occur when
30 he is caught in the tension of this hybrid of emotions, and that uncanny, arrogant amazement and surprise at the world is coupled with the ardent longing to approach this same world with love. Whatever glances he then casts on heaven and earth, they are always sunbeams that “draw up moisture,” collect
35 mists, gather thunderheads. *At once clairvoyantly lucid and lovingly selfless*, his glance falls upon the earth, and everything he illu-

minates with the double luminosity of his gaze forces nature with terrible speed to discharge all of its energies, to reveal its most deeply hidden secrets. And nature accomplishes this by means of *modesty*. It is more than a metaphor to say that he took
5 nature by surprise with that glance, that he saw it naked, and in response it seeks to flee modestly to its antitheses. What was formerly invisible, internal, flees into the sphere of the visible and becomes a visual phenomenon; what formerly was only visible flees into the dark sea of sound. *In the attempt to conceal*
10 *itself, nature reveals the essence of its antitheses*. The primal dramatist speaks about what is occurring in him and in nature in a violently rhythmic and yet floating dance, in ecstatic gestures; the dithyramb of his movements is just as much shuddering understanding and arrogant perspicacity as it is a drawing near out
15 of love and joyful self-renunciation. Intoxicated, the word follows the flow of this rhythm; paired with the word, the melody resounds; and the melody, in turn, throws its sparks farther into the realm of images and concepts. A dreamlike visual phenomenon that is similar and dissimilar to the image of nature
20 and of its wooer floats by; it condenses into more humanlike figures, it expands as the consequence of an act of arrogant, heroic willing, of an ecstatic demise and end to willing.— This is how tragedy comes into being; this is how life is presented with its most marvelous wisdom, the wisdom of tragic
25 thought; this, finally, is how the greatest magician and benefactor among mortals evolves—the dithyrambic dramatist.—

8

Wagner's actual life—that is, the gradual revelation of the dithyrambic dramatist—was at the same time a nonstop battle
30 with himself, to the extent that he was not only this dithyrambic dramatist. The only reason his battle with the world that opposed him was so fierce and uncanny was because he heard the voice of this “world,” this alluring enemy, speaking from within himself, and because he harbored within him a powerful
35 demon of opposition. When the *ruling thought* of his life arose

within him—that theater had the potential to exert an incomparable influence, an influence greater than that exerted by any other art form—it unleashed in his being the most violent ferment. This did not immediately call forth a clear, lucid decision
5 about his subsequent desires and actions; at first this thought appeared almost solely in the form of temptation, as the expression of that ominous personal will that insatiably longs for *power and glory*. Influence, incomparable influence—But how? Over whom?—From that moment on, this was the question
10 and quest that filled his heart and mind. He wanted to triumph and conquer as no artist had ever done before and, if possible, to achieve with a single blow that tyrannical omnipotence toward which he was so darkly driven. With a jealous, penetrating gaze he sized up everything that was successful, and he paid
15 even closer attention to those who had to be influenced. By means of the magical eye of the dramatist, who can read souls as easily as the most familiar text, he probed the spectator and listener, and although this insight often made him uncomfortable, he immediately seized upon the means to master his audience. These means were at his fingertips; whatever powerfully
20 affected him, he was also willing and able to create; at every stage he understood just as much about his paragons as he himself was able to produce; he never doubted his own ability to create whatever pleased him. Perhaps he is in this respect
25 an even “more presumptuous” person than Goethe, who said of himself: “I always thought I had everything; a crown could have been placed on my head and I would have thought it a matter of course.” Wagner’s ability, his “taste,” and likewise his intention—all three of these always fit together just like a key
30 fits a lock: together they *became* great and free—but at this time they had not yet achieved this. Of what concern to him was the feeble, if more noble and yet selfishly solitary, feeling of this or that art lover raised far from the great multitudes in a literary or aesthetic environment! But those violent storms of the soul
35 that are produced in the great multitudes through individual augmentations of the dramatic hymn, that sudden, contagious

intoxication of their hearts, thoroughly honest and selfless—that was the echo of his own experience and feeling; with this he was pervaded by an ardent hope for supreme power and influence! Thus he understood *grand opera* as the means through which he could express his ruling thoughts; his desire urged him on to opera, and he directed his gaze toward its home. A lengthy period of his life, including the boldest changes in his plans, studies, domiciles, and acquaintances, can be explained only by this desire and the external resistance that the impoverished, restless, passionately naive German artist was bound to encounter. Another artist understood better what it took to become a master in this field, and now that we have gradually become aware of the extensive, artificially spun web of influences of every sort with which Meyerbeer prepared and achieved his victories and how meticulously he weighed even the succession of “effects” in an opera, we can also understand the degree of humiliating bitterness that overcame Wagner when his eyes were opened to the “artistic devices” the artist was virtually obliged to employ in order to achieve success with the audience. I doubt that there was ever another great artist in all of history who started out with such a tremendous error and who so uncritically and guilelessly pursued the most revolting form of his art, and yet the manner in which he did this demonstrated greatness, and it hence was astonishingly fruitful. For out of the despair that stemmed from recognizing his error, he came to comprehend the nature of modern success, the nature of the modern public, and the whole mendacious nature of modern art. By becoming a critic of “effects,” he arrived at the first chilling inklings of how he himself might be purged. From this moment on, it was as if the spirit of music spoke to him with an entirely new spiritual magic. Like someone returning to the light of day after a long illness, he scarcely trusted his hand and eye any longer and just groped along, and thus he considered it a wonderful discovery that he was still a composer, still an artist—indeed, that he had only now become one.

Every further stage in Wagner’s development is marked by

the fact that the two basic forces of his being joined ever more closely together: the aversion of the one for the other diminishes, and from this moment on the higher self no longer condescends to be of service to its violent, more earthly brother; 5 rather it *loves* him and must serve him. Ultimately, having reached the end of its development, what is most gentle and most pure is contained in what is most powerful; the turbulent drive pursues its course as before to that place where the higher self is at home, but by following other paths; and once more 10 it descends to earth and recognizes its own likeness in everything earthly. If it were possible to speak in this manner of the ultimate aim and conclusion of that development and still remain intelligible, then we ought to be able to find the metaphorical expression that could designate a lengthy intermediate 15 stage of that development, but I doubt that this is possible and therefore will not attempt it. This intermediate stage can be historically delimited from the earlier and later stages by two phrases: Wagner becomes a *social revolutionary*, and Wagner recognizes the only hitherto existing artist, *the poeticizing common 20 people*. The ruling idea, which, following that great despair and atonement, appeared to him in a new guise and mightier than ever before, led him to both of these. Influence, incomparable influence by means of the theater!—But over whom? He shuddered at the thought of those whom he had previously 25 wanted to influence. On the basis of his experience he understood the entirely humiliating position in which art and artists find themselves: how a society without soul or with a calloused soul, a society that calls itself good but is actually evil, numbers art and artists among its slavish retinue for the gratification 30 of its *illusory needs*. Modern art is a luxury; he comprehended this just as thoroughly as he did the corollary that it will stand and fall with the rights of this luxury society. In just the same way as this luxury society knew how to exploit its power in the most hardhearted and clever way in order to render those who 35 are powerless, the common people, ever more subservient, abject, and less populist and to transform them into modern

“workers,” it also stripped the common people of their greatest and purest possessions, of their myths, their song making, their dances, their distinctive language, of those things that they produced for themselves out of their deepest need and in which they, the only true artists, mild-heartedly communicated their souls—and it did this only in order to distill from them a lascivious antidote to the exhaustion and boredom of its existence: the modern arts. How this society came into being; how it knew how to draw new energies from apparently conflicting spheres of power; how, for instance, a Christianity that had degenerated into hypocrisy and half-truths let itself be used as a bulwark against the common people, as a means to protect this society and its possessions; and how scholarship and scholars submitted only too docilely to this slave labor—Wagner traced all of this through the ages until, reaching the end of his examination, he leaped to his feet in disgust and rage; he had become a revolutionary out of compassion with the common people. From now on he loved them and yearned for them as he yearned for their art, for alas!, only in them, only in the vanishing, scarcely perceptible, artificially remote common people did he now find the only spectators and audience who could possibly be worthy of and equal to the power of his work of art as he envisioned it. Thus his reflections came to a head around the question: How does a common people come into being? How is it resurrected?

He always found only one answer: if a multitude suffered the same need that he was suffering, he told himself, they would be the common people. And where the same need would lead to the same urge and desire, the same type of gratification would have to be sought, the same type of happiness experienced in this gratification. When he then looked around to see what it was that most profoundly comforted and heartened him in his need, what met his need with the greatest sensitivity, then he became aware with blissful certainty that this could only be myth and music: myth, which he knew as the product and language of the common people’s need; music, which had a simi-

lar if yet more enigmatic origin. He bathes and heals his soul in these two elements; they are what he most fervently needs: from this he could infer how closely his need was related to that of the common people when it came into being, and how
5 this common people would then have to come into being again once there were *many Wagners*. How did myth and music manage to live in our modern society—to the extent that they had not fallen victim to it? They had suffered a similar fate, which bears witness to their mysterious kinship. Myth had been profoundly
10 debased and distorted, refashioned into “fairy tales,” into the playfully pleasing possession of the children and women of the atrophied common people, entirely stripped of their wonderful, serious and sacred masculine nature. Music had survived among the poor and humble, among solitary people; the Ger-
15 man musician had not succeeded in integrating himself happily into the luxury industry of art; he himself had become a monstrous, cryptic fairy tale full of the most stirring sounds and signs, a helpless questioner, something totally bewitched and in need of redemption. Here the artist clearly heard the
20 command that was given to him and him alone: to return myth to the realm of the masculine and to release music from the spell cast upon it, to make it able to speak. He suddenly felt his strength for *drama* unfettered and his mastery over an as yet undiscovered middle realm between myth and music established.
25 His new work of art, in which he merged everything powerful, effective, and enrapturing that he knew, he now placed before human beings with his great, painfully incisive question: “Where are those who have the same suffering and the same need as I? Where is the multitude in which I yearn to
30 find a common people? I will recognize you by the fact that you ought to have the same happiness, the same consolation in common with me: your suffering will be revealed to me in your happiness!” This is what he asked with *Tannhäuser* and *Lobengrin*, and he looked around for his equals; the solitary person
35 thirsted for the multitude.

But how must he have felt? No one gave an answer, no one

had understood his question. Not that all remained silent; on the contrary, people answered a thousand questions he had not asked, they chattered about the new works of art as if they had actually been created only in order to be discussed to death. The entire aesthetic mania for scribbling and jabbering broke out among the Germans like a fever; people sized up and fiddled around with these works of art and the artist's person with that lack of shame that is no less peculiar to German scholars than it is to German journalists. Wagner turned to his writings in an attempt to make his question more intelligible: new confusion, new buzzing — at that time a composer who wrote and thought was for all the world simply inconceivable. So they cried out: "He's a theoretician who wants to reform art by means of clever concepts; stone him!" — Wagner was stunned; his question was not understood, his need not felt. His work of art seemed to be a communication to the deaf and blind, his "common people" a figment of the imagination. He staggered and faltered. The possibility of a total overthrow of all things appears before his eyes, and he no longer is terrified by this possibility: maybe a new hope can be established beyond the upheaval and destruction — and maybe not. In any case, nothingness is better than a repulsive something. Soon he was a political refugee and destitute.

And only at this point, precisely when his outer and inner destiny had taken such a frightful turn, does that period begin in the life of the great human being upon which the radiance of supreme mastery shines like the glow of liquid gold! Only now does the genius of dithyrambic drama cast off his last veil! He is alone, the age seems meaningless to him, he has abandoned hope; thus, once more, his gaze at the world sinks into the depths, this time down to the very bottom. Here he sees suffering in the nature of things, and from this point on, having, as it were, become more impersonal, he accepts his share of suffering with more serenity. The desire for supreme power, an inheritance from former circumstances, is now channeled completely into artistic creation; he speaks only through his

art and only with himself, no longer with a public or a common people, and he struggles to lend his art the greatest clarity and competence for such a powerful dialogue. Even the artworks of his previous period were different. In them, too, he
5 had given consideration, although in a delicate and noble way, to immediate effect: this work of art was intended to be a question, it was supposed to call forth an immediate answer; and how often Wagner sought to make it easier for those he asked to understand him—so that he made concessions to them and
10 their inexperience in being asked questions and adapted himself to older artistic forms and means of expression. Where he had reason to fear that his most personal language would be unconvincing or unintelligible, he tried to persuade and present his question in a tongue that was half-foreign to him, but more
15 familiar to his audience. Now there was nothing that could have caused him to make such concessions; now he wanted only one thing: to communicate with himself, to think about the nature of the world in terms of events, to philosophize in sound; what *intentions* remained in him were directed at ultimate
20 *insights*. Those worthy of knowing what transpired in him then, what he discussed with himself in the dark sanctuary of his soul—not many are worthy of it—should hear, watch, and experience *Tristan and Isolde*, the true *opus metaphysicum* of all art, a work on which lies the shattered gaze of a dying man with his
25 insatiable, sweetest of all longings for the mysteries of night and death, far removed from life, which, as what is evil, deceptive, and divisive, shines in the piercing light of a horrible, ghostly dawn. It is a drama with the severest austerity of form, overwhelming in its simple grandeur and precisely suited to the
30 mystery of which it speaks, the mystery of death in life, of unity in duality. And yet there is something more wonderful than this work: the artist himself, who, only a short time afterward, was able to paint a picture of the world in totally different colors, the *Meistersinger of Nuremberg*. Indeed, he was an artist who used
35 both these works merely as a means for rest and refreshment, as it were, so that he could complete with measured haste

that enormous four-part structure, planned and begun before them, the product of twenty years of reflection and writing, his Bayreuth artwork, the *Ring of the Nibelungen*! Anyone who feels amazed at the proximity of *Tristan* and *Die Meistersinger* has
5 failed to understand one important aspect of the life and nature of all truly great Germans: he does not know the ground in which alone that genuinely and uniquely *German cheerfulness* of Luther, Beethoven, and Wagner can grow, a cheerfulness that other nations utterly fail to understand and that present-day
10 Germans themselves appear to have lost: that goldenly radiant, thoroughly fermented blend of simplicity, the penetrating gaze of love, an attentive mind, and mischievousness that Wagner offered as the most delicious drink to all those who profoundly suffered from life but have turned to face it once
15 more with the smile of the convalescent. And while Wagner himself looked upon the world with a more conciliatory gaze, while he was less frequently seized by wrath and disgust, more likely to renounce power out of sorrow and love than to recoil from it, while he quietly pushed ahead with his greatest work,
20 completing one score after another, something occurred that made him stop and take notice: *friends* arrived, announcing to him an underground movement of many hearts—it was by no means the “common people” that moved here and announced itself, but perhaps the kernel and first life-giving source of a
25 true human society to be realized in a distant future. In the first place it was just a promise that his great work would at some time be able to be entrusted to the watch and ward of loyal human beings who would be charged with, and would be worthy of, guarding this most magnificent legacy to posterity. With the love of his friends, the colors in the daylight
30 of his life began to shine with more radiance and warmth; his most noble concern—to arrive before evening, as it were, at his goal with work in hand and to find a refuge for it—would no longer be his alone. And then an event occurred that he
35 could understand only symbolically and that signified for him new consolation, a propitious sign. A great war waged by the

Germans caused him to look up, a war waged by those same Germans whom he knew to be so profoundly degenerate, so far removed from that lofty German sensibility that he had explored and recognized with profound attentiveness in himself
5 and in the other great Germans of history. He saw that these Germans, when in an utterly horrible situation, displayed two genuine virtues, simple courage and presence of mind, and he began to believe with innermost happiness that he was perhaps not the last German, and that some day an even greater power,
10 one more powerful than the devoted yet scanty strength of his few friends, might stand beside his work for that long period of time in which this work, as the artwork of the future, must wait for that future for which it is predestined. It may be that the more he sought to transform this belief into immediate
15 hopes, the less it could shield him indefinitely from doubt; it was enough that he felt a powerful impulse that reminded him of a lofty *obligation* that had as yet remained unfulfilled.

His work would not be complete, would not have been brought to a conclusion, if it had been entrusted to posterity
20 only as a silent score: he had to demonstrate publicly and teach what was least capable of being divined and what was above all reserved for him, his new style of execution, his performance, so that he might set an example that no one else was capable of setting and thereby found a *stylistic tradition* that is not
25 inscribed in signs on paper, but rather in effects upon the human soul. This had become for him an all the more serious obligation since meanwhile his other works, especially with regard to the style of execution, had suffered the most insufferable and absurd fate: they were famous, admired, and were *butchered*, and
30 nobody seemed outraged. For, as strange as this might seem, although he renounced ever more radically the idea of having success with his contemporaries, whom he evaluated most judiciously, and although he rejected the thought of power, "success" and "power" nonetheless came to him; at least that
35 was what everyone told him. It made no difference that he repeatedly and decisively made it clear that these "successes"

were predicated on utter misunderstandings and that they were hence humiliating to him; people were so little accustomed to seeing an artist strictly distinguish his type of effects that even his most solemn protests were not really taken seriously. After
5 Wagner recognized the connection present-day theaters and theatrical success have with the character of present-day human beings, his soul refused to have anything more to do with this theater. He was no longer concerned with aesthetic fanaticism and the acclaim of excited masses; indeed, he could not help
10 but be enraged when he saw his art indiscriminately devoured by the yawning jaws of insatiable boredom and the hunger for diversion. He inferred from a recurrent phenomenon how shallow and thoughtless every effect had to be, how it was really more a matter of gorging a glutton than of nourishing some-
15 one who was starving: his art was received everywhere, even on the part of those performing and producing it, in the very same way as any other theatrical music composed according to the repulsive cookbook of operatic style; indeed, thanks to cultivated conductors, his works were cut and chopped to fit
20 standard operatic form, just as the singers thought that they could approach them only after they had been carefully voided of all spirit. And where they sought to do things right, they followed Wagner's instructions with such ineptitude and prudish uneasiness that it was almost as if they wanted to stage the
25 gathering crowd on the streets of Nuremberg at night, called for in the second act of *Die Meistersinger*, by using awkwardly choreographed ballet dancers. And in all these instances they seemed to believe that they had acted in good faith and without ulterior motives. Wagner's devoted attempts to indicate
30 through actions and examples the simple correctness and integrity of the performance, at the very least, and to introduce singers to his novel style of execution were repeatedly swept away by the mudslide of ruling mindlessness and habit. More-
over, these attempts always forced him to occupy himself with
35 just that kind of theater whose whole being had begun to disgust him. After all, even Goethe lost all desire to attend the

performances of his *Iphigenie*: "I suffer horribly," he explained, "when I have to cope with these ghosts that do not succeed in taking shape the way they should." At the same time, Wagner's "success" in the theater that had become so repulsive to him
5 continued to grow; ultimately it came to the point that the large theaters lived almost exclusively from the fat profits that Wagnerian opera, deformed into conventional opera, brought in. The confusion over this growing passion of the theatrical public even seized some of Wagner's friends: he—the great
10 martyr!—had to endure the bitterness of seeing his friends intoxicated by "successes" and "victories" when his singularly lofty idea was torn right down the middle and denied. It almost seemed to him as though a people that was in many respects serious and solemn did not want, where its most serious artist was concerned, to let a fundamental frivolity be spoiled, as
15 if this were precisely the reason why everything vulgar, mindless, inept, and malicious in German nature had to be directed at him.—However, when during the German war a greater and freer current seemed to take charge of people's minds,
20 Wagner recalled his obligation to fidelity, so that he could at least rescue his greatest work from this abuse and success that was based on misunderstanding and present it in its authentic rhythm, establishing it as an example for all ages: thus he conceived the *idea of Bayreuth*. In the wake of that current that
25 had taken charge of people's minds, he believed that he saw a heightened sense of obligation awaken in those to whom he wished to entrust his most precious possession: and it was out of this feeling of mutual obligation that the event arose that, like a strange ray of sunlight, illuminates the series of years that
30 immediately precede and follow it. Designed for the benefit of a distant, merely possible, but not demonstrable future, to the contemporary age and those human beings who are nothing but contemporary it is little more than an enigma or an abomination; for the few who were able to contribute to it, it
35 is a foretaste, a fore-experiencing, of joy and life of the highest sort through which they are made aware that they are happy

and will bestow happiness and fruitfulness well beyond their span of years; for Wagner himself a dark night of toil, worry, reflection, and grief, a new raging of the hostile elements, but everything bathed in the radiance of the star of *selfless fidelity*, and, in this light, transformed into unspeakable happiness!

We scarcely need to say it: an air of tragedy surrounds this life. And everyone who can intuit something of it from out of his own soul, everyone who is not wholly unfamiliar with the constraint of a tragic illusion about the aim of life, the bending and breaking of intentions, and the renunciation and purification by means of love, must sense a dreamlike remembrance of the great human being's own heroic existence in what Wagner now presents to us in his works of art. It will seem to us as if Siegfried were relating his deeds from a remote distance: the deep sorrow of waning summer is woven into the most touching happiness of memory, and all of nature lies quietly in the yellow evening twilight.—

9

To reflect on what *Wagner the artist is* and to review and reflect on the drama of a truly liberated talent and license: this is necessary for the cure and recovery of anyone who has thought about and suffered over *how Wagner the human being developed*. If art is nothing other than the ability to communicate to others what one has experienced, then every work of art contradicts itself if it cannot make itself understood. Hence Wagner's greatness as artist must consist precisely in that demonic ability to communicate his nature, which speaks of itself in all languages, as it were, and allows his inner, most personal experience to be recognized with supreme clarity. After humanity has grown accustomed to viewing the separation of the arts as a law, his appearance in the history of art is like a volcanic eruption of nature's entire, undivided artistic ability. For this reason, one can vacillate when considering what to call him, whether he should be called—taking each designation in its broadest possible meaning—a poet, or a sculptor, or a com-

poser, or whether a new designation must not in fact be created for him.

The *poetic* in Wagner manifests itself in the fact that he thinks in visible and palpable events, not in concepts; that means that
 5 he thinks mythically, just as the common people have always thought. The basis of myth is not a thought, as the children of an overrefined culture suppose, but rather myth itself is a kind of thought; it communicates an idea of the world, but in a succession of events, actions, and sufferings. The *Ring of the*
 10 *Nibelungen* is an immense system of thought without the conceptual form of thought. Perhaps a philosopher would be able to create something completely equivalent to it, something wholly without image and action that would speak to us solely in concepts; then identical things would be portrayed in dis-
 15 parate spheres, in one instance for the common people, and in another for the antithesis to the common people, the theoretical human being. Wagner does not address himself to the latter, for the theoretical human being understands about as much of what is truly poetic, of myth, as a deaf person does of music;
 20 that is, they both see a movement that seems senseless to them. We cannot look from one of these disparate spheres into the other; as long as we are under the spell of the poet, we think with him, as if we were merely feeling, seeing, and hearing beings; the conclusions we draw are the connections between
 25 the events we see, that is, factual causalities, not logical ones.

If the heroes and gods in mythic dramas of the sort Wagner composes are also supposed to make themselves intelligible in words, then there is no greater danger than that this *ver-*
bal language awakens in us the theoretical human being and
 30 thereby transports us into another, nonmythic sphere, so that ultimately we would not have understood what happened before our eyes more clearly due to the use of words, but instead would have understood nothing at all. This is why Wagner forced language back into a primal state in which it conceives
 35 almost nothing with the help of concepts, a state in which it itself is still poetry, image, and feeling. The fearlessness with

which Wagner tackled this totally terrifying task shows just how powerfully he was guided by the poetic spirit, like someone who must follow regardless of where his ghostly guide takes him. Every word in these dramas had to be able to be sung, and every word was intended for the mouths of gods and heroes: this was the extraordinary demand that Wagner imposed on his verbal imagination. Anyone else would have been disheartened by this task, for our language seems almost too old and ravaged to demand of it what Wagner demanded; and yet when he struck the rock, an abundant stream of water issued forth. Precisely because he loved this language more and demanded more of it, Wagner suffered more than any other German from its degeneration and debilitation, that is, from the manifold losses and mutilations of its forms, from the cumbersome system of particles characteristic of our syntax, from the unsingable helping verbs: these are all things that entered our language by way of sins and corruption. On the other hand, he felt with deep pride the immediacy and inexhaustibility still present in this language even today, the resonant strength of its roots in which he sensed—in contrast to the highly derivative, artificially rhetorical Romance languages—a wonderful inclination and disposition for music, for true music. Wagner's poetry is full of a love for the German language, a warmth and frankness in his dealings with it that, with the exception of Goethe, can be found in no other German. Concreteness of expression, bold terseness, power and rhythmic variation, a remarkable wealth of strong and meaningful words, syntactic simplicity, an almost unique inventiveness in the language of fluctuating emotions and intuition, a populist and proverbial quality that occasionally bubbles up quite purely—these are among the qualities that would have to be enumerated, and even then the one that is most powerful and most worthy of admiration would still have been omitted. Anyone who reads one after the other two such compositions as *Tristan* and *Die Meistersinger* will feel a similar amazement and incredulity for the verbal expression as for the music; he will wonder, namely, how it was possible to have

creative control over two worlds that are as different in form, color, and structure as they are in spirit. This is the most powerful aspect of Wagner's talent, something at which *only* the great master will succeed: to coin a new language for every work and also give the new inwardness a new body, a new sound. Where this rarest of powers expresses itself, that criticism that focuses on sporadic excesses and oddities, or on the more frequent obscurities of expression and conceptual indistinctness, will remain merely petty and unfruitful. Moreover, those who until now have voiced their criticism most loudly have found not so much the language as the soul, the entire manner of suffering and feeling, to be offensive and scandalous. We will wait until these critics themselves have a different soul, for then they, too, will speak a different language; and then, it seems to me, the German language will on the whole be better off than it is today.

But above all, no one who reflects on Wagner the poet and shaper of language should forget that none of Wagner's dramas was meant to be read and hence should not be burdened with the demands we place on spoken drama. Spoken drama seeks to have an effect on the emotions by means of concepts and words alone; given this intention, it falls under the jurisdiction of rhetoric. But passion in life is rarely eloquent; still, in spoken drama it must be eloquent in order to communicate in any manner whatsoever. But if the language of a people is already in a state of decline and decay, then the verbal dramatist is tempted to lend his language and thoughts an unusual color and structure; he wants to elevate language so that it will once more resound with elevated feeling, and in doing so he runs the risk of not being understood at all. Similarly, he seeks to impart a certain sublimity to passion by means of lofty phrases and fanciful notions, and thereby runs another risk: he appears false and artificial. For the real passion of life does not speak in maxims, and poetic passion easily arouses suspicion about its sincerity if it departs from this reality in essential ways. By contrast, Wagner, the first person to recognize the internal defects of spoken drama, presents every dramatic event on three mutu-

ally clarifying levels: verbal expression, gesture, and music. And the music transmits the fundamental internal emotions of the drama's characters immediately to the souls of the audience, who then perceive the first visible signs of those inner
5 events in the gestures of the same character, and recognize in this character's verbal expression a second, paler manifestation of these, translated into a more conscious form of willing. All these effects occur simultaneously and without disrupting one another, and they compel those to whom such a drama is presented to adopt a new mode of understanding and experience,
10 just as if suddenly their senses had become more spiritual and their spirit more sensual, and as if everything that seeks to be released from the human being and thirsts for knowledge suddenly found itself free and blessed in a celebration of knowing. Since every event in a Wagnerian drama communicates itself to the spectator with supreme intelligibility—because it is internally illuminated and inflamed by the music—its creator could dispense with all those means the verbal poet requires in order to give his events warmth and luminosity. The entire economy
20 of the drama could hence be more simple, the rhythmic sense of its architect could once again dare to manifest itself in the great, overall proportions of the edifice, for now there was no longer any reason for that intentional complexity and confusing multiplicity of architectural style by means of which the verbal poet strives to attain a sense of wonder and rapt interest for his work, so as then to intensify them into a feeling of ecstatic amazement. The impression of idealized distance and height could be achieved without relying on artificial devices. Language abandoned rhetorical expansiveness and returned to
30 the concision and power of a language of feeling, and despite the fact that the performing artist spoke much less than previously about what he did and felt in the play, now internal events, which until then had been banished from the stage by the verbal dramatist's fear of what is allegedly undramatic, compelled the listener to passionate participation, while the
35 accompanying language of gesture needed to be expressed in

only the most delicate modulation. To be sure, sung passion is generally of a longer duration than spoken passion; music, as it were, stretches out the emotion; the result of this, in general, is that the performing artist, who is simultaneously a singer, must
 5 overcome the excessively great, unplastic agitation of movement from which the spoken drama suffers when performed. He sees himself drawn to an ennoblement of gesture, and this all the more so since the music has bathed his emotions in a purer ether and thereby has spontaneously brought them closer
 10 to beauty.

The extraordinary tasks Wagner has imposed upon actors and singers will ignite a competition among them that will last for entire generations, and will ultimately represent the image of every Wagnerian hero in his most corporeal visibility and
 15 perfection; just as this perfected corporeality is already prefigured in the music of the drama. Following this guide, the eyes of the plastic artist will finally be opened to the wonders of a new visual world, a world beheld for the first time only by the creator of such works as the *Ring of the Nibelungen*: a supreme
 20 *shaper* who, like Aeschylus, will show the way to an art of the future. Must not jealousy alone awaken great talents when the effect achieved by the plastic artist is compared to that achieved by music like Wagner's, in which there is the purest, brightest happiness, so that anyone who hears it will feel as though all
 25 prior music had spoken an alienated, constrained, and unfree language, as though until now people had wanted to use it to play a game for those who were not worthy of seriousness, or as though it were to be used for purposes of instruction and demonstration for those who are not even worthy of a game. Only
 30 for a few short hours does this older music fill us with that happiness that we always feel when hearing Wagner's music; they seem to be rare moments of forgetfulness that overcome this music, as it were, when it speaks with itself and directs its gaze upward, like Raphael's St. Cecilia, away from the listeners who
 35 demand from it diversion, amusement, or edification.

In general, we can say about Wagner the *composer* that he

gave a language to everything in nature that until now had not wanted to speak; he does not believe that anything must be mute. He even immerses himself in colorful dawns, forests, fog, chasms, mountainous heights, the dread of night, and moonlight and takes note of their secret desire; they too want to resound. When the philosopher says there is one will in animate and inanimate nature that thirsts for existence, then the composer adds: and at every stage this will wants a resounding existence.

10 On the whole, prior to Wagner music had narrow limits; it referred to permanent human states of mind, to what the Greeks call *ethos*, and only with Beethoven did it begin to discover the language of *pathos*, of passionate willing, of dramatic events, in the internal realm of human beings. Prior to
15 that, a mood, a composed, joyous, reverent, or repentant state of mind, expressed itself by means of sound; a certain striking homogeneity of form and the sustained duration of this homogeneity were supposed to compel the audience to interpret the music and ultimately put them in the same mood. For all such
20 images of moods and states of mind individual forms were necessary; others were established by convention. The duration was left to the discretion of the composer, who wanted, of course, to put his listener in a certain mood, but did not want to bore him by having this mood last too long. Things
25 went one step further when the images of contrary moods were evoked in succession and the lure of contrast discovered, and even one step further when the same musical piece contained a contradictory *ethos*, for instance, the opposition between a masculine and a feminine theme. These are all still crude and
30 primitive stages of music. Some laws are dictated by the fear of passion, others by the fear of boredom; every deepening and excess of emotion was considered "unethical." But once the art of *ethos* had portrayed the same common states of mind and moods in hundredfold repetition, it finally exhausted itself, despite the amazing ingenuity of its masters. Beethoven was the
35 first to let music speak a new language, the forbidden language

of passion, but because his art grew out of the laws and conventions of the art of ethos and had to try, as it were, to justify itself to this art, his artistic development was peculiarly difficult and indistinct. An inner, dramatic event— for every passion follows a dramatic course— wanted to break through to a new form, but the traditional system of mood music resisted and spoke up, almost with an attitude of morality, against the emergence of immorality. At times it seems as though Beethoven imposed upon himself the contradictory task of letting pathos express itself through the medium of ethos. But this conception is inadequate for explaining Beethoven's last and greatest works. He truly discovered a new means for reproducing the great sweeping arc of a passion: he selected individual points along its trajectory and indicated them with the greatest possible precision in order then to let the audience *intuit* from these the entire line. Seen from the outside, this new form looked like a fusion of numerous musical pieces, whereby each individual piece seemed to portray a lasting state but was in truth only a single moment in the dramatic course of the passion. The listener could believe he was hearing the older mood music, except that the relationship of the individual parts to each other had become incomprehensible to him and could no longer be interpreted according to the canon of oppositions. Even among composers a disdain for the requirement of a coherently structured artistic totality set in; the succession of parts in a work became arbitrary. The invention of the great form of passion led back, by way of a misunderstanding, to the single movement with arbitrary content, and the mutual tension among the various parts vanished altogether. That is why after Beethoven the symphony is such a curiously indistinct structure, especially when in its individual parts it still stammers Beethoven's language of pathos. The means are not suited to the intention, and the intention as a whole does not become clear at all to the listener because it was never clear in the head of the composer. But precisely the demand that one have something quite specific to say and that one say it in the

clearest possible way becomes all the more indispensable the higher, more difficult, and more demanding a genre is.

That is why Wagner's entire struggle was concentrated on finding means to serve *clarity*; for this he needed above all to
5 free himself from all the constraints and demands of the older music of states of mind and place the resounding process of feeling and of passion, a wholly unambiguous discourse, into the mouth of his music. If we look at what he achieved, then it seems to us as if he accomplished the same thing in the field of
10 music that the inventor of the freestanding figure accomplished in the field of sculpture. All previous music, when measured against Wagner's, seems stiff or timid, as if one should not look at it from all sides and as if it were ashamed. Wagner seizes every degree and every coloration of feeling with the greatest
15 firmness and determination; he takes the most tender, most remote, and most tempestuous emotion into his hand without fear of losing it, and he holds on to it like something that has become hard and firm, even though everyone else may regard it as an elusive butterfly. His music is never indefinite, mood-
20 like; everything that speaks through it, human being or nature, has a strictly individualized passion; in his music, storm and fire take on the compelling force of a personal will. Over all the individuals realized in sound and the struggle of their passions, over this entire vortex of oppositions there soars, with supreme
25 presence of mind, an overpowering symphonic intellect that constantly produces concord out of this conflict; Wagner's music taken as a whole is a likeness of the world in the sense in which it was conceived by the great Ephesian philosopher, as a harmony that discord produces out of itself, as the union
30 of justice and strife. I am amazed that it is possible to calculate the curve of a collective passion based on a multitude of passions that run in various directions; that this is possible I see proved throughout every individual act of a Wagnerian drama, which narrates, side by side, the individual histories of vari-
35 ous individuals and a collective history of them all. We already sense at the beginning that what we have before us are con-

flicting individual currents, but also a current, mightier than all the rest, with one powerful direction: at first this current moves turbulently over hidden, jagged rocks; the floodwaters appear at times to split apart, to want to flow in various directions. Gradually we notice that the collective internal movement has become more powerful and forceful; the convulsive turbulence has been transformed into the calm of the wide, terrible movement heading toward a still unknown goal. And suddenly, at the end, the entire breadth of the stream plunges down into the depths with a demonic desire for the abyss and the foam. Wagner is never more Wagner than in those moments when the difficulties multiply tenfold and he can govern great relationships with the joy of the lawmaker. Subduing turbulent, resisting masses into simple rhythms, asserting one will throughout a confusing multitude of demands and desires—these are the tasks for which he feels himself born, in which he feels his freedom. Never does he lose his breath; never does he arrive panting at his goal. He has striven just as relentlessly to impose the most difficult laws upon himself as others strive to lighten their burden; life and art oppress him if he cannot play with their most difficult problems. Just consider the relationship of sung melody to the melody of unsung speech, how he treats the pitch, the volume, and the tempo of the passionately speaking human being as a natural model that he must transpose into art; consider, in turn, the placement of such a singing passion in the entire symphonic context of the music: then you will become acquainted with a marvel of overcome difficulties. Wagner's ingenuity in things small and large, the omnipresence of his spirit and his diligence, is of a sort that, upon looking at a Wagnerian score, one is tempted to believe that no real effort and labor went into it. It seems that even with regard to the toil of art he could have said that the true virtue of the dramatist consists in self-renunciation; but he would probably retort: "There is only one form of toil, the toil of those who have not yet been liberated; virtue and goodness are easy."

Taken as a whole, Wagner the artist has—to recall a well-

known type—something of Demosthenes about him: the terrible seriousness toward his object and the force of his grip, so that he always grasps the object; he places his hand around it, in a moment, and it takes firm hold, as if it were made of
5 bronze. Like Demosthenes he conceals his artistry or causes us to forget it by forcing us to think of the object; and yet he is, like Demosthenes, the last and supreme manifestation of an entire line of powerful artistic spirits and consequently has more to hide than his predecessors. His art has the effect of nature,
10 of produced, rediscovered nature. He has nothing epideictic about him, unlike all previous composers who occasionally make their art into a game and put their virtuosity on display. In the instance of the Wagnerian work of art, one thinks neither of what interests, nor of what delights, nor of Wagner himself,
15 nor even of art in general; one merely feels what is *necessary*. What sternness and constancy of will, what self-overcoming, the artist required during the period of his development, in order finally, having reached maturity, to do in every moment and with joyous freedom what is necessary—that is something
20 no one will ever be able to appreciate; it is enough if we sense in individual cases how his music subjugates itself with a certain cruel decisiveness to the course of the drama, a course that is as inexorable as fate, while the fiery soul of this art longs to roam about just once unchecked in freedom and in the wilderness.

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An artist who has this power over himself subjugates, even without wanting to, all other artists. On the other hand, he is the only one for whom those who are subjugated, his friends and followers, do not present a danger, a limitation, whereas
30 those of lesser character, because they seek to depend on their friends, end up forfeiting their freedom. It is extremely wonderful to see how over his entire life Wagner avoided every formation of factions, but how during each phase of his artistic development a circle of followers formed, apparently in
35 order to hold him hostage to this phase. He always passed right

through the midst of them and never permitted himself to be tied down; moreover, his path was too long for any individual to have been able to accompany him from the very beginning; and it was so unusual and steep, that even the most faithful
5 follower would probably have lost his breath. In almost all the phases of Wagner's life his friends would have liked to make him dogmatic; the same can be said of his enemies, but they had different reasons. If the purity of his artistic character had been just a shade less resolute, he would have become the deci-
10 sive master in the contemporary world of art and music much sooner: something that he now has finally become, but in the much higher sense that everything that happens in any artistic field finds itself automatically brought before the tribunal of his art and his artistic character. He has subjugated even
15 the most reluctant; there are no longer any talented musicians who do not inwardly listen to him and find him more worthy to listen to than themselves and all the rest of the music world taken together. Many who desperately want to be of some significance struggle against precisely this inner allurements that
20 threatens to overwhelm them, banish themselves with anxious eagerness to the circle of the old masters, and prefer to base their "independence" on Schubert or Handel rather than on Wagner. To no avail! By fighting against their own better conscience they become smaller and pettier as artists; they ruin
25 their character by having to put up with bad allies and friends; and after making all these sacrifices, it still happens, perhaps in a dream, that they have ears only for Wagner. These opponents are pitiable; they think they will lose much if they lose themselves, and that is a mistake.

30 Now, it is obvious that it matters little to Wagner whether composers compose from this day on in a Wagnerian fashion, or whether they even compose at all; indeed, he does his best to destroy the unfortunate belief that a school of composers should form around him. To the extent that he has immediate
35 influence on composers, he attempts to instruct them in the art of great execution; it seems to him that a time has come in the

development of art in which the will to become a skilled master of performance and interpretation is much more valuable than the desire to be "creative" at any price. For at the stage of art that we have presently achieved, this creativity has the disastrous consequence of diluting the effects of what is truly great by reproducing it, to the extent that this is possible, thereby wearing out the means and devices of genius by submitting them to everyday use. Even what is good in art is superfluous and harmful when it derives from the imitation of the best.

10 Wagner's ends and means belong together; it requires nothing but artistic honesty to sense the truth of this, and it is dishonest to copy his means and apply them to completely different, trivial ends.

If Wagner thus refuses to live among a swarm of composers who compose in the Wagnerian manner, he is all the more forceful in imposing upon all new talents the task of discovering along with him the stylistic laws of dramatic performance. The most profound need impels him to establish for his art the *stylistic tradition* by means of which his work will be able to survive in its pure form from one age to another, until it reaches that *future* for which it was predestined by its creator.

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Wagner possesses an insatiable urge to communicate everything that pertains to the establishment of that style, and thereby to the continued existence of his art. To make his work, in the words of Schopenhauer, "a sacred *depositum* and the true fruit of his existence, the property of humankind, handing it down to a posterity better able to judge it; this became the aim that took precedence over *all other aims* and for which he wore a crown of thorns that will some day sprout into a wreath of laurel. His effort was concentrated just as decisively on the preservation of his work as the effort of the insect, in its final form, is concentrated on the preservation of its eggs and providing for the brood it will never experience; it deposits the eggs in a place where it knows with certainty that they will someday find life and nourishment, and then dies contented."

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This aim, which takes precedence over all other aims, drives

him on to ever new inventions; the more clearly he is aware that he is struggling against an age harboring the greatest antipathy, an age that possesses the poorest will to listen, the more he draws from the fount of his demonic ability to communi-
5 cate. But gradually even this age begins to yield to his tireless attempts, his subtle insistence, and lends him its ear. Wherever he remotely perceived either a minor or a significant opportunity to explain his thought by means of examples, Wagner was prepared to do so: he adapted his thoughts to the given circum-
10 stances and was able to express them even in their most miserable embodiment. Wherever a halfway receptive soul opened itself up to him, he cast in his seeds. He attaches hopes to situations at which the cold observer can only shrug his shoulders; he deceives himself a hundred times in order to prove just once
15 to such an observer that he is right. Just as the wise man interacts with living people only to the extent that they can help him increase his store of knowledge, so it almost seems as though the artist cannot have any interaction with those of his contemporaries through whom he cannot ensure the immortality
20 of his art; one can love him only by loving this immortality, and similarly he acknowledges only one form of hate that is directed against him, that hate that would destroy the bridges to the future for which his art is intended. The students whom Wagner trained, the individual musicians and actors to whom
25 he uttered one word or demonstrated one gesture, the small and large orchestras he directed, the cities that witnessed how seriously he took his activities, the princes and ladies who, half shyly, half lovingly, took part in his plans, the various European countries to which he belonged for a while as the judge
30 and the bad conscience of their arts: everything gradually became the echo of his thought, of his insatiable striving for a future fruitfulness. If this echo frequently returned to him in a distorted and confused form, nonetheless the overwhelming force of the powerful voice with which he cried out to the
35 world a hundred times can ultimately not help but call forth an overwhelming echo, and soon it will no longer be possible

not to hear him or to misunderstand him. Today this echo is already causing the artistic institutions of modern humanity to tremble; every time the breath of his spirit blew through these gardens, it shook down all the dead wood and everything that
5 was ready to fall. And a doubt that surfaces everywhere speaks even more eloquently than this trembling: no one knows where else Wagner's influence may yet unexpectedly break out. He is totally incapable of viewing the welfare of art as distinct from any other welfare or ill; wherever the modern spirit harbors
10 dangers within itself, he recognizes with the eye of perceptive mistrust that here there also lies a danger for art. In his imagination he dismantles the edifice of our civilization, and nothing that is rotten, nothing that is poorly constructed escapes his gaze; when in so doing he comes across weatherproof walls
15 and solid foundations, he immediately looks for a way to exploit them as a bulwark and protective shelter for his art. He lives like a refugee who seeks not to preserve himself but rather to preserve a secret; like an unfortunate woman who wants to save the life of the child she carries in her womb more than she
20 does her own life: he lives like Sieglinde, "for the sake of love."

It is certainly a life full of many kinds of torment and shame: to be unsettled and not at home in the world, and yet to have to speak with it, to have to make demands of it; to despise it, and yet not to be able to get along without it. This is the true plight
25 of the artist of the future, who cannot hunt down knowledge in a dark forest, as the philosopher can, for he needs human souls as the mediators to the future, public institutions as guarantors of this future, as bridges between the present and the times to come. His art cannot be transported in the ship of
30 written records, as the work of the philosopher can; art requires *skilled people* as its transmitters, not letters and notations. Over long stretches of Wagner's life there resounds the fear that he will not find these skilled people, and that, in the place of the example that he seeks to pass on to them, he will find himself
35 forcibly restricted to written signs; that instead of performing actions he will be forced to show the palest glimmer of

these actions to those who can read—which means, in effect, to those who themselves are not artists.

As *writer* Wagner exhibits the drive of a brave human being whose right hand has been shattered and who fights on with the left; when he writes, he is always a sufferer because he has been deprived by a temporarily insurmountable necessity of the mode of communication proper to him, which takes the form of a shining and triumphant example. His writings do not have anything canonical or rigorous; instead, the canon lies in his works. They are attempts to grasp the instinct that impelled him to create his works and to look himself in the eye, as it were. Once he has succeeded in transforming his instinct into knowledge, he hopes that the reverse process will take place in the souls of his readers; this is the prospect that motivated his writing. If it should turn out that in this he is trying to do something impossible, then Wagner would simply share the same fate as all those who have reflected on art, and he has the advantage over most of them that the most powerful overall artistic instinct took up residence in him. I know of no writings on aesthetics that shed so much light on the subject as do Wagner's; whatever there is to be learned about the genesis of works of art can be learned from him. In these works one of the greatest artists appears as a witness and over a long series of years constantly improves, liberates, and clarifies his testimony, removing from it all imprecision, and even when he stumbles while progressing down the path to knowledge, he kicks up sparks. Certain texts, such as "Beethoven," "On Conducting," "On Actors and Singers," and "State and Religion," silence every desire for contradiction and force one to assume a pose of quiet, inward, pious contemplation, like that appropriate to the opening of precious shrines. Others, especially those from his earlier period, including "Opera and Drama," cause excitement and disquiet: they have an uneven rhythm by means of which, as prose pieces, they cause confusion. Their dialectic is repeatedly broken, their progress more inhibited than accelerated by leaps of emotion; a kind of antipathy on

the part of the writer lies upon them like a shadow, as though the artist were ashamed of conceptual proofs. The greatest difficulty for the uninitiated is perhaps a tone of authoritative dignity that is wholly peculiar to him and difficult to describe; 5 it often seems to me as though Wagner were frequently *speaking in the presence of enemies*—for all of these texts are written in the style of spoken, not of written discourse, and they will be found to be much clearer when read aloud—in the presence of enemies with whom he is unfamiliar and who for that 10 reason are the cause of his restraint and reticence. However, it is not infrequent that a compelling passion breaks through this deliberate draping; then the artificial, heavy periods, richly swollen with superfluous words, disappear, and then sentences and entire pages emerge that are among the most beautiful ex- 15 amples of German prose. But even assuming that in these parts of his texts he is speaking with friends and the ghosts of his adversaries are not standing next to him, all the friends and foes with whom Wagner the writer gets involved have something in common that fundamentally distinguishes them from 20 the common people for whom Wagner the artist creates: in the refinement and unfruitfulness of their cultivation they are thoroughly *unpopulist*, and anyone who wants to be understood by them must speak in an unpopulist manner, just as our best prose writers have done, and just as Wagner, too, does. We can 25 guess with what degree of duress. But the power of that protective, as it were, motherly impulse for which no sacrifice is too great draws him back into the atmosphere of scholars and cultivated people to whom, as a creative artist, he said farewell forever. He submits to the language of cultivation and all its 30 laws of communication, even though he was the first to sense the profound inadequacy of this form of communication.

For if there is anything that distinguishes his art from all other art of modern times it is this: it no longer speaks the cultivated language of a caste and in general no longer even 35 recognizes the distinction between cultivated or uncultivated. It thereby places itself in opposition to the entire culture of

the Renaissance, which up to now has enveloped us modern human beings in its light and its shadow. Because Wagner's art momentarily transports us outside this culture, it makes it possible for us to survey its homogeneous character for the first time; Goethe and Leopardi then appear to us as the last great descendants of the Italian philologist-poets, and *Faust* appears as the portrayal of the most unpopulist riddle posed by modern times in the form of the theoretical person who thirsts for life. Even the Goethean song is modeled on the folk song, not a model for the folk song, and its poet knew why he confided to one of his followers with such earnestness: "My works cannot become popular; anyone who believes this and strives to achieve it is making a mistake."

That there could even exist an art so sunny, bright, and warm that its rays could both illuminate those who are humble and poor in spirit and melt the arrogance of the learned—this is something that could not be divined and hence had to be experienced. But it must overturn all notions about education and culture in the minds of those who now experience it; to them it will seem that the curtain is being raised on a future in which the only supreme blessings and joys that exist are those common to the hearts of all people. The stigma that until now was attached to the word "common" will then be stripped away.

When presentiment ventures into the distant future in this manner, conscious insight will examine the dismal social insecurity of our present age and will not conceal from itself the danger threatening an art that appears to have no roots at all except in that distant future, and that would rather show us its blossoming branches than the soil from which it grows. How can we rescue this homeless art for that future, how can we dam up the flood of the revolution that everywhere appears inevitable so that the blissful anticipation and guarantee of a better future, of a freer humanity, will not be swept away along with the many things that are doomed and deserve to be doomed?

Anyone who has such concerns and asks such questions shares in Wagner's concerns; he will feel himself impelled,

along with Wagner, to search for those existing powers that, in these times of earthquakes and upheavals, have the will to be the guardian spirits of humanity's noblest possessions. Only in this sense does Wagner ask cultivated people through his writings whether they are willing to protect his legacy, the precious ring of his art, in their treasuries, and even that magnificent confidence that Wagner placed in the German spirit, even with regard to its political aims, seems to me to have its origin in the fact that he believes the nation responsible for the Reformation to be capable of that strength, gentleness, and courage that is needed in order to "channel the sea of revolution into the placidly flowing stream of humanity"; and I am tempted to believe that it is nothing other than this that he wanted to express in the symbolism of his "Imperial March."

But in general the generous impulse of the creative artist is too great, the horizon of his love of humanity too expansive for his gaze to be enclosed within the boundaries of any one nation. Like every good and great German, his thoughts are *supra-German*, and the language of his art does not speak to nations, but rather to human beings.

But to *human beings of the future*.

This is his peculiar faith, his torment, and his distinction. No artist of any previous epoch whatsoever has ever received such a remarkable dowry from his genius, no one aside from him has had to drink these horribly bitter drops with every draught of nectar that enthusiasm served him. It is not, as one might believe, the artist who is unrecognized and mistreated, the artist who is a fugitive, as it were, in his own time, who acquired this belief in self-defense: success and failure among his contemporaries could neither cause nor cancel it. He does not belong to this generation, regardless of whether it praises or condemns him: that is the judgment of his instinct, and whether a generation will ever belong to him cannot be proved to anyone who is not inclined to believe it. But this disbeliever can certainly ask the question: What sort of generation would have to exist in order for Wagner to recognize in it his "common people" as the

incarnation of all those who feel a common need and seek to redeem themselves from it by means of a common art? Of course, Schiller was more believing and more hopeful: he never asked what the future would look like if the prophetic instinct of the
 5 artist were accurate; on the contrary, he *demand*ed of artists:

Raise yourselves on daring wings
 High above the course of your age!
 May your mirror catch the distant glow
 Of the new century's dawning!

II

May good sense preserve us from the belief that someday or other humanity will discover an ultimate, ideal order and that then happiness will shine down with constant intensity upon the people ordered in this way, like the sun in the tropics:
 15 Wagner has nothing to do with such a belief; he is no utopian. If he cannot dispense with belief in the future, then this only means that he perceives qualities in contemporary human beings that do not belong to the unalterable character and bone structure of human nature, but instead are changeable, indeed,
 20 transitory, and that it is precisely *due to these qualities* that art must be homeless among them and he himself the messenger of another age. No golden age, no cloudless sky is allotted to these coming generations toward which Wagner's instinct directs him and whose approximate features can be divined from
 25 the hieroglyphs of his art—to the extent that it is possible to infer the type of need from the type of satisfaction. Nor will suprahuman goodness and justice stretch like an immobile rainbow over the fields of this future. Perhaps this generation will seem on the whole even more evil than the present one—
 30 for it will be *more open*, in evil as in good; indeed, it is possible that if its soul were ever to speak out in a full, free voice, it would shake up and terrify our soul in much the same way as if it had heard the voice of some previously hidden evil spirit of nature. Or how do these statements sound to our ears: that

passion is better than stoicism and hypocrisy; that being honest, even where evil is concerned, is better than losing oneself in traditional morality; that the free human being can be both good and evil, but that the unfree human being is a disgrace
 5 to nature and shares neither in any heavenly nor in any earthly consolation; finally, that any person who wants to become free must accomplish this through himself, and that freedom does not fall like a surprise gift into anyone's lap. No matter how shrill and uncanny all this may sound, these are sounds from
 10 that future world that is *truly in need of art* and can also expect true satisfaction from it; it is the language of a nature restored even in its human aspect, it is precisely what I earlier called correct feeling, in contrast to the false feeling that prevails today.

Now, only what is natural, not what is unnatural, can ever
 15 experience true satisfactions or deliverance. The only thing left for what is unnatural once it has arrived at consciousness of itself is the yearning for nothingness; by contrast, what is natural desires to be transformed through love. The former does *not* want to be; the latter wants to be *different*. Anyone who has
 20 grasped this should review in all the tranquillity of his soul the simple themes of Wagnerian art in order to ask himself whether it is the natural or the unnatural, as these were just defined, that informs its aims.

The inconstant, despairing man finds deliverance from his
 25 torment in the merciful love of a woman who would rather die than be unfaithful to him: the theme of *The Flying Dutchman*. — The loving woman, renouncing all her own happiness, becomes, in a heavenly transformation of *amor* into *caritas*, a saint and rescues the soul of her beloved: the theme of *Tannhäuser*. —
 30 Something most marvelous and most sublime descends with longing to the world of human beings and does not want to be asked whence it came; it returns, once the fatal question is asked, with painful duress to its higher life: the theme of *Lobengrin*. — The loving soul of a woman, and likewise the common
 35 people, take in the new genius who bestows happiness, despite the fact that the guardians of convention and tradition repudi-

ate and slander him: the theme of *Die Meistersinger*. Two lovers, unaware that they are in love and instead believing themselves deeply wounded and despised, desire to drink the deadly potion from each other's hand, apparently to atone for the insult, but
 5 in truth out of an unconscious urge: they want to be liberated through death from all separation and dissemblance. The death they believe is near releases their souls and leads them to a brief, terrifying happiness, just as if they had actually escaped daylight, deception, indeed, life itself: the theme of *Tristan and*
 10 *Isolde*.

In the *Ring of the Nibelungen* the tragic hero is a god who thirsts for power and who, after pursuing all paths to gain it, binds himself through contracts, loses his freedom, and becomes entangled in the curse that is inseparable from power.
 15 He experiences his lack of freedom in the fact that he no longer has any means to take possession of the golden ring, the symbol of all earthly power and simultaneously of all the dangers he faces as long as it remains in the possession of his enemies; he is overcome by fear of the end and of the twilight
 20 of all the gods, as well as by his despair at being able only to foresee, but not prevent, this end. He needs a free, fearless human being who, without his advice and support, indeed, in a struggle against the divine order, accomplishes of his own volition the deed denied to the god; he does not see him, and
 25 in precisely that moment when a new hope awakens, he must obey the constraint that binds him: he must destroy with his own hand the person he loves the most and punish the person who showed the purest compassion for his plight. And now, at last, he is disgusted by power, which bears evil and lack of
 30 freedom in its womb; his will is broken, he himself longs for the end that threatens him from afar. And only now does the thing occur that he had previously most desired: the free, fearless human being appears; he came into being in opposition to all tradition; those who engendered him must do penance
 35 for the fact that an alliance against the order of nature and morality bound them together: they perish, but Siegfried lives.

When Wotan sees how magnificently Siegfried has developed and flourished, all disgust leaves his soul; he follows the destiny of the hero with the eye of paternal love and anxiety. How he forges the sword, kills the dragon, gains possession of the ring, evades the most cunning ruse, awakens Brünnhilde; how the curse attached to the ring does not spare him either, but comes closer and closer to him; how he, faithful even in infidelity, wounds out of love what he most loves, is enveloped by the shadows and mists of guilt, but ultimately emerges as pure as the sun and perishes, igniting the entire sky with his fiery glow and purging the world of the curse—all this is witnessed by the god whose sovereign spear is broken in the battle with the freest of men and who has lost his power to him, filled with rapture at his own defeat, filled with joy and compassion for his conqueror: his eye rests with the radiance of a painful bliss on these latest events; he has become free in love, free of himself.

And now ask yourselves, you generations of human beings living today! Was this written *for you*? Do you have the courage to point your hand at the stars of this entire firmament of beauty and goodness and say: it is *our* life that Wagner placed under these stars?

Where among you are the people who are capable of interpreting the divine image of Wotan according to their lives, and who, like him, will themselves become all the greater the more they withdraw? Who among you is willing to renounce power in the knowledge and experience that power is evil? Where are those who, like Brünnhilde, will relinquish their knowledge out of love and yet ultimately derive the supreme knowledge from their life: "Deepest suffering of grieving love opened my eyes." And those among you who are free and fearless, who evolve out of themselves and flourish in innocent egotism, the Siegfrieds among you?

Anyone who asks such questions, and asks in vain, will have to look toward the future, and if his gaze should discover somewhere in the distance that "common people" that is able

to read its own history in the signs of Wagner's art, then he will ultimately also understand *what Wagner will be for this common people*: something that he cannot be for all of us, namely, not the prophet of the future, as he might appear to us, but rather
5 the interpreter and transfigurer of the past.

Notes

The following symbols are used throughout the notes:

[]	Deletion by Nietzsche
	Addition by Nietzsche
[?]	Uncertain reading
{ }	Addition by the translator
< >	Addition by the editors (Colli and Montinari)
---	Unfinished or incomplete sentence or thought

Variants are referred to by the following abbreviations:

<i>Cp</i>	Correction in the proofs
<i>Pd</i>	Preliminary draft
<i>Pm</i>	Printer's manuscript
<i>PmG</i>	Peter Gast's printer's manuscript
<i>PmN</i>	Nietzsche's printer's manuscript
<i>Pp</i>	Page proofs
<i>Sd</i>	Second draft
<i>Se</i>	Subsequent emendations
<i>Up</i>	Uncorrected proofs

v, 2 (Title Page) *Unfashionable*] Taken literally, Nietzsche's word *unzeitgemäss* means "out of keeping with the nature of the time." With this word Nietzsche seeks to situate his own observations explicitly outside what he perceives to be the fashionable main-

stream of German popular scholarly discourse. The word contains the implications of being "untimely," but also of being "unpopular" in the sense of "not conforming to popular taste." For this reason, and because Nietzsche's arguments throughout these treatises formulate an attack on the popular fashions of German cultivated society, it is rendered as *unfashionable*, a word that best captures these nuances.

First Piece David Strauss the Confessor and the Writer

Two earlier versions of "David Strauss" are extant: Nietzsche's preliminary draft (*Pd*) and his second draft (*Sd*). The printer's manuscript, which Nietzsche dictated to Carl von Gersdorff, has been lost. However, a set of printer's proofs (*Up*) with corrections in Nietzsche's hand (*Cp*) exists.

Nietzsche's notebooks containing unpublished fragments related to the Strauss essay are published in Vol. II of this edition. Relevant unpublished fragments are referred to in the notes by the number of the notebook followed by fragment number in brackets (e.g., 26 [12]).

Nietzsche quotes from David Strauss's *Der alte und der neue Glaube: Ein Bekenntnis* (Leipzig, 1872); page references that Nietzsche failed to cite in the text are supplied in the notes and indicated as "Strauss," followed by the page number.

I

5, 1 *1*] Cf. 26 [16].

5, 4 *war*] The Franco-Prussian War (1870-71), which led to unification of the German empire under Prussian rule in 1871.

5, 17 *public opinionators*] Nietzsche's phrase is *öffentlich Meinenden*, which he coins in analogy to *öffentliche Meinung* ("public opinion") in order to designate those who control public opinion.

6, 21 *Perhaps... only*] *Sd*: Apparently this is the case

6, 22-23 *considered... advantageous,*] *Sd*: preferred, out of a sense of its own powerlessness,

6, 34 *"cultivatedness"*] To the word "cultivation" (*Bildung*), which retains for Nietzsche the distinctly positive connotation it has

had in German since the theories of education developed in the eighteenth century, Nietzsche juxtaposes the term "cultivatedness" (*Gebildetheit*), which has for him the negative sense of an artificial, stilted learnedness.

- 7, 1-3 *the Germans... Germans.] Pd:* the task is horrible, and every courageous individual recognizes his own helplessness when confronted with a universal enemy. [But what a battle here awaits both leader and led alike! What a gradually retreating and then once again advancing enemy!] But if this battle is to be horrible at all, so that a gradually retreating and then once again advancing enemy awaits the warrior, the hope of victory was never smaller than today, immediately after the glory of war.
- 7, 15 *delirium.] Pd:* delirium: although no one knows any longer what culture is—namely, unity of style—and every glance at our apartments, rooms, clothing, manners, theaters, museums, schools demonstrates absolute lack of style; nonetheless, everyone is wholly contented with the result of his cultivatedness, which, however, is not culture. It is an amazing phenomenon that is worthy of study. The Germans take pride in believing that in all things they know more than other peoples: the forgotten fact that they are *capable* of less, indeed, that they *want* to accomplish nothing. In truth, there is scarcely a more sublime creature than a German who is capable of and wants to accomplish something great, but he then stands alone and his influence has neither depth nor breadth; rather, it is aesthetically distilled and— —
- 8, 12 *sort.] Pd:* sort. They are informed and instructed, but they have no culture.
- 8, 17-18 *wherever... artistry] Cf.* 26 [18].
- 8, 31-32 *Macedonian... Greek armies] Under* the leadership of Philip II (382-336 B.C.) and his son Alexander the Great (356-323), the Macedonians asserted their dominance over the Greeks.
- 9, 8-20 *The German... styles.] Addendum in a note to Pd:* He can neither invent for himself a type of clothing, nor can he sketch with some taste the imprint on a gold coin.
- 10, 12 *barbarians."]* Goethe, *Gespräche mit Eckermann* (Conversations with Eckermann), 3 May 1827. Cf. 19 [309, 312].

2

- 11, 34 *tutti unisono*] "everyone in unison."
- 12, 1 *systematic*] *Sd*: systematized
- 12, 20-21 *whatever... aims.*] *Sd*: whereas we are only able to recognize in it the systematization of nonculture.
- 12, 32 *found... seeks*] Here, as well as in what follows, Nietzsche is alluding to the Biblical "seek and ye shall find."
- 13, 15 *could.*] Goethe, *Gespräche mit Eckermann* (Conversations with Eckermann), 14 Mar. 1830.
- 13, 36-14, 4 *the cultivated... further.*] *Sd*: the cultivated philistines seek to deceive themselves in order basically to liberate themselves from the classical authors, and above all to exempt themselves from the irksome and prolonged task of imitating them.
- 14, 5-28 *At... existence.*] Cf. 27 [55].
- 15, 12 *Goethe*] Nietzsche is alluding to Goethe's *Maximen und Reflexionen* (Maxims and reflections), no. 405: "The best thing that we have from history is the enthusiasm it provokes."
- 15, 14 *nil admirari*] "to admire or wonder at nothing"; the opening words of Horace's *Epistle*, I.6.1.
- 15, 20-24 *A philosophy... real*] Nietzsche is alluding to the philosophy of Hegel.
- 16, 33 *satisfait*] "one who is contented."
- 17, 13-14 *a well-known... rationality*] Friedrich Theodor Vischer (1807-88), a German philosopher who composed an "Aesthetics" following Hegel's model.
- 17, 18 *founded*] *zu Grunde geben*, literally: "to raze to its foundations." By alluding to the strictest sense of this phrase, Nietzsche is stressing its root word, *Grund*, which means "ground" or "foundation." I have sought to render this in translation through the pun implied in the word "founded." This applies as well to subsequent uses of the verb "founder" found in this paragraph.
- 17, 30-31 *Werther of Greece*] Vischer is grafting onto Hölderlin, whose writings are marked by a glorification of ancient Greek culture, the sentimentality characteristic of the famous protago-

nist of Goethe's novel *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* (The sorrows of young Werther).

18, I *barbarian.*] Nietzsche's quotation is taken from a speech Friedrich Theodor Vischer gave in Lauffen, Hölderlin's birthplace, on the occasion of the poet's one-hundredth birthday.

18, II *escaped*] *Sd*: inadvertently escaped

3

19, 9 "*The Old and the New Faith*"] David Strauss, *Der alte und der neue Glaube: Ein Bekenntnis* (Leipzig, 1872); parenthetical page references are to the German original cited by Nietzsche.

19, 22 *natures such as Strauss's*] Nietzsche's neologism, *Straussen-naturen*, contains a pun on Strauss's name, since in German "Strauss" literally means "ostrich." *Straussen-naturen* hence signifies both "natures such as Strauss's" and "ostrichlike natures."

19, 24 "*have...up*"] Cf. 27 [42].

19, 26-27 *Who...Mommsen*] Cf. 27 [13].

20, 17 *land.*] Strauss, 294.

21, 8 *Riehl's House Music*] Wilhelm Heinrich von Riehl (1823-97), journalist and composer of popular music, published his 2-volume *House Music* in 1860. The term "house music" was coined in contradistinction to "salon music" and was intended to communicate that Riehl's music was the bourgeois counterpart—that is, intended for the bourgeois household—to the salon music of aristocratic society.

21, 10 *wide!*] A quotation from Goethe's *Faust*, pt. I, ll. 1247-50. In this scene Faust's poodle takes on the form of a hippopotamus before eventually being metamorphosed into Mephistopheles himself. Nietzsche alludes to this when later in this paragraph he mentions a hippopotamus and the barking of a dog.

21, 12-13 *the proud...religions.*] *Sd*: the bellowing sound of prophets and evangelists.

21, 23 *agreeable.*] Strauss, 368.

21, 36-22, 1 *out...effect.*] *Sd*: but it is the reader who is responsible for this.

- 22, 34 *people.*] Lichtenberg, *Vermischte Schriften* (Göttingen, 1867), 1: 188.
- 24, 30 *Spener Zeitung; Nationalzeitung*] Two widely circulated German newspapers of Nietzsche's day.
- 25, 12-13 *In...here;*] *Sd:* Indeed, the philistine as aesthete is the philistine as such;
- 25, 17 *rainbow...spread*] Nietzsche's phrase, *der Regenbogen spannt sich aus*, alludes to the colloquial expression in German *den Bogen spannen*, meaning "to stretch matters to the breaking point."
- 25, 20 *standpoint.*] Strauss, 366.
- 25, 21 *tour guide*] *Sd:* tour guide, [bubbling with bliss]
- 25, 27 *out...speaks.*] Cf. Matt. 12:33.
- 26, 13 *Homeric chimera*] A reference to Homer's *Iliad*, 6.179-83. The chimera is a mythological beast that is part snake, part lion, and part goat.
- 26, 23 *Wanderjahre*] *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* (The travels of Wilhelm Meister), Goethe's last novel, written as a sequel to *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (Wilhelm Meister's apprenticeship) and composed as a series of novellas.
- 26, 27 *cold-water bath*] Nietzsche has taken over this image directly from Strauss, 325.
- 27, 3 *minimality*] Nietzsche coins the noun *Minimität*, derived from "minimal."
- 27, 6 *Grillparzer*] Cf. Grillparzer's remarks on Gervinus, *Sämtliche Werke* (Stuttgart, 1872), 9: 175: "This acquired enthusiasm, this gallop of the hired horse permeates all of Gervinus's endeavors."
- 28, 12 *polemics.*] Goethe, *Gespräche mit Eckermann* (Conversations with Eckermann), 7 Feb. 1827. Cf. 27 [9].
- 28, 20 *conversion*] Winckelmann is alleged to have converted to Catholicism in order to make possible a trip to Rome for the purpose of studying the art of antiquity.
- 28, 32-33 *epilogue to the "Bell"*] Nietzsche is citing Goethe's epilogue to Schiller's famous poem "Das Lied von der Glocke" (The song of the bell).

29,2 *tanquam re bene gesta*] “as though matters had turned out well.”

5

29, 28 *Haydnic*] Nietzsche is punning on Haydn’s name, whose adjectival form, *Haydnisch*, is homonymous with the adjective *heidnisch*, meaning “heathen.” Thus Nietzsche implies that Strauss’s “Haydnic mystery cult” is also a heathen mystery cult.

30, 4-19 *He...modesty.*] Nietzsche’s examples and quotations are drawn from Strauss, 358-59.

6

33, 4 *Mameluke*] A caste of warriors that ruled Egypt and Syria from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century and were known especially for their courage.

33, 30 *me?*] See Goethe, *Faust*, pt. I, l. 3181.

34, 8-9 *slaps open...slaps around*] Nietzsche is punning on the verb *aufschlagen*, which means either to open (a book) or to slap (someone) around.

34, 11 “*reacts religiously,*” Cf. 27 [43].

34, 31-32 “*this...studied.*” Cf. 27 [50].

35, 8 *intellect.*] Strauss, 149-50.

35, 36-36, 1 *dependence*] Strauss, 132, 133.

36, 2 *sub specie biennii*] “from the perspective of two years”; Nietzsche is playing on the standard phrase *sub specie aeterni*, meaning “from an eternal perspective.”

37, 26 *hangover.*] See the poem “Saki Nameh (Das Geschenk-buch)” (Saki Nameh [The gift book]) in Goethe’s *West-östlicher Divan* (West-eastern divan); quoted by Strauss, 248.

7

38, 3 *bumbug*] Strauss, 72.

38, 14 *me.*] This passage is taken from the afterword Strauss appended to the second edition of *Der alte und der neue Glaube*, “Nachwort als Vorwort zu der neuen Auflage meiner Schrift *Der alte und der neue Glaube*” (Afterword as foreword to the new edition of my book *The Old and the New Faith*), published in 1873.

- 39, 8-9 *bellum omnium contra omnes*] "the war of all against all."
 39, 19 *species.*] Strauss, 236.
 39, 25 *Patagonian savage*] *Sd*: Kaffir
 40, 2-3 *it is just... establish it*] Nietzsche is alluding to the epigraph to Schopenhauer's treatise *Über die Grundlage der Moral* (On the fundamentals of morality).
 41, 3 *religion.*] Strauss, 239.
 41, 28 *his feathers*] Nietzsche is once again playing on the literal meaning of Strauss's name, "ostrich."
 41, 34-35 *cosmodicy*] Nietzsche coins the phrase "cosmodicy" (*Kosmodicee*) in analogy to the Leibnizian notion of "theodicy," the system of natural theology that seeks to vindicate divine justice by giving evil a role in divine creation. Nietzsche is suggesting that Strauss's notion of the universe extends this notion of theodicy into the cosmological; hence, "cosmodicy."
 42, 33 *Lichtenberg*] See Lichtenberg, *Vermischte Schriften* (Göttingen, 1867), I: 90.
 43, 36 *figures.*] Strauss, 280.
 44, 7 *busy.*] Strauss, 281.
 44, 30 *Système de la nature*] A materialistic, deterministic treatise, published in 1770 by the German aristocrat Baron d'Holbach (1723-89) under the pseudonym J. B. Mirabeau. Goethe relates his experience of disillusionment upon first reading this treatise in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Poetry and truth), bk. III, chap. 11.
 44, 31 *Cimmerian*] The Cimmerians were a mythological people whose land Homer described as being veiled in perpetual mist and darkness.

8

- 45, 1 8] Cf. 28 [1].
 45, 8 *oracular handbook*] Nietzsche is alluding to Balthasar Gracián's *El oráculo manual y arte de prudencia* (1647), a collection of aphoristic laws on the ethics of daily existence.
 46, 20 *this heir... hours*] *Up*: the fleeting individual
 47, 1 *otium sine dignitate*] "idleness without dignity."
 48, 10 *newspaperish*] Nietzsche's word, *zeitungsgemäss*, derived from the noun *Zeitung* ("newspaper"), plays on the word *zeitgemäss*

("fashionable"; "timely") that reverberates in his own title. The implication is that whatever in his time is fashionable and "timely" (*zeitgemäss*) is by definition only newspaperish (*zeitungsgemäss*), that is, sensational but ephemeral.

48, 22-23 *lantern...human beings*] The allusion is to Diogenes of Sinope who went out with a lighted lantern during the day in search of an honest human being.

49, 36 *scholar*] *Up*: university professor

50, 15 *philistrious*] Nietzsche coins the adjective *philiströs*, formed from the noun *Philister* (philistine), in analogy to the manner in which the adjective *monströs* (monstrous), for example, derives from the noun *Monster*. I have attempted to recreate the effect of Nietzsche's coinage by inventing the word *philistrious*, which has the ironical ring of "illustrious."

52, 4-5 *chieftain*] *Up*: column of smoke

52, 7-8 *mediocritas*] "mediocrity."

9

52, 30-53, 17 *We are asking...coherence.*] Cf. 27 [32].

52, 31 *totum ponere*] "to construct a whole."

55, 29 *me.*] Strauss, 207.

56, 14 *it.*] Strauss, 367.

56, 17-18 *Straussian street coach*] Nietzsche's phrase is *Straussen-Wagen*, "Straussian coach," which playfully alludes to the German *Strassen-Wagen*, "street coach." The translation "Straussian street coach" fuses these two.

56, 21 *regard,*] Strauss, 6.

57, 2 *of scholarly evidence*] *Up*: of a scholarly book

57, 29 *statement by Strauss about Voltaire*] Strauss presented a series of lectures on Voltaire that were subsequently published under the title *Voltaire: Sechs Vorträge* (Voltaire: six lectures), (Leipzig, 1870). Cited by Nietzsche as *Volt.*

10

60, 30-32 *but...gait.*] *Pd*: but does one then have to pretend to be skipping along! Cf. 27 [45].

60, 35 *scantly clad*] Cf. 27 [49].

- 61,3-6 "*scantily...up,*] *Sd*: "his intentionally scantily clad book" scantily clad! Indeed, Master, very scantily! And intentionally! So scantily that you expose yourself, without even being clothed from the waist up, like your Rousseau!,
- 61,4-6 *his Rousseau...down.*] Cf. Strauss, 316.
- 61,22-23 *prose writer,*] See Strauss's "Afterword" to *Der alte und der neue Glaube*. Cf. 27 [39].
- 61,29-32 *But...features*] Cf. 27 [21].
- 62,27 *Merck*] Johann Heinrich Merck (1741-91), German scholar and critic.
- 62,29 *well!"*] Strauss, "Afterword," p. 10. Cf. 27 [39].
- 63,5 *speech,*] Lichtenberg, *Vermischte Schriften* (Göttingen, 1867), 1: 306. Cf. 27 [25].

II

- 63,34 *impotence."*] Arthur Schopenhauer, *Aus Schopenhauers handschriftlichem Nachlaß* (From Schopenhauer's handwritten papers). Frauenstädt-Ausgabe (Leipzig, 1864), 58. Henceforth cited as *Nachlaß*.
- 64,8 *Sanders*] Daniel Sanders (1819-97), German lexicographer who published, among other works, a three-volume German dictionary that illustrated proper usage on the basis of quotations from the German classics. Nietzsche is referring to the pocket edition of this work.
- 64,8-9 *blandly handy pocket dictionary*] Nietzsche's phrase, *kurzgefassten Hand- und Schand-Wörterbuch*, means literally "condensed handy and shameful dictionary." I have tried to recreate the biting sarcasm of Nietzsche's rhyme on *Hand- und Schand-* with the rendering "blandly handy."
- 64,9-15 *Here...stylist.*] *Pd*: In fact, in an expressly modern paper I have even read the declaration that our classical authors are no longer sufficient as exemplars of style, and that they have been replaced by new writers of stature such as Adolf Stahr, Strauss, etc.
- 64,9 *Gutzkow*] Karl Gutzkow (1811-78), German writer and journalist. Nietzsche attacked Gutzkow in "On the Future of Our

- Educational Institutions" for the speed and carelessness of his writing, which Nietzsche saw as characteristic of contemporary journalism.
- 64, 9-10 *Gutzkow...style,*] *Up:* the *National-Zeitung*
- 64, 36 *workaday German*] Nietzsche's phrase, *Alltags-Deutsch*, alludes to the common expression *Alltagsgeschwätz*, meaning "idle chatter."
- 65, 5 *tutti unisono*] "everybody, all together."
- 65, 11 "To...People,"] *Pd:* in the Augsburg newspaper for the foundation of a German monument,
- 65, 15-16 *Devrient...Mendelssohn*] In 1869 the actor and theater director Eduard Devrient published a eulogy to the composer Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy.
- 65, 26 *today.*] Schopenhauer, *Nachlaß*, p. 61.
- 68, 34 *consequuntur.*] Tacitus, *Dialogue on Oratory*, 23.3-4: "They acquire the health of which they boast by fasting rather than from strength."
- 68, 34 *firmitas*] "strength."
- 69, 12 *Strauss style*] Nietzsche's phrase, *Straussen-Stil*, once again exploits the pun on Strauss's name, so that "Strauss style" also suggests the style of ostriches. In addition, Nietzsche is perhaps playing on the phrase *Strassen-Stil*, which would imply that Strauss's style of writing conforms to that everyday style one finds on the streets, that is, in the newspapers.
- 69, 33 *jackasses.*] Schopenhauer, *Nachlaß*, pp. 60-61.

12

- 70, 17-34 *To...mire.*] Cf. 27 [29, 30].
- 71, 10-11 *di meliora!*] "God forbid."
- 71, 14 *it!*] Arthur Schopenhauer, "Über Schriftstellerei und Stil" (On authorship and style), §283 in Schopenhauer's *Parerga und Paralipomena*.
- 75, 35 *Ariadne's thread*] According to Greek mythology, Ariadne gave Theseus the thread that allowed him to find his way out of the labyrinth.
- 76, 9 *rambling on in this sinful manner!*] Nietzsche's phrase, *in den*

Tag binein fortzusündigen, alludes to the colloquial expression *in den Tag binein reden*, meaning “to ramble on.” Nietzsche’s version adds to this the notion of sinfulness.

76, 12 *fully developed*] Nietzsche’s word, *ausgewachsen*, is drawn from Strauss’s “fully developed religious and moral disposition,” which Nietzsche cited above. At the same time, Nietzsche plays ironically on this term, which means not only “fully grown,” but also “hunchbacked,” so that it subtly refers back to the parable of the traveler in the land of the hunchbacks.

77, 2–3 *German of babies wrapped in diapers*] Nietzsche’s neologism, *Wickelkinderdeutsch*, exploits a pun on the stem verb *wickeln* (meaning both “to wrap” and “to change diapers”) that is evident in the words *Einwickeln* and *Auswickeln* that Strauss uses in the cited quotation.

77, 13 *Brothers Grimm*] Besides their famous collection of fairy tales, Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm were also accomplished philologists and lexicographers who compiled the first significant dictionary of the German language, which today has a status equivalent to that of the *Oxford English Dictionary* for English.

78, 6 *between.*] Strauss, 174.

81, 14 *vener.* *Of course*] *Up: vener[*, and every stone thrown at them was a touchstone.] *Of course*

81, 23–24 *when...follows.*] An allusion to Friedrich Schiller’s *Die Verschwörung des Fiesco zu Genua* (The conspiracy of Fiesco at Genoa), act 5, scene 17.

81, 29–30 *feather from Strauss’s pen*] Nietzsche’s phrase, *Straussenfeder*, once again puns on Strauss’s name, meaning both “ostrich feather” and “feather from Strauss’s pen.”

81, 35–36 *unfashionable*] Nietzsche’s word, *unzeitgemäss*, invokes the general title under which he collected these essays, and it resounds in the adverb “timely” (*an der Zeit*), which Nietzsche associates here with the act of speaking the truth.

Second Piece On the Utility and Liability
of History for Life

In addition to the preliminary draft (*Pd*), the second draft (*Sd*), the printer's manuscript (*Pm*), and the page proofs (*Pp*) of "Utility and Liability of History," a copy of the published text found in Nietzsche's library contains subsequent emendations (*Se*) dating most likely from the year 1886.

Early versions of some sections of "Utility and Liability of History" can be found in the unpublished fragments from summer 1873 to winter 1874, published in Vol. II of this edition. In the notes, references to these fragments are cited by the number of the notebook followed by the fragment number in brackets.

FOREWORD

85,3 *activity.*] From a letter by Goethe to Schiller, dated 19 Dec. 1798.

85,4 *ceterum censeo*] "but I am of the opinion": An allusion to the famous sentence with which the elder Cato is purported to have closed every speech before the Roman Senate: "Ceterum censeo Carthaginem esse delendam" ("But I am of the opinion that Carthage must be destroyed").

85,10 *hatred...that*] *Se*: *hatred*: why? Because

85,15-16 *crude...afflictions.*] *Se*: more uncouth wishes.

85,17 *easy*] *Se*: enjoyable

85,17-18 *action...base*] *Se*: action, let alone for the whitewashing of an exhausted life, and of petty and cowardly

85,21-23 *a phenomenon...age.*] *Pm*: just as we can study this phenomenon quite completely but also quite painfully in the striking symptoms of our age.

85,26-86,10 *Perhaps...Germans.*] *Se*: What will I receive in return for this? I have no doubt that people will answer: Nothing is more perverse, cheaper, and more illicit than this feeling of mine—by feeling it, I prove myself unworthy of that powerful movement in favor of history, of that historical sensibility that, as something new in history, has only made itself evident in Europe for two generations and in Germany for four.

- 86, 16 *age.*] *Sd:* age. [Moreover: who would walk with a whip through a valley known for its echo without cracking it a few times just so that he might hear that beautiful echo? Anyone who wants to get to know his age should give it cause to speak—by dealing with it candidly.]
- 86, 17-23 *The observations...it.*] *Se:* Now, it is precisely this that is the *unfashionable* aspect of my mode of observation. I attempt to understand something in which our century justifiably takes pride, (its) historical cultivation, as a detriment, an infirmity, a deficiency of the century, because I go so far as to believe that it suffers from this as from its most serious illness and should at least recognize *that* it suffers from it.
- 86, 23 *Goethe*] For the passage Nietzsche is alluding to, see Goethe, *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Poetry and truth), bk. III, chap. 13.
- 86, 23-29 *But...up.*] *added in Se without indication of where it should be inserted:* I wish to convince my readers [to recognize] to come to recognize [in] under this historical cultivation [the most dangerous] a dangerous illness of this century. By doing so I am not attempting something that flies in the face of reason. Goethe—and this is the only thing that I want to prove: that with our “historical sensibility” we *have cultivated our own faults*.

I

- 87, 6 *I*] For earlier versions of the opening paragraphs, cf. 29 [98]; 30 [2].
- 87, 7 *Observe...you.*] *Se:* This herd that grazes past me:
- 87, 11-12 *thus...bored.*] *Se:* *thus* happy, neither melancholy nor bored.
- 87, 13-18 *boasts...human being*] *Se:* would like to boast about the superiority of his humanity over animals and yet looks enviously upon their happiness. He
- 87, 19-20 *“Why...happiness?”*] *Se:* “Why don’t you tell me about your happiness? Why do you [only] remain silent and just look at me like that?”
- 87, 20-23 *The animal...wonder.*] *Se:* And the animal also wanted to answer, “Because I always immediately forget what I want to

- say"—but it had already forgotten this answer and hence said nothing, so that the human being was left to wonder anew.
- 87, 28-29 *does...of a/ Se:* does repeatedly return, this ghost disturbs the peace of every
- 87, 33 *envies] Pm:* marvels at *Sd:* [envies] marvels at
- 87, 33-88, 4 *that immediately...honest.] Se:* for being able to forget and for truly "killing" time. The animal lives *ahistorically*: it disappears entirely into the present, like a number that leaves no remainder.
- 88, 6-7 *weighs...over,] Deleted in Se.*
- 88, 8 *he can...that] Deleted in Se.*
- 88, 12 *in blissful blindness] Se:* blind and blissful
- 88, 15-16 *will...obliviousness.] Se:* awakens from its obliviousness.
- 88, 19 *imperfect] Se:* "imperfect" Nietzsche's word, *Imperfectum*, not only evokes the notion of imperfection but also signifies the imperfect tense in grammar, commonly called the simple past. Thus the pun on this word—which Nietzsche stresses when in his subsequent emendation he places it in quotation marks—suggests that imperfection inheres by nature in the sense of pastness.
- 88, 19-24 *When...itself.] Deleted in Se.*
- 88, 25-29 *is in...living] Se:* is supposed to be what binds the living to life, then indeed no philosopher would be closer to truth than is the cynic, for the happiness of the animal, who is, after all, the consummate cynic, is the
- 88, 30-34 *is uninterruptedly...privation.] Se:* comes again and again, is an incomparably greater form of happiness than the greatest happiness that only occurs as an exception and a mood, in the midst of sheer joylessness, yearning, and privation, and for precisely that reason increases the painfulness a hundredfold.
- 89, 2-16 *Anyone...well.] Se:* Forgetting is necessary for all action. *Appended to this the rejected beginning of a partial revision:* Let's imagine the most extreme instance: this would be a human being who is condemned to see eternal becoming and nothing but eternal becoming.
- 89, 13 *Heraclitus] Heraclitus* defended the doctrine that all of existence is in a constant state of flux. In his metaphor of the stream

- of becoming, Nietzsche alludes to Heraclitus's famous assertion that one cannot place one's foot into the same stream twice.
- 89, 16-19 *A human... ruminat[i]on.*] Cf. 29 [32].
- 89, 18-23 *forced... simply.*] *Se*: who principally went without sleep, or like an animal that no longer wanted to eat but only to ruminate. It is possible to live almost without memory, indeed, to live happily, as the animal shows us; but it is utterly impossible to live without forgetting. Or, to return to the problem I am dealing with, a problem of health, as we will see:
- 89, 24-25 *and... whether.*] *Se*: all living things, whether
- 89, 25 *things.*] *Continuation in Pd*: things. Shaping power. Memory and forgetting are both necessary for health, both for the health of a people, of a culture.
- 90, 13 *blood.*] *Pp*: blood, in order to suck it in as blood.
- 91, 22 *ahistorical.*] *Pp*: suppressed
- 92, 18 *in Goethe's words.*] See Goethe, *Maximen und Reflexionen* (Maxims and reflections), no. 251: "The person who acts is always without a conscience; no one except the observer has a conscience."
- 92, 25 *their worth... great.*] *Pp*: there were no honor that would be able to do justice to them.
- 93, 5 *form.*] The source of this quotation from Barthold Georg Niebuhr is unknown.
- 93, 23 *give.*] Nietzsche cites this quotation in the original English. The passage is drawn from Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, Part 10, but is not, in fact, by Hume himself; rather, it is cited by Hume from John Dryden's play *Aureng-Zebe*, act 4, scene 1. Cf. 29 [86]; 30 [2].
- 94, 32 *yourself.*] Both Nietzsche and Schopenhauer admired the work of Leopardi. The lines Nietzsche quotes are drawn from the poem "A se stesso" (To himself).
- 94, 33-95, 10 *But... wisdom.*] Cf. 30 [2].
- 95, 9 *unwisdom.*] *Pm*: unknowledge
- 95, 15 *reduced to an intellectual phenomenon.*] *Se*: translated back into an intellectual problem
- 95, 16 *he understands.*] *Se*: he resolves
- 95, 22 *lives.*] *Pd*: lives. [But only because he is not guided by

knowledge, but rather by the urges of life; only by means of an antidecorative orientation to the past does he learn — — —]
 95, 32 *neither could nor should*] *Se*: could not

2

96, 18 *as Goethe observed*] See Goethe's *Gespräche mit Eckermann* (Conversations with Eckermann), entry dated 21 July 1827.

96, 20 *Polybius*] Nietzsche is referring to a passage from Polybius' *Histories*, I.1.2.

97, 8-10 *was... substance*] *Pm*: once existed to spread the concept of "the human being" into more beautiful and loftier domains

97, 14-17 *of such... history.*] *Pd*: of a past age is also great and that the presaging belief of the desire for fame will be fulfilled, that is the fundamental idea of *culture*.

98, 18 *Schopenhauer*] See chap. 4 of the "Aphorismen zur Lebensweisheit" (Aphorisms for worldly wisdom) in vol. 1 of Schopenhauer's *Parerga und Paralipomena*, entitled "Von Dem, was Einer vorstellt" (About that which one imagines).

99, 6-14 *Basically... America.*] Cf. 29 [108]; 29 [29].

99, 12 *Stoic... Caesar*] Cf. 29 [61]. The allusion is to the conspiracy between Gaius Cassius and Marcus Brutus to assassinate Julius Caesar.

99, 14 *America.*] *Pp*: America, and America Columbus.

100, 18 *golden hip*] For the story of Pythagoras's golden hip, see Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, 8.11.

100, 20 *master.*] *Pp*: master while he was bathing.

3

102, 27-34 *Second... life.*] Cf. 29 [114].

102, 34-35 *ancestral household effects*] An allusion to Goethe's *Faust*, pt. I, l. 408.

103, 26 *soul.*] Nietzsche is referring to Goethe's essay "Von deutscher Baukunst" (On German architecture), written in Strasbourg in 1772 and dedicated to the builder of the Strasbourg cathedral, Erwin von Steinach. In this essay Goethe celebrates the Strasbourg cathedral as a true work of German genius.

- 103, 29-30 *Burckhardt*] Jacob Burckhardt was a respected colleague of Nietzsche's at the University of Basel. Here Nietzsche is quoting Burckhardt's *Die Kunst der Renaissance in Italien* (The civilization of Renaissance Italy), 2nd ed. (Leipzig, 1869), 200.
- 105, 9-14 *This...rejected.*] Cf. 29 [114].
- 105, 23-24 *death...commonly*] *Pm*: death to the benefit of the roots —and thereby the roots, in turn, are most certain to
- 106, 13 *gives rise to*] *Pm*: becomes
- 106, 31 *violence*] *Pm*: guilt
- 107, 4 *being.*] See Goethe's *Faust*, pt. I, ll. 1339-41.

4

- 108, 9 4] Cf. 29 [118, 121, 122, 65, 81].
- 108, 19 *purpose.*] *Pm*: life. *Pd*: purpose.
- 109, 14 *fiat veritas pereat vita*] "Let there be truth, though life may perish."
- 109, 30 *fairy tale*] See the tale "Der Wolf und die sieben Geislein" (The wolf and the seven little goats) in the Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (Fairy tales).
- 110, 15-16 *that snake*] *Pm*: the boa
- 111, 9 *Barbarians.*] *deleted continuation in Sd*: Indeed, we can go even further and say the antithesis between "cultivated" and "uncultivated" emerged on the basis of historical studies. But what has the creative intellect—for whom, after all, world history, if it is to have any meaning, must be intended—lost, irretrievably lost by being forced between these antitheses! It is impossible to express! He has lost the reliance on his people because he knows that their feelings are painted over and counterfeited. Even if this feeling has become more refined and more sublime in a small segment of the people, that is no compensation for him, for then he only speaks, as it were, to a sect, and does not sense himself to be needed by his people. Perhaps he will prefer to bury his treasure because he feels disgust at being pretentiously patronized by a sect while his heart is full of compassion for all. The instinct of his people no longer embraces him: for that antithesis has confused and led astray all instincts.
- 111, 27-28 *the unity...people*] Nietzsche is alluding to a comment

he himself made in the first of the *Unfashionable Observations*; see section 1 of the Strauss essay.

114, 2 *moderns.*] Nietzsche is loosely quoting the words of Franz Grillparzer; see Grillparzer's *Sämmtliche Werke* (Stuttgart, 1872), 9: 187.

114, 19-20 *cultivated...ill-cultivated*] Nietzsche is playing on the common stem of the words *Gebildete* and *verbildet*; I have tried to render this by translating *verbildet*, which means either "deformed" or, in the context of education, "ill-trained," as "ill-cultivated."

114, 21-22 *How...endure*] *Pp*: What has he lost

114, 27 *more refined*] *Pm*: freer

5

115, 22 *f*] Cf. 29 [130].

116, 29 *Schiller*] Nietzsche is alluding to Schiller's poem "Die Worte des Glaubens" (The words of faith).

117, 9-11 *If...shadows.*] *Pd*: The contact with so many past individuals has nearly made human beings into pure abstractions and shadows:

118, 3 *history stories*] Nietzsche's word *Geschichten*, the plural form of *Geschichte*, means both "histories" and "stories." I have chosen to render this ambiguity as "history stories," since it retains both the equivocation of the German and the sarcastic implication that history has been reduced to nothing but stories.

119, 12 *well.*] See section 1 of Goethe's essay "Shakespeare und kein Ende" (Shakespeare without end).

119, 22-23 *historically cultivated products of cultivation*] Nietzsche's neologism, *Bildungsgebilde*, borders on tautology since both components of the word, *Bildung* (cultivation; formation) and *Gebilde* (product), derive from the verb *bilden* (to form, shape, or cultivate). The chosen English phrase reproduces this tautology, without being able to reproduce Nietzsche's ironic play on the concept of *Bildung* that is so central to his argument.

119, 24 *image*] Here, too, Nietzsche's word, *Bild*, echoes the concept of *Bildung*.

120, 2-4 *corpora...vilia...corpora*] Nietzsche is playing ironically

- on the Latin word *corpus*, which means "body" both in the literal sense of physical body and in the figurative sense of "body of works"; *vilia* means "vile," a sarcastic cut at the substandard level of the "body of works" produced, as Nietzsche sees it, by modern human beings.
- 120, 5 *occurs...not*] *Sd*: occurs to me: Why Democritus? Why not
- 120, 16-17 *Eternal Feminine...upward*] An allusion to the closing lines of Goethe's *Faust*; see *Faust*, pt. II, ll. 12110-11: "Das Ewig-Weibliche / Zieht uns hinan" (The Eternal Feminine / Draws us upward).
- 121, 6 *survey and supervise*] Nietzsche's verb, *überschauen*, connotes both "to survey" and "to supervise," and both meanings seem applicable here.
- 121, 13 *few*] *Sd*: few or no
- 121, 24-25 *have...them.*] *Sd*: draw from the inkwell of the Danaides.
- 121, 25 *guiding their pens*] Nietzsche's phrase, *ihre Federn führen*, plays on the expression *federführend*, meaning "competent," or "leading," as in the leading figure of a movement or organization.
- 121, 25 *guiding...guided*] *Pp*: writing with their pens are written
- 121, 27 *impotentia*] "impotence."

6

- 121, 29 6] Cf. 29 [96, 62, 92].
- 121, 30-122, 13 *But...unjust.*] *Deleted opening in Pd*: At the same time, the modern human being, insofar as he is the historically cultivated human being, even deceives himself into believing that he is the *just human being* and that his famed objectivity is the font of the highest virtue, of justice!
- 122, 14-124, 9 *Truly...truth.*] *Title in Pd*: *All Sorts of Servants of Truth*. Cf. 29 [23].
- 123, 10 *fear of*] *Sd*: flight from
- 125, 17 *in conformity with*] *Sd*; *Pm*: in a manner that does justice to
- 125, 35-36 *contemplates...connotes*] *Sd*: contemplates and thereby forgets his own person. In other words, one demands of the historian artistic contemplativeness and
- 126, 2 *empirical*] *Sd*; *Pm*: true
- 127, 2 *events.*] Nietzsche has pieced together this quotation from

- two different statements by Franz Grillparzer; see Grillparzer's *Sämmtliche Werke* (Stuttgart, 1872), 9: 129, 40.
- 127, 11 *imagination.*] See Friedrich Schiller, *Was heisst und zu welchem Ende studiert man Universalgeschichte?* (What is and why do we study universal history?).
- 127, 12 *a celebrated historical virtuoso*] Nietzsche is referring to the German historian Leopold von Ranke. The source of the quotation Nietzsche goes on to cite is unknown.
- 127, 17-18 *truth...untruth*] *Sd*: wisdom... un wisdom
- 127, 19 *compelled*] See Goethe's letter to Schiller dated 21 Feb. 1798.
- 127, 22 *itself.*] The source of the quotation attributed to Swift is unknown.
- 128, 24 *boringness*] *Pm*: boredom
- 128, 27 *that artistic condition*] *Sd*: artistic disinterestedness
- 129, 11-14 *On...that.*] *Pd*: Not every age is charged with the task of being the judge of all previous ages, and our age certainly least of all, because it relates to the great ages the same way as the critic relates to the work of art.
- 129, 26 *Otherwise*] *Sd*: Otherwise you are lost, otherwise
- 129, 35-36 *artistic*] *Sd*: artificial
- 130, 8 *"historiens de M. Thiers."*] "The historians who work for M. Thiers." Louis Adolphe Thiers was a French historian known for his work on monumental historical projects.
- 130, 11 *easier to combine*] *Sd*: often found together
- 130, 12 *history*] *Sd*; *Pm*: history requires the active human being, history
- 130, 23-28 *By...striving.*] *Pd*: Let me tell you how one controls the historical sensibility: Eyes front! Set a great goal! Take [German] Prussian politics as your model!

7

131, 12 7] Cf. 29 [56, 51].

131, 19-20 *its verdict is always a death sentence.*] Nietzsche's text reads literally: "its verdict is always an annihilation" (*sein Richten ist immer ein Vernichten*), whereby the identity of this verdict and annihilation is underscored by the rhyme on *Richten* and *Ver-*

- nichten*. The chosen translation attempts to render the rhetorical force of the German original, without being able to recreate this rhyme.
- 131, 20-28 *If...goal.*] *Pd*: The historical sensibility, when a constructive impulse stands behind it, has its highest worth as an element that sweeps away and destroys, for wherever something is comprehended, the creative instinct is annihilated. A religion that seeks to become a science seeks to destroy itself.
- 132, 13 *tyrants.*] See Goethe's essay "Fragment über die Natur" (Fragment on nature). Nietzsche apparently lifts the quotation from Eduard von Hartmann's *Die Philosophie des Unbewussten* (The philosophy of the unconscious) (Berlin, 1869), 620, since Nietzsche retains the minor alterations present in Hartmann's quotation of the passage.
- 132, 19 *Voltaire's écrasez]* Voltaire's famous motto, *écrasez l'infame*, "destroy the infamous thing," meaning: destroy the church.
- 132, 22 *Protestant Union]* Founded in 1863, the German Protestant Union, which emerged from the movement known as "Cultural Protestantism," sought to reform and modernize the Lutheran Church.
- 132, 33 *theologus liberalis vulgaris]* "common liberal theologian."
- 133, 1-2 "*greatest theologian of the century*"] The German theologian and philosopher Friedrich Daniel Schleiermacher.
- 133, 31 *lust for the new]* Nietzsche's word, *Neubegier*, is a neologism that combines the common word *Neugier*, "curiosity," with *Be-gierde*, "lust."
- 133, 32 *actio in distans]* "distanced action."
- 134, 4 *illusion,]* See Wagner, *Die Meistersinger*, act 3, scene 1.
- 135, 8 *clumps]* A line from Schiller's poem "Der Taucher" (The diver).
- 135, 11-14 *The young...are.] Pm*: The young person has become an outcast, is skeptical about all customs and concepts; now he knows: in every age things were different; it does not matter what you are.
- 135, 21 *ones.]* See Hölderlin's letter to Isaak von Sinclair dated 24 Dec. 1798.
- 136, 1-12 *Believe...scholars.] Pd*: It ought no longer be the era of

the harmonious personality, but rather that of "common labor." But that only means: *before* they are complete, human beings are used in the factory. But have no doubt, in a short time scholarship will be just as ruined as the human beings who accomplish this factory labor.

- 136, 20-23 *The carters...genius.*] *Pm*: The carters have negotiated a labor contract among themselves, according to which genius is supposed to be declared superfluous by reminting every carter as a genius.
- 137, 6 *Goethe*] See Goethe's *Maximen und Reflexionen* (Maxims and reflections), nos. 694 and 693. Cf. 29 [84].
- 137, 21 *conceive...enough.*] *Sd*: comprehend it as noble and lofty enough. But it is not easy to conceive your "mixed public" in all its vulgarity.
- 137, 23-24 *aqua fortis*] nitric acid.

8

- 137, 33 8] Cf. 29 [46].
- 138, 8 *error,*] The source of this quotation from Goethe is unknown.
- 138, 24-139, 4 *Historical...end!*] Cf. 29 [48].
- 139, 14 *memento mori*] "remember that you must die."
- 139, 16 *knowledge and conscience*] Nietzsche is playing on the close etymological connection in German of *Wissen* (knowledge) and *Gewissen* (conscience). One could approximate this by rendering the passage as "science and con-science," but although such a rendering recreates the rhetorical effect of Nietzsche's German, it strays somewhat too far from the literal meaning of the passage.
- 139, 17 *memento vivere*] "remember that you are alive"; Nietzsche is probably alluding to Goethe's "Gedenke zu leben!" (Remember to live!) from *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (Wilhelm Meister's apprenticeship), bk. VIII, chap. 5.
- 139, 19 *insincere...is*] *Pm*: insincere, just as if a lame person were to swing his leg while sitting in order to demonstrate how fast he could run. In the same way, humanity sits
- 140, 4 *striving*] *Sd*: living

- 140, 25 *history...theology*] An allusion to Ludwig Feuerbach's famous statement that philosophy is a disguised theology.
- 141, 2-4 *explanation...explanations*] *Sd*; *Pm*: possibility...possibilities
- 141, 24 *life.*] This quotation is taken from Wilhelm Wackernagel's *Abhandlungen zur deutschen Literaturgeschichte* (Essays on German literary history), from vol. 2 of his *Kleinere Schriften*, ed. Moritz Heyne (Leipzig, 1873). This book was part of Nietzsche's personal library.
- 143, 13 *concept,*] *Pm*: concept," with demonstrable necessity
- 143, 15 *scornfully*] *Pm*: justifiably
- 143, 21-32 *so that...facts.*] Cf. 29 [51].
- 143, 24 *everything*] *Sd*: everything[, for example, the present constellation of glory and victory wreaths,]
- 143, 31 *mythological*] *Sd*: unmythological
- 144, 23 *ira...studium...sine ira et studio*] The words *ira* and *studium* mean, respectively, "anger" and "course of study." Nietzsche ironically plays these literal meanings off against the phrase *sine ira et studio*, "without anger and self-involvement," which the Roman historian Tacitus used to describe the manner in which he wrote his histories. Nietzsche thus takes another sarcastic swipe at the emotionally detached "objectivity" and pedantic studiousness of modern historians.
- 145, 5 *more like a calf than a god*] An allusion to the pagan sacrifice of calves, which is intended to underscore the "idolatrous" character of those who worship history.
- 145, 7 *natura naturans*] "creative nature." This term was employed by the philosopher Baruch de Spinoza to designate God as a creative force, as the origin of all things. It is often opposed to *natura naturata*, "created" or "man-made nature."
- 145, 34 *me!*] The protagonist of Goethe's novel *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* (The sorrows of young Werther) commits suicide, an act that set off a rash of actual suicides by readers of the book who identified with its protagonist. This caused Goethe to issue a warning in the second edition of the novel, admonishing his readers not to follow Werther's example.
- 146, 3 *be.*] *Pd*: be." In this respect history is a self-contradictory,

self-consuming, self-negating absurdity, and every moment that only becomes a moment by killing the previous one teaches us this lesson.

9

- 146, 8 9] Cf. 29 [72, 59, 51, 40].
- 146, 25 *become*] Pp: again become
- 146, 32 *process.*] The quotation is drawn from Eduard von Hartmann's *Philosophie des Unbewussten* (Philosophy of the unconscious) (Berlin, 1869), 638. Further references will be cited as "Hartmann" with the page number. Hartmann was a popular metaphysical philosopher, and his *Philosophie des Unbewussten* went through a number of editions in the years immediately following its first publication in 1869.
- 147, 23 *Overproud*] Sd; Pp: Jocular
- 148, 9 *Hegel*] Cf. 29 [72].
- 148, 10 *hand.*] From Hegel's "Introduction" to his *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* (Lectures on the philosophy of history).
- 148, 34-149, 33 *If...redemption.*] Cf. 29 [59, 66, 51].
- 149, 6 *ex causis efficientibus*] "by means of efficient causes."
- 149, 6-7 *ex causa finali*] "by means of a final cause."
- 149, 13 *manhood*] Hartmann, 619, 625.
- 149, 14 *mediocrity.*] Hartmann, 618.
- 149, 16 *stockbroker.*] Hartmann, 619.
- 149, 23 *education.*] Hartmann, 619.
- 149, 29 *influence*] Hartmann, 610.
- 149, 33 *redemption.*] Hartmann, 637-38.
- 150, 23 *world.*] Hartmann, 638.
- 150, 28 *process.*] Hartmann, 638.
- 150, 30 *suicide.*] Hartmann, 635-36.
- 150, 34 *it.*] Hartmann, 638.
- 151, 5 *infelicitous.*] Quoted by Nietzsche in the original English. The source is unknown, but the quotation could possibly be taken from Walter Bagehot's *Physics and Politics*, which was published in 1869.

- 151, 17 *owl*."] The source of this quotation attributed to Goethe is unknown.
- 151, 29-33 *the republic...them*.] See Schopenhauer, *Der handschriftliche Nachlaß*, ed. A. Hübscher (Frankfurt, 1970), 3: 188. Cf. 24 [4].
- 152, 11 *the Danaides' futile attempts to draw water*] According to Greek mythology, forty-nine of the fifty daughters of Danaus, a king of Argos, killed their husbands by order of their father and were condemned in Hades forever to attempt to draw water with sieves.
- 152, 14 *Judgment*."] Hartmann, 637.
- 152, 32-33 *time...appear*"] The force of Nietzsche's fictional decree depends on the etymological relation of the German word *Zeitungen* ("newspapers") with the noun *Zeit* ("time"). The implication is that the only way to halt the appearance of newspapers, which Nietzsche vilifies, is to halt time itself.
- 153, 21 *a posteriori*] Literally, "from what comes later." In philosophical discourse this phrase designates the process of moving inductively from particular observations to general laws, or deriving generalizations from empirical givens.
- 153, 25 *animae magnae prodigus*] Literally, "prodigal of a great soul," but meaning "careless of life." The phrase is taken from Horace's *Odes*, I.12.38.
- 154, 5-155, 29 *Only...God*."] Cf. 29 [40, 41, 139, 149].
- 155, 1 *him*.] *Pd*: him: but here what is original seems to have gotten completely lost, and all that remains is a name for tendencies of the masses and of many ambitious-egoistic individuals.
- 155, 4-5 *imperium romanum*] "Roman empire."
- 155, 16-18 *Expressed...progress*.] Cf. 29 [49].
- 156, 10-29 *In sum...everything*.] Cf. 29 [51].
- 156, 13 *future*."] Hartmann, 618.
- 156, 14 *humanity*."] Hartmann, 625.
- 156, 22 *striving*."] Hartmann, 625.
- 156, 29 *everything*.] Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, act 2, scene 7, ll. 162-65.

10

- 158, 21-23 *in the immaturity... skepticism,*] Cf. 27 [80].
- 159, 10-12 *For... of time,*] *Pd:* But it is obvious that they will perish. Cf. 29 [142].
- 159, 14 *gradual.*] Hartmann, 638.
- 159, 22-23 *Gottsched's... Pindar*] Johann Christian Gottsched's dramatic theories, which were adapted from French models, dominated the eighteenth-century German stage until Gottsched was attacked and his theories debunked by such critical spirits as Lessing. Karl Wilhelm Ramler, today viewed as a minor poet, at best, in his own time earned the appellation "the German Pindar" based on his odes. Both men represent figures who won renown in their own time but who had already been recognized as negligible a hundred years later when Nietzsche was writing this essay.
- 160, 5-6 *the quickly dated up-to-date babblers*] Nietzsche is playing on the term *alikleug*, which means "precocious," but whose literal significance is something like "having the cunning of old age at an early age." In playful reference to this term he then coins the word *neuweis*, "newly wise." The rendering "quickly dated up-to-date" attempts to capture both the temporal contrast so central to this juxtaposition as well as the rhetorical power of Nietzsche's language.
- 160, 6 *sensorium*] The supposed seat of physical sensation in the gray matter of the brain.
- 160, 8-9 *thirst. That*] *Pd:* thirst—in short, the pseudoimage of the vital and healthy cultured human being, who is above all human being, inwardly and outwardly whole and one of a kind. That
- 161, 18 *babblers!—*] *Followed in Up with this passage that Nietzsche then deleted:* What made governing so difficult for Germany's leading statesman for an entire decade if not the acquired, indeed, stolen conceptions of foreign party politics that were buzzing around in the heads of the Germans, conceptions that correspond to no views in Germany itself, those needs composed of words and schematisms, not needs composed of vital exigencies? What is the true cause of that disgraceful conflict, mocked

abroad, in which we Germans live with the creative artistic genius of the age, in whose name precisely this age will be engraved upon and honored by the memory of posterity? What else but acquired, empty words and historical, gray-stranded conceptual spiderwebs in which the German has trapped his full and profound nature, and in which, once caught, he then sucks the blood out of his own living reality. For this is precisely what "cultivation" wants: to sit in a conceptual web, to sit bloodlessly and be vicious to all those who blow on this web and now and again blow away some of its filaments.

161, 19 *Plato*] Plato expounds this theory of the necessary lie in *The Republic*, 3.414b.

161, 31 *aeterna veritas*] "eternal truth."

162, 6-18 *But...age.*] *Disposition in Pd*: Self-correctional facility necessary for the first generation. Cure, being able to forget. (Impossible without somewhat too much; we will certainly suffer from the cures.)

162, 11-13 *Thus...upbringing.*] Cf. 29 [182].

162, 30 *cogito, ergo sum...vivo, ergo cogito*] A reference to Descartes's famous formula "I think, therefore I am," which Nietzsche modifies to read "I live, therefore I think."

162, 33 *animal...cogital*] Nietzsche takes the word *animal* in its broadest meaning as something that is "animated," i.e., that lives, and he coins the word *cogital*, meaning something that cogitates or thinks, in analogy to it.

163, 24-29 *With...religion.*] Cf. 29 [194].

163, 29-164, 5 *Science...becoming.*] *Pd*: Science views both as poisons, but it is really only a lack of science that lets them be conceived as poisons and not as remedies. A branch of science is lacking: a kind of higher hygiene that examines the effects of science on life and determines the permitted amount from the standpoint of the health of a people or of a culture. Prescription: The ahistorical teaches forgetting, localizes, creates atmosphere, horizon; the suprahistorical makes more indifferent to the allurements of history, has a soothing and diverting effect. Nature philosophy art pity.

165, 1-4 *But...hybrids.*] Cf. 29 [195].

- 166, 16 *God of Delphi*] Apollo, who as the god of prophecy ruled over the oracle of Delphi.
- 166, 19 *alludes.*] Heraclitus, fragment 93 (Diels-Kranz).
- 166, 33-167, 7 *The Greeks...peoples.*] Cf. 29 [191, 192].
- 167, 19 *physis*] "nature."
- 167, 25-28 *even...culture.*] *Pm*: may this truthfulness also often undermine and bring about the downfall of a "cultivatedness" that stands in high esteem, a merely decorative culture.
- 167, 28 *culture.*] *Followed in Pm by this passage, which Nietzsche then deleted*: "And what is to become of us?," the historians will reluctantly object at the end of my observations. What is to become of the science of history, our famous, rigorous, sober, methodical science? "Get thee to a nunnery, Ophelia," Hamlet says {see Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, act 3, scene 1, l. 121}; but to which nunnery do we wish to ban this science and the historical scholar? This is a riddle that the reader must himself address and solve if he is too impatient to wait for the author's own solution in a herewith promised set of observations "On the Scholar and His Thoughtless Integration into Modern Society." {Nietzsche never completed the promised essay.} Cf. 29 [196].

Third Piece Schopenhauer as Educator

There are two earlier versions of "Schopenhauer as Educator": Nietzsche's preliminary draft (*Pd*) and his second draft (*Sd*). Only part of the printer's manuscript (*Pm*) is still extant, and the page proofs have been lost. A copy of "Schopenhauer" in Nietzsche's library contains subsequent emendations (*Se*) that are only in part attributable to Nietzsche himself.

Nietzsche's notebooks containing unpublished fragments related to the Schopenhauer essay are published in Vol. 11 of this edition and are cited according to the number of the notebook followed by the fragment number in brackets.

I

- 171, 7-11 *At...is.*] Cf. Paul de Lagarde, *Deutsche Schriften* (Göttingen, 1878), I: 72: "Every human being is one of a kind, for he

is the result of a one-of-a-kind process that will never be repeated."

- 171, 9 *unicum*] "unique being"; "one of a kind."
- 172, 24 *arouse...pity*] Nietzsche is alluding to discussions about the "fear" and "pity" that, according to Aristotle, the tragic hero is supposed to evoke. The implication is that the human beings Nietzsche is describing can lay no claim to being tragic heroes.
- 172, 27 *public opinions...private lazinesses*] Nietzsche is alluding to the subtitle of Bernard de Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees*, "Private Vices, Public Benefits."
- 173, 3-7 *by...whereas they*] *Sd*: by contrast, can we, who are not citizens of this time, be! For if we were, we would assist in killing their time—whereas we as people of action
- 174, 4 *him*] Oliver Cromwell, as quoted by Ralph Waldo Emerson in "Circles" (*Essays: First Series*). Nietzsche read Emerson, whom he greatly admired, in the German translation by G. Frabricius (Hannover, 1858). This book was a part of Nietzsche's library, and Nietzsche marked the cited passage (found on p. 237) several times in his edition.
- 174, 12-18 *that no...on its*] *Sd*: that cannot be healed. He should elect a different way of knowing himself and look at his
- 174, 36 *parody of education.*] *Sd*: shadow and parody of cultivation.

2

- 175, 16 2] *Sd*: Chapter One
- 175, 35-176, 27 *But does...mechanics.*] Cf. 30 [9].
- 176, 3-5 *Benvenuto...piping*] Benvenuto Cellini relates this in his autobiography, *Life*, bk. I, chap. 2. Nietzsche read Cellini's autobiography in Goethe's German translation.
- 180, 5 *genuine*] *Sd*: proper
- 181, 2-3 *me...whatsoever.*] *Sd*: me of English writers more than of any German models.
- 181, 14 *devices.*] The source of the original quotation in Schopenhauer is unknown. Quite possibly this is a makeshift quotation on Nietzsche's part that summarizes attitudes Schopenhauer expressed in the essay "Über Schriftstellerei und Stil" (On authorship and style) in his *Parerga und Paralipomena*.

- 181, 27 *wing.*] An incorrect translation of Montaigne on Nietzsche's part, a fact that Nietzsche himself noted in the margin of his own printed copy of this essay. Montaigne's assertion reads: "Je ne le puis si peu accointer que je n'en tire cuisse ou aïse," which one English translator renders as: "He can no sooner come into my sight but I pull some leg or wing from him."
- 181, 32 *Aliis laetus, sibi sapiens*] "Cheerful to others, sensible to himself."
- 182, 12 *cheerleaders*] Nietzsche coins the derogatory term *Heiterlinge*, which could be translated literally as "cheerlings"; however, the word "cheerleaders" better renders Nietzsche's biting sarcasm and ties in well with the connection between cheerfulness and victory that Nietzsche goes on to make.
- 182, 33 *being.*] Goethe, *Italienische Reise* (Travels in Italy), entry dated 9 Oct. 1786.
- 183, 14 *tragelaphine*] A tragelaph is a horned beast.

3

- 183, 26 3] *Pd*: 2
- 184, 25 *extraorderly*] Nietzsche coins the noun *Ausserordnung* as a parallel to *Unordnung* ("disorder"). This new word also alludes to the adjective *ausserordentlich* ("extraordinary"), thereby suggesting that there is nothing extraordinary in this professorial truth precisely because it refuses to be extraorderly, to transcend the established order of things.
- 185, 5 *A modern Englishman*] Walter Bagehot; Nietzsche draws the quotation that follows from the chapter "On Nation-Making" in Bagehot's *Physics and Politics*. There is an error in Nietzsche's citation: where he has "England," Bagehot wrote "New England."
- 185, 14 *Beethoven*] *Pm*: Luther
- 185, 14 *Beethoven, Goethe*] *Missing in Pd*.
- 185, 25 *traces.*] The source from which Nietzsche draws this anecdote is unknown.
- 186, 13 *legor et legar*] "I am read, and I will be read."
- 187, 26-27 *lack of love,*] *Pd*: loneliness, [and he wrote the most moving letter ever written by an artist]

- 188, 30 *other.*] Letter of Heinrich von Kleist to Wilhelmine von Zenge, dated 22 Mar. 1801.
- 189, 19-21 *threads...labyrinthine.*] Nietzsche is alluding *ex negativo* to Ariadne's thread, which helps Theseus find his way out of the labyrinth. By contrast, the "threads that have no end," which Nietzsche depicts, lead one into a labyrinth.
- 190, 11 *physis*] "nature."
- 191, 14 *grace.*] This episode is related by W. Gwinner in his *Arthur Schopenhauer aus persönlichem Umgange dargestellt* (Leipzig, 1862), 108.
- 191, 26-31 *The more...pugnacious.*] *Pd*: As I have said, it is a miracle that Schopenhauer was able to defend himself against, and save himself from, three such dangers as those I have depicted, but this is his triumph and his salvation only when one looks at the broad, general picture. In the process much was damaged and weakened, and no one should be amazed——
- 192, 30 *this!*] A quotation from Goethe's *Faust*, pt. I, l. 376.
- 192, 33 *feeble*] *Pd*; *Pm*: harmful
- 194, 17 *physis*] "nature."
- 194, 22-195, 31 *If every...Empedodes.*] Cf. 34 [8].

4

- 195, 32 4] *Title in Sd*: Depiction of the Age.
- 195, 33-196, 4 *Let...possible.*] Cf. 31 [8]; 34 [8, 10].
- 196, 4-22 *I...do.—*] Cf. 29 [225].
- 196, 15 *saeculum obscurum*] "dark age."
- 197, 15-21 *How...Munich.*] *Pd*: I cannot tell you why in 1871 a new day is supposed to have dawned for the world! Or, how can the problem be solved by the fact that in some corner of the world a people comes together again? Anyone who believes that a political innovation is sufficient to make human beings once and for all into contented dwellers on this earth truly deserves to be a professor of philosophy at a German university. I am ashamed to admit that professors like Harms in Berlin and Jürgen Meyer in Bonn have made just such an idiotic statement, without the universities having protested against such an aberration.

- 198, 17-18 *Never...goodness.*] *Sd*: Everywhere lack of love and self-sacrificing devotion.
- 198, 34 *thing?"*] From Act 2 of Wagner's *Tannhäuser*.
- 200, 1 *adiaphora*] "matters of indifference or irrelevance to questions of faith."
- 200, 2 *price*] *Se*: ransom price
- 201, 14 *Typhon*] According to Greek myth, Typhon was a snake-like giant with one hundred heads.
- 202, 27-28 *from this...him.*] An allusion to the conclusion of Goethe's *Faust*, in which divine intervention prevents Faust's soul from passing into the possession of the devil.
- 203, 5-6 *Catilinarian*] Lucius Sergius Catiline (ca. 108-62 B.C.) was a Roman politician who turned conspirator and led an unsuccessful coup.
- 203, 11 *still."*] See Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (Wilhelm Meister's apprenticeship), bk. 8, chap. 5.
- 203, 11 *still."*] *Sd*: still." Anyone who lives among Germans will certainly have in his heart a commentary on these words. [Schopenhauer's human being cannot only be unpleasant and bitter at times, he is on the whole quite nasty—and I, at least, am of the opinion that for that reason he is better even than Wilhelm Meister. He no longer knows anything about the goodness of nature: he laughs at those who believe they have been born to be happy.]
- 203, 12-19 *Thus...life.*] Cf. 34 [4].
- 203, 26 *devil."*] Goethe, *Faust*, pt. I, ll. 1379-81.
- 203, 34 *principle.*] *Followed in Sd by the caption*: Conclusion of Chapter Four
- 203, 34-35 *All...negated*] Cf. the similar formulation in Goethe's *Faust*, pt. I, ll. 1339-41.
- 204, 9 *suffering."*] See Meister Eckhart, *Werke*, ed. Franz Pfeiffer (Leipzig, 1857), 1: 492. This passage is quoted by Schopenhauer in the supplement "Zur Lehre von der Verneinung des Willens zum Leben" (On the doctrine of the negation of the will to life) in vol. 2 of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (The world as will and representation).
- 204, 30 *"A*] *Sd*: Conclusion of Chapter Four. Schopenhauer: "A

- 204, 36 *like the prince in Gozzi's Re corvo*] The allusion is to Prince Deremo in Carlo conte di Gozzi's comedy *Il Re corvo* (The king stag), who is turned to stone.
- 205, 4 *Nirvana.*] The quotation is drawn from §172a in vol. 2 of Schopenhauer's *Parerga und Paralipomena*, in the section entitled "Nachträge zur Lehre von der Bejahung und Verneinung des Willens zum Leben" (Addenda to the doctrine of the affirmation and negation of the will to life).
- 205, 5-8 *Such...people.*] *Pm*: All of us ought to be heroes of truthfulness; better yet, all of us are capable of this. To be sure, not according to the inadequate conception of those who are now celebrating festivals and honoring the memory of great people,

5

- 207, 18 *]* Cf. 35 [14]; 34 [24, 14, 21].
- 208, 16 *activity.*] Goethe, from the "Bekenntnisse einer schönen Seele" (Confessions of a beautiful soul) in *Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre* (Wilhelm Meister's apprenticeship), bk. 6.
- 211, 33-34 *nature...leap*] Nietzsche is alluding to, and taking exception with, Charles Darwin's assertion in *The Origin of Species* that the doctrine of natural selection confirms the age-old belief that nature advances progressively and not by sudden leaps and bounds. See chap. 6 of Darwin's treatise, "Difficulties of the Theory."
- 212, 29-30 *becoming*] *Pm*: death
- 213, 32 *causa finalis*] "final purpose"; "ultimate aim."
- 213, 33 *use.*] See Goethe's letter to Charlotte von Stein dated 3 Mar. 1785.
- 214, 6-36 *There can...existence. —*] *Preceding these remarks in Pd*: To work for the production of this human being is the only thing that I call actively working for culture.
- 214, 28 *bate.*] *Pd*: hate, and pessimism will experience a resurrection.

6

- 215, 1 6] Cf. 35 [12]; 29 [13]; 34 [22, 24, 29, 37].
- 217, 25-26 *the production of genius.*] *Pd*: promoting the production of genius. If Schopenhauer's spirit and its institutions——
- 218, 2-3 *in their...path*] An allusion to the famous line from part I of Goethe's *Faust*, ll. 328-29: "Ein guter Mensch in seinem dunklen Drange/ist sich des rechten Weges wohl bewußt" ("A good human being, in his dark drive,/is well aware of the proper path").
- 218, 17 *culture*] *Pd*: culture, [in which for that supreme purpose absolutely nothing]
- 218, 19-20 *engage in intercourse with it*] Nietzsche's phrase, *mit ihr verkehren*, has sexual connotations, lending his statement the implication that these "powers" treat culture as their prostitute.
- 220, 10 *selfishness*] *Pm*: fists
- 221, 14 *war*] The Franco-Prussian War (1870-71).
- 221, 33 *will now be written off as un-German.*] *Pd*: will gradually be written off as "un-German," or as one would probably say today, as "hostile to the state." Deference to the state has elegance—may God bless them both.
- 222, 27 *fire.*] See Richard Wagner, "Über das Dirigieren" (On conducting), *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen* (Leipzig, 1871-73), 8: 387.
- 222, 29-223, 23 *Of course...faith.*] *Earlier version in Pd*: Those who call for elegance truly deserve that we get angry at them, for they give a ready-made, insolent response to a noble and profound consideration that the German has had on his mind for a long time. It sounds as though someone were calling to him: "learn to dance"—whereas that longing of Faust's to bathe in the red glow of evening {see *Faust*, pt. I, ll. 1064-99} is aroused in him. Hölderlin has expressed the attitude of the German: "You still delay and remain silent, you conceive a joyous work that will bear testimony to you, conceive of a new creation that is as unique as you yourself, that, like you, is born of love and is good." {see Hölderlin, "Gesang des Deutschen" (Song of the

German)) To be sure, with this conception in his mind he is disgusted by his present day; as a German he can barely stand to live among Germans.

224, 2-3 *Or...way?*] *Pm*: With this I am called back to that course that I will now consistently follow through to my conclusion.

226, 3-4 *adiaphoris*] "matters that are irrelevant."

226, 8 *sensus recti*] "sense of propriety."

228, 22 *stomach.*] A quotation from Goethe's translation of Diderot's *Rameau's Nephew*.

228, 28-29 *ingenii largitor venter*] "the stomach is the dispenser of genius."

230, 21-22 *Now...age* —] *Pd*: Now, when the moon of the scholar appears to be in its final phase —

7

234, 15-18 *And...point*] *Sd*: In other words: to do away with all the hindrances to genius and pave the way for the emergence of genius, which means nothing other than — to fight for culture. Let's draw up the practical guidelines for the production of the future philosopher: what obstacles have to be removed from his path? And, to be sure, at this point

234, 22-24 *nature's...redemption*] *Sd*: nature's benevolent manner

234, 25-26 *intelligible and meaningful*] *Sd*: more meaningful and thereby more bearable

235, 4 *humanity;*] *Sd*: the thronging multitude;

236, 15 *effect.*] *Sd*: effect. We ought to believe that this opposition is so paltry that one finger would be enough to brush it aside.

236, 18 *public supporters.*] *Sd*: literary heralds.

237, 21 "*cultural struggle*"] Nietzsche's term, *Kulturkampf*, was one of the slogans associated with Bismarck's cultural politics in the years immediately following the founding of the Second German Empire in 1871.

237, 25 *deformed*] *Sd*: artificial

237, 26-30 *According...produced.*] Cf. §191 in vol. 2 of Schopenhauer's *Parerga und Paralipomena*.

238, 29-30 *new political conditions*] Nietzsche is alluding to the unification of the German states under Bismarck's Prussia.

- 239, 1 *order.*] *Sd:* civil order.
- 239, 2 *a sign*] *Sd:* a true sign
- 239, 4-5 *furor philosophicus*] "philosophical passion."
- 239, 5 *furor politicus*] "political passion."
- 239, 6 *from reading*] *Sd:* from dealing with politics and reading
- 239, 13 *Another...fact*] *Sd:* But Schopenhauer's greatest fortune was
- 239, 19-20 *end...cbrystalis.*] *Sd:* end a scholar who occupied himself with philosophy.
- 239, 25 *lets...come*] *Sd:* lets books, even if they are the best of books, come
- 240, 12 *weighed...wanting*] An allusion to Dan. 5:27.
- 240, 13 *existence.*] *Sd:* existence in a vision.
- 240, 30 *vitam impendere vero*] "to devote one's life to truth"; Schopenhauer used this statement, drawn from one of Juvenal's *Satires*, as the epigraph to his *Parerga und Paralipomena*.

8

- 242, 3 *philosopher*] *Sd:* philosopher, as well as his effect,
- 242, 31 *treatise on university philosophy*] Schopenhauer's "Über die Universitäts-Philosophie" (On university philosophy), in vol. 1 of *Parerga und Paralipomena*.
- 243, 15 *Ceramicus*] A famous cemetery in Athens.
- 243, 34 *human beings*] *Sd:* philosophers
- 244, 21-22 *noli me tangere*] "Touch me not"; see John 20:17.
- 245, 19-20 *whenever...him*] An allusion to John 3:8.
- 246, 14 *Ritter, Brandis, and Zeller*] Three German academic philosophers whose specialties were the history of philosophy, especially Greek and Roman philosophy.
- 247, 8-9 *"education...weaning from philosophy*] Nietzsche rhetorically underscores his point here by playing on the similarity in the words *Erziehung* ("education") and *Abziehung* ("weaning").
- 247, 20 *generation*] *Sd:* generation with reason to be cautious
- 247, 29 *has it.*] *Sd:* has it; and what would have become of the once so-called "nation of thinkers" if it were true that its current brain power is characterized by five great names——, as was recently maintained in a very public forum. Cf. 30 [20].

- 247, 29-248, 25 *That...nosebleeds.*] *On the opposite page in Sd, otherwise blank, Nietzsche noted: Ils se croient profonds et ne sont que creux. ("They take themselves to be profound but are merely hollow.") Cf. 34 [46].*
- 247, 32-34 *just...was*] *Sd: indeed, that they already do. The contempt directed against them is constantly increasing, and for good reason. Most young people are*
- 249, 20 *directions.*] *Walter Bagehot, Physics and Politics (Boston, 1956 [1869]), p. 139. Nietzsche slightly alters the word order of some of the sentences, but the sense remains the same.*
- 249, 24-25 *Swift...Laputans*] *See pt. III, chap. 2 of Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels, entitled "A Voyage to Laputa."*
- 249, 28-29 *"Don't...beam*] *An allusion to Matt. 7:3.*
- 250, 1 *themselves...nose,*] *Sd: can submit to them blindly,*
- 250, 2 *immediately*] *Sd: usually*
- 250, 3-5 *some...here!"] Sd: some such thought merchant like David Strauss defiling the natural sciences, a thought merchant like Carrière defiling history for us! Get them out of here!" Miserable thought merchants!*
- 250, 8 *Herbartians*] *Followers of the German philosopher Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841), who held a chair in philosophy at the University of Göttingen and won acclaim especially for his psychological theories.*
- 250, 17 *state-sponsored*] *Sd: state- and university-sponsored*
- 250, 35-36 *a courtier.*] *Sd: an actor.*
- 251, 2 *them.*] *Sd: philosophy.*
- 251, 4 *be.*] *Sd: be.—With this I have reached the realm of practical suggestions: I thus propose as the first, fundamental guideline the dissolution of all philosophical professorships at all institutions of higher education. I now want to prove without further ado that every public recognition of philosophy is superfluous for the state and pernicious for philosophy itself.*
- 252, 19 *its*] *Sd: philosophical*
- 252, 29-36 *For...regard.*] *Earlier version in Sd: Anyone acquainted with the spirit of lecture courses on philosophy held at the universities today knows that it is certainly not the spirit that governs and unites all the other disciplines. Instead, it is often*

nothing but a timorous spirit of contradiction directed against nothing other than the most powerful learned disciplines of the present day, against the natural sciences, in order to deprecate them with the ignoble designation "materialism." An academic scholar who holds lectures on the critique of materialism, as happens often today, thereby makes it seem as if the entire investigative methodology of the modern natural sciences does not yet have a place at his university, and as if it were still dealing, as in former days, with the scholastic problems of personal immortality or proofs of God's existence. Regardless of how far removed he might be from such things — as soon as he criticizes the foundation of contemporary science, he becomes, consciously or unconsciously, an ally of powers that are very distinct from philosophy: namely, of church and state. And even if it is wholly irrelevant whether as an individual he evokes a misunderstanding, it is not irrelevant when an entire university evokes misunderstandings in such matters. I believe that people who are not bound together by any common ruling thoughts should also not permit themselves to be bound together by any institution: should they do this, they are bound to ruin this institution. To be sure, the state has a certain interest in allowing such obscurities to persist, and it has already made use of "philosophy" for too long so as to obscure the meaning of a state institution, the university. These are places where many things can be held back; everyone who lives there knows this. And to my eyes in particular it appears as if the actual primary directions of those scholarly disciplines held in high regard are no longer being pursued — because the path along which the entire educational institution was supposed to move has been lost.

253, 2-3 *writing and oratory*] *Sd*: style and rhetoric

253, 6 *Schopenhauer*] See Schopenhauer's "Preface" to the first edition of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (The world as will and representation).

253, 20 *Nathan the Wise*] Drama by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, commonly recognized as one of the first masterpieces of German Classicism.

254, 14 *ingrata principibus nomina*] "names unwelcome to princes."

- 254, 18 *and statesman*] *Sd*: statesman, politician
 255, 3 *pursuits.*] From Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay "Circles," in *Essays: First Series* (Boston, 1892), 289.
 255, 23 *undignitaries*] Nietzsche coins the word *Unwürdenträger* in analogy to *Würdenträger* ("dignitaries").
 255, 26 *and powerful*] *Missing in Sd.*

Fourth Piece Richard Wagner in Bayreuth

In addition to Nietzsche's preliminary draft (*Pd*), the second draft (*Sd*), and the page proofs (*Pp*) of "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth," there is also a printer's manuscript of the first six sections proofed by Nietzsche (*PmN*), and a printer's manuscript of the entire text proofed by Nietzsche's secretary, Peter Gast (*PmG*).

Early versions of some segments of "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth" can be found in vol. 12 of this edition, containing unpublished fragments from winter/spring 1875 to November 1879. References to these preliminary notes are cited by the number of the notebook followed by the fragment number in brackets.

The abbreviation *Schriften* refers to the edition of Wagner's collected works that Nietzsche had in his personal library: Richard Wagner, *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen* (Leipzig, 1871-73).

I

- 259, 1 *1*] Cf. II [44, 34, 43].
 260, 22 *form.*] From the speech Wagner gave at the ceremony for the laying of the foundation stone of the Festival Theater in Bayreuth, "Das Bühnenfestspielhaus zu Bayreuth," *Schriften*, 9: 392.
 261, 7-8 *And...that*] *Pd*: This may be granted him, and we may even recommend to him that he parody both the Festival and its participants. That way his enjoyment will be assured, and ours left undisturbed. For it is important to recognize that in those parodies a sense of hostility is discharged that
 262, 3 *five-year silence of the Pythagoreans*] In his *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers* (7.10), Diogenes Laertius claims that the students of Pythagoras were required to listen in total silence to their

master for five years before taking their examination. Only after passing their examination were they themselves permitted to speak.

2

262, 30 2] Cf. II [42, 27]; 12 [10].

263, 2-4 *as is...poet*] Cf. 8 [5].

263, 6-7 *The...unmistakable*] *Pd*: [Wagner, the way he developed!—] Wagner's life has something of the drama about it. Cf. Nietzsche's letter to Wagner of 24 May 1875: "Whenever I think about your life, I have the feeling that it has followed a *dramatic* course."

263, 19 *that*] *Pd*: that can be found quite frequently and everywhere and

263, 21 *haste*] *Pd*: haste[, which {produces} pathological concoctions of the brain]

263, 23-24 *abrupt...noise*.] *Pd*: something noisy, screaming, effervescent in all its expressions, a flight from balance, diligence, and heartfelt serenity.

263, 26 *direction*.] *Pd*: direction[; his life ran distractedly and without guidance among the incentives to pursue the most diverse kinds of careers]:

263, 28-264, 3 *a superficial...contrast*.] *Pd*: he seemed to be born to be a dilettante. Even having a city such as Leipzig as one's place of birth is not to be counted as a blessing, for here an amazingly impotent, pretentious, but enterprising element is formed out of the generally acquired desire to toy with intellectual pursuits, the excitability and shallowness of feelings, the alternation of literary and booksellerlike discussions and fashions, and the malleable nature of the Saxons themselves, and all this on the foundation of a middle-class, thorough, but narrow morality. And although this is something in the history of German breeding that we should by no means overlook or underestimate, it is hardly deserving of our admiration.

264, 10-14 *Especially...self*.] *Pd*: Wagner participated to an especially high degree in this peculiar nature of modern human beings: as a youth he totally lacked naiveté, and in those days he

- resembled no one less than his Siegfried[, whom, on the basis of an inner experience of the essence of the youth, he created for all ages as the archetype of youth].
- 264, 14-17 *Only...Nibelungen.] Pd:* When he created that marvelously rigorous archetype of youth, he was well past his own physical youth, and yet it was only then that he became young, and he remained young for a long time.
- 264, 18-19 *so...respect] Up:* just as as a human being
- 264, 19 *being.] Pd:* being. [And thus I would recognize in what we previously called the predramatic phase of Wagner's life a peculiarly extended childhood, a childhood spent in the longing for and satisfaction with playing at a thousand things—to be sure, at things that do not commonly come within the reach of children.]
- 264, 25 *and that desires power.] Pd:* leaping, climbing, wildly bumping up against the walls, and beating its wings; having scraped himself raw on hidden cliffs, without peace, tormenting both himself and others—this is how the one side of Wagner's nature now appears. Like the Dutch sailor he seemed damned restlessly to sail the seas in all eternity, bearing in his heart a grudge against existence. Cf. II [42].
- 264, 27 *goodness and helpfulness] An* allusion to the qualities attributed to humanity in Goethe's famous poem "Das Göttliche" (The divine): "Edel sei der Mensch, / Hilfreich und gut!" ("The human being shall be noble, / Helpful and good!").
- 265, 9-14 *The spirit...way.] See* Wagner, "Eine Mittheilung an meine Freunde" (A communication to my friends), *Schriften*, 4: 325. Cf. II [42].
- 265, 15 *it?] it?* Perhaps if we follow this way.
- 265, 19-21 *Rienzi...Brünnbilde] Characters* from Wagner's operas *Rienzi*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *Tannhäuser*, *Lobengrin*, *Tristan and Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger*, and the cycle *The Ring of the Nibelungen*.
- 265, 27 *The Robbers...Wallenstein...Tell] Dramatic* works composed by Friedrich von Schiller, each marking important way stations in his development as a dramatist. *The Robbers* is Schiller's first dramatic work, written in 1781; the plays that constitute the *Wallenstein* trilogy were composed in 1798-99;

Wilhelm Tell, Schiller's last complete dramatic work, was written in 1804, one year prior to his death.

265, 32-34 *The Ring... Siegfried.*] Cf. 27 [26].

266, 11 *ravines.*—] *Pd*: ravines[, violently snatched up boulders and trees, destroyed, ragged].—

266, 24-26 *something... "fidelity,"*] *Pd*: something to which he is indebted for being himself, and which he worships like a religion,

266, 33 *tyrannical one.*] *Pd*: unjust one—even here there is mercy.

3

267, 1 3] Cf. 11 [27, 45, 39, 38].

267, 1-268, 10 3...*moved*] *Pd*: [That is] In the interrelation of these two innermost forces, in the submission of the one to the other, lies Wagner's great necessity, the only thing that is necessary for him, and through which he remains whole and himself. At the same time, it is the only thing that he does not have in his power, that he must observe and accept with mental anguish, while he watches how he is continually threatened anew by the temptations to infidelity and the horrible dangers it represented for him. This is the great source of his sufferings: each of his drives strives to reach the immeasurable, all of his talents seek to break away and find individual satisfaction; the greater their number, the greater is the tumult, the more hostile their confrontations. What is more, life provokes him to acquire power and pleasure; he is tortured even more often by the merciless necessity of having to live at all; everywhere he turns there are fetters and traps. How is it possible to remain faithful, to remain whole under such circumstances! This doubt overcomes him so often and expresses itself in the manner in which artists experience doubt: in artistic figures. Elisabeth can do nothing but suffer, pray, and die for Tannhäuser; she saves this inconstant man with her fidelity—but not for this life. Incessantly the most noble form of curiosity lures the individual talent to one side; his creative capacities want to find their own way and dare to go out into faraway places. To cite just one example: for those able to hear, the lament about the cruelty of dramatic form resounds even in the supreme mastery of his later music. It draws him

- almost irresistibly into the symphonic; only with bitter resolve does he subject himself to the course of the drama that is as inexorable as fate; and in this way he asserts his mastery over the winged horse of music that is pulling at the reins.—Wagner's entire life is full of danger and despair. He could have achieved honor and power by many means; peace and satisfaction were repeatedly offered to him in the form familiar to modern human beings. Herein, but also in the opposite—in his disgust with the modern ways of attaining pleasure and prestige, in the rage that turns against all contentment—lay his dangers. Once he had landed on the ground of the German theater, he clung forcibly and with vexation to this unstable and frivolous world; he accepted and absorbed as much of this world as was necessary to be able to live in it, and yet he was repeatedly overcome by disgust once more, despite the strength of a secret love that bound him to the gypsies and outcasts of our culture. Tearing himself away from one situation, he rarely entered into a better one, and sometimes he sank into a state of dire need. He moved
- 268, 6–8 *and must...them.*] See Wagner, "Epilogischer Bericht über die Umstände und Schicksale, welche die Ausführung des Bühnenfestspiels 'Der Ring des Nibelungen' bis zur Veröffentlichung der Dichtung desselben begleiteten" (Report in the form of an epilogue on the conditions and fortunes that affected the realization of the festival play *The Ring of the Nibelungen* until the time of the publication of the poetic text), *Schriften*, 4: 370.
- 268, 15 *as though he was*] *PmN*: that he was
- 268, 20–22 *A sudden...apparition.*] See Wagner, "Eine Mittheilung an meine Freunde" (A communication to my friends), *Schriften*, 4: 371–72.
- 268, 28–29 *The conflict...it*] *Pd*: [Due to] the conflicts | between | his desire and the [actual impotence] common insufficiency in satisfying it, | with the intoxicationlike nature of all his hopes, |
- 269, 3 *Schopenhauer*] See Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (The world as will and representation) (Wiesbaden, 1961), 1: 380: "The life of every individual, when viewed generally and as a whole, ... is always a tragedy; however, if one dwells on particulars, it takes on the character of a comedy."

- 269, 11-12 *compassion...admiration*] Nietzsche is alluding to the classical theory of tragedy, according to which tragic events are thought to evoke compassion, horror, and admiration in the audience that views them.
- 269, 14 *true nation of learners,*] *Pd:* nation of learning, Cf. 5 [65].
- 269, 15-17 *a rootless...illusion.*] *Pd:* an impossible and unbelievable middle-class life.
- 269, 26-28 *and the larger...thought.*] *Pd:* in his case the bow of dialectical thought is drawn ever more taut.
- 270, 18 "*has...afraid.*"] An allusion to Wagner's hero Siegfried; see Act I of *Siegfried*.
- 270, 19-271, 4 *He...deed?*] *Pd:* He not only passes through fire, but also through the mist of knowledge and of scholarship— [fidelity to himself or] [what was it that saved him? Was it not fidelity] with that fidelity to a higher self [or even more precisely:] | —or more correctly: by the fidelity of a higher self to him— |, that saved him from his most severe dangers. This higher self demanded of him a *collective action* of his being and commanded him to suffer and learn in order to accomplish that action. To test and strengthen him, it led him to progressively more difficult tasks. But the supreme dangers and tests were not those of the *sufferer*, not those of the *learner*, but rather those of the *creator*. Cf. 12 [31].
- 271, 2 *always seeks*] *Pp:* can only seek
- 271, 2 *reform instead of revolution*] See Wagner, "Beethoven," *Schriften*, 9: 105: "Thus the German is not revolutionary, but reform-minded."
- 272, 4-5 *no longer optimistically*] Cf. 5 [12].
- 272, 13-14 *If...theodicy*] An allusion to Ludwig Feuerbach's statement that philosophy is a disguised theology.
- 272, 23-32 *By...themselves.*] Cf. 9 [1].
- 273, 2-3 *mist of knowledge*] Cf. Goethe, *Faust*, pt. I, l. 395: "steam of knowledge."

- 273, 7 4] Cf. 11 [22, 23, 26, 20, 1].
- 273, 26 *the Eleatics*] An ancient Greek school of philosophy cen-

tered in Elea in the fifth and sixth centuries B.C. Its greatest representatives were Parmenides and Zeno.

274, 35-275, 2 *We...task?*] *PmN*: Here someone will probably interrupt by calling out: "But what is it, then, that Wagner actually always sought to accomplish, that he, as you see it, will in fact accomplish in the best of cases? Certainly nothing more than a *reform of the theater!* And what would have occurred then!" —

276, 29 *it?"*] See Wagner, *Tristan and Isolde*, act 2, scene 2.

276, 36 *cultivatedness*] *Pd*: [cultivation] [culture] education

279, 11 *art...repose.*] *Pd*: art here is the repose and sacrament of the active human being.

5

280, 12 *f*] Cf. 12 [24, 25, 28].

280, 13-16 *Wagner...for*] *PmN*: After having allowed myself to be held up—not without reason, as it seems to me—in the course of my observations, I now can continue explaining what I consider to be Wagner's power of consolidation and why I have called him a simplifier of the world. He placed contemporary life and the past under [a] the intellectual searchlight strong enough to penetrate into uncommonly distant regions, and

280, 13-281, 7 *Wagner...answer.*] This paragraph represents a reworking of 12 [24].

280, 27-30 *What...beings?*] See Wagner, "Zukunftsmusik" (Future music), *Schriften*, 7: 150.

281, 6-7 *Precisely...answer.*] See Wagner, "Zukunftsmusik" (Future music), *Schriften*, 7: 149.

281, 8-282, 22 *Wagner was...love.*] See Wagner, "Oper und Drama" (Opera and drama), *Schriften*, 4: 122-23.

281, 25-29 *das ps...concepts.*] *Pd*: hangs like a nightmare over human beings; as soon as they want to communicate with one another, they are seized by the madness of words, of general concepts. And this inability to communicate about themselves corresponds in turn to the creations of their collective sensibility, which for their part do not correspond to their real needs,

but instead to those tyrannical words and concepts, which as an uncanny ghost world---

282, 14 *When*] *Pd*: [For this fundamental lack, this wounding of present-day human beings with a gentle hand] Whereas a humanity wounded in such a way becomes progressively more mutually incomprehensible, and what they take to be their sole language {resembles} a clatter---not so much because it now has a heavy tongue, but, on the contrary, because its tongue {is} all too light, but {moves} in a tempo---When

283, 28 *us.*] From Goethe's drama *Torquato Tasso*, act 5, scene 5.

283, 35-284, 5 *By...age?*] See Wagner, "Über musikalische Kritik" (On musical criticism), *Schriften*, 5: 74-78.

284, 33 *word. And*] *Pd*: word, [which is why their "cultivation" relates to that creative harmony between music and gymnastics, which we venerate in ancient Greek cultivation, as their dance does to Greek orchestrics, their gymnastics to Greek] which is why the form of cultivation they have attained does not resemble a creative harmony between music and gymnastics, but rather (has) only as much worth as their dance and gymnastics---and Cf. 12 [25].

285, 1 *soon,*] *Pd*: soon, [as a late birth or a premature birth] because [human beings have not yet learned introspective gazing at new formations, which to the outer reality] in their souls,

285, 7 *gaze*] *Pd*: [gaze] intuition

285, 9-16 *died...language.*] *Pd*: died. [Someone should try now to build and shape like a Greek, someone---And someone should likewise {create} the most malleable form that---] Anyone who understands how to look upon music with that [fiery gaze] eye, will not let himself be [swept away] seduced into [deceptive] hopes for one single moment by everything that now exhausts itself in formations and forms and styles, just as he will not expect true success from a literary shaper of language. Music lifts him above all vanities of this sort.

286, 19 *passion,*] *Pd*: sensual passion,

286, 21 *ghostly chase.*] *Pd*: pandemonium.

286, 22-24 *art...something.*] *Pd*: they think much (too) little or much too vulgarly of life to be able even to have an inkling of

- an entirely different justification for art in this life. And even if we could make this clear to them, they would still hate art, just as they hate everything that their thoughtlessness and thorough secularization [and depravity]— —
- 286, 26–27 *he hesitatingly...places*] *Pd*: [he stammers the words and forms of past ages] he repeats in a hesitating, ice-laden [?] voice something that he thinks he hears from ancient times
- 287, 5–6 *desirous. For*] *Pd*: torn: [they are the [servants] slaves of false feeling, [without] they only know vacillation;] for
- 287, 13–14 *In...feeling.*] *PmN*: Who would be capable of merely even showing them that they, as the slaves of false feeling, are under a spell—without asking the question: “Who would be capable of redeeming them?” *Pd*: Would one not have to teach them the prayer that Socrates— —

6

- 287, 15 *¶*] Cf. 11 [33]; 12 [32, 33]; 13 [1].
- 287, 16–19 *I...money,*] *PmN*: Previously people looked down with honest superiority on those with money,
- 287, 25 *nil admirari*] “To wonder at nothing”: the famous opening words of Horace’s *Epistle*, I.6.1: “To wonder at nothing is perhaps the one and only thing... that can make a man happy.”
- 288, 4–11 *But despite...freezing.*] *Pd*: But because it has usurped [?] with thievish cleverness all the wisdom and art of the past and struts about in this most priceless of all garments, it displays its vulgarity in the fact that *it does not know how to wear this cloak*. “How impudent!”—this is what we say to ourselves when we see the art lovers.
- 288, 31–32 *To make one’s conscience unconscious*] The original German, *Das Gewissen zum Nichtwissen bringen*, plays on the stem word *Wissen* (“knowing”), which forms the basis of the words *Gewissen* (“conscience”) and *Nichtwissen* (literally “not knowing”).
- 289, 4–10 *liberate...liberate...liberated...liberated*] *PmN*: redeem... redeem...redeemed... redeemed
- 289, 26–28 *after...cave.*] Nietzsche is alluding to Plato’s famous allegory of the cave; see *The Republic*, 7.514–17.
- 289, 34 *Wagner’s*] *PmN*: Beethoven’s

- 290,7 *Wagner*] *PmN*: Beethoven
 290,9 *spectacle, regardless*] *Pd*: spectacle in the world; for the viewer, the world becomes a summer garden, regardless
 290,22 *strength.*] Reference to a statement made by Hans Sachs in Act 3 of *Die Meistersinger*.
 290,32-33 *primordially determined nature,*] *Pd*: great talent,

7

- 291,12 7] Cf. 12 [26]; 11 [57].
 291,23-24 *that demonic...self-renunciation*] See Wagner, "Über Schauspieler und Sänger" (On actors and singers), *Schriften*, 9: 259.
 291,31-32 *looking things in the face*] Nietzsche coins the word *Entgegenschauen*. The prefix *entgegen* implies opposition, whereas the stem *schauen* means "to look" or "to see." Implied in this phrase is a kind of observation that confronts the object it perceives.
 291,32-292,14 *If...body.*] *Earlier version in Pd*: Everything visual wants to transform itself into something audible, everything audible wants to come into light as a phenomenon for the eye and, as it were, assume bodily form. Everything that can be experienced when the soul, in its wanderings, empathizes with other souls and their destinies and learns to view the world through many eyes. It is the theatrical predilection and its opposite, for which we have no name, the will and ability to descend out of the world as visual drama into the world as auditory drama, out of semblance into the realm of truth, a retranslation, as it were, of visible motion into invisible inspiration.
 292,5-8 *in Wagner...form.*] See Wagner, "Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft" (The artwork of the future), *Schriften*, 3: 114.
 292,14; 18 *dithyrambic; dithyrambic*] *Missing in Pd*.
 292,23-28 *if Wagner...Christianity*] See Wagner, "Brief an einen italienischen Freund" (Letter to an Italian friend), *Schriften*, 9: 344.
 292,28 *Christianity*] *Pd*: the religion of the holy gospels
 293,2 *arts,*] *Pd*: visual arts,
 293,29 *city.*] See Plato, *The Republic*, 3.398.
 294,4-8 *who...blindness.*] Cf. 10 [1]; 11 [47].

- 294, 7 *like Faust*] See Goethe, *Faust*, pt. II, ll. 11495-510
- 294, 16-18 *With...freedom.*] Cf. 12 [33].
- 294, 22-23 *we...death*] Cf. 10 [7]; 11 [18].
- 294, 36-295, 1 *to allude...life.*] See Wagner, "Über Staat und Religion" (On the state and religion), *Schriften*, 8: 7-9.
- 295, 19 *the yearning...depths*] See Wagner, "Eine Mittheilung an meine Freunde" (A communication to my friends), *Schriften*, 4: 361.
- 295, 23 *arms*] See Goethe's poem "Der Gott und die Bajadere" (God and the Bajadere): "Immortals lift lost children/In fiery arms up to heaven."
- 295, 24-25 *in order...devotion*] See Wagner, "Eine Mittheilung an meine Freunde" (A communication to my friends), *Schriften*, 4: 362.
- 296, 20-26 *more humanlike...dramatist.—*] *First fragmentary version in Pd*: clear figures and expands as the consequence of an entire heroic existence: existence stirs, tragedy comes into being——this is how tragedy and tragic thought are born, this is how the wise human being comes into being, who then presents us with his most marvelous and most magical finery—this, finally, is how the greatest magician among all artists emerges, the dithyrambic dramatist, like Aeschylus, like Wagner. Cf. Wagner, "Deutsche Kunst und deutsche Politik" (German art and German politics), *Schriften*, 8: 80-81.

8

- 296, 27 *8*] Cf. 11 [2, 25, 29, 10]; 12 [13-17].
- 297, 28 *course.*] Nietzsche is paraphrasing a self-reflection recorded in Goethe's *Aus meinem Leben: Fragmentarisches* (From my life: fragments), *Sämmtliche Werke in vierzig Bänden* (Stuttgart, 1857), 27: 507. This volume was part of Nietzsche's personal library.
- 298, 4 *Thus...means*] See Wagner, "Eine Mittheilung an meine Freunde" (A communication to my friends), *Schriften*, 4: 319.
- 298, 6 *its home.*] *PmG*: Paris. {Wagner lived from 1839 to 1842 in Paris, then the center of grand opera.}
- 298, 33-35 *and thus...one.*] See Wagner, "Eine Mittheilung an

- meine Freunde" (A communication to my friends), *Schriften*, 4: 325.
- 298, 36-299, 5 *Every...him.*] *Pd*: Every [new] further stage in Wagner's development is marked by the fact that the two counterforces of his being [move closer to one another, and that one does not observe the other from a distance, as it were, that the higher self no longer condescends to, but instead loves its violent, more earthly brother] join more closely together; the aversion of the one for the other diminishes — —
- 299, 10-11 *recognizes...earthly*] An allusion to the closing lines of Goethe's *Faust*: "Alles Vergängliche/Ist nur ein Gleichnis" ("Everything transitory/Is but a likeness"); see *Faust*, pt. II, ll. 12104-5.
- 299, 18 *Wagner...revolutionary*] See Wagner, "Eine Mittheilung an meine Freunde" (A communication to my friends), *Schriften*, 4: 323.
- 299, 25-300, 8 *On...modern arts.*] See Wagner, "Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft" (The artwork of the future), *Schriften*, 3: 61.
- 299, 30 *illusory needs*] Nietzsche's phrase, *Scheinbedürfnisse*, has two principal meanings. On the one hand, it signifies "needs that are illusory," as the translation indicates; on the other hand, it also implies "needs for illusion." Both of these meanings are coherent with the arguments Nietzsche is making throughout this section; and while it is likely that both are intended, the first seems to be primary in this context.
- 300, 26-28 *if...people.*] See Wagner, "Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft" (The artwork of the future), *Schriften*, 3: 59.
- 302, 17-23 *The possibility...destitute.*] See Wagner, "Eine Mittheilung an meine Freunde" (A communication to my friends), *Schriften*, 4: 377, 406.
- 302, 29 *the age...him*] See Wagner, "Epilogischer Bericht..." (Report in the form of an epilogue...), *Schriften*, 4: 369.
- 302, 29-303, 3 *the age...dialogue.*] In *Pd* Nietzsche makes the following remark in reference to this passage: Art becomes religion; the revolutionary resigns himself.
- 303, 19-20 *what...insights.*] Cf. 12 [31].
- 303, 23 *opus metaphysicum*] "metaphysical work."

- 303, 29-31 *and precisely...duality.*] *Sd*: just as [any tragedy by Aeschylus] any work of antiquity.
- 304, 8 *Luther*] *Pd*: [Dürer] Luther
- 304, 20 *completing...another*] See Wagner, "Epilogischer Bericht ..." (Report in the form of an epilogue...), *Schriften*, 4: 378.
- 304, 36 *great war*] The Franco-Prussian War (1870-71).
- 305, 3 *that lofty German sensibility*] *Pd*: [the great sensibility] the lofty German manner
- 305, 12 *the artwork of the future*] An allusion to Wagner's important treatise, "Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft" (The artwork of the future).
- 305, 26-30 *This...outraged.*] See Wagner, "Über das Dirigieren" (On conducting), *Schriften*, 8: 403-5.
- 306, 4 *seriously. After*] *Pd*: seriously. [As if he could possibly have placed any stock in the approval of the theater-going public of today.] After
- 307, 1 *Iphigenie*] *Iphigenie auf Tauris* (Iphigenie on Tauris), the drama that marks the maturation of Goethe's classical style.
- 307, 3 *should."*] See the entry dated 1 Apr. 1827 in Goethe's *Gespräche mit Eckermann* (Conversations with Eckermann).
- 308, 13-17 *It...twilight.*—] These remarks allude to Act 3 of Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* (Twilight of the gods). Cf. II [10].
- 308, 14 *Siegfried*] *Pd*: Wotan

9

- 308, 18 9] Cf. II [18, 40, 53, 8, 28, 42, 51]; 12 [32]. *Pd*: Wagner as composer. Music prior to Beethoven and Wagner had on the whole an undramatic character; a mood or a state of mind, whether of a reverential, |a| penitent, or |a| joyous nature sought to express itself. The listener was supposed to be put in this mood by means of a certain homogeneity of form and a sustained duration of this homogeneity. For all such images of moods or states of mind individual forms were necessary; others were established by convention. The duration was left to the discretion of the composer, since he wanted, of course, to put his listener in a particular mood, but did not want to bore him by having this mood last too long. Things went one step further

when the images of contrasting moods were evoked in succession, and even one step further when the same musical piece contained a contradictory ethos, for instance, the opposition of a masculine and a feminine theme. These are all still crude and primitive stages of music. In these stages laws are dictated by the fear of passion; the moods ought not to be too deep, the contrasts not too daring. Every excess of emotion was considered "unethical"; on the other hand, [art increasingly exhausted itself in the portrayal of the more frequent states of mind] ethical art fell increasingly into exhaustion due to the hundredfold repetition of the common states of mind and moods, and the first sign of this degeneration was the popularity of abnormal moods and characters. Beethoven was the first to let music [language] speak a new language, the language of passion; but his music had to grow out of the laws and conventions of the music of ethos | and justify itself to this older art | ; herein lay the difficulty of his artistic development. An inner, dramatic event (for every passion follows a dramatic course) sought forcefully to obtain a new form, but the traditional system of mood music resisted, just as if | through this system | the morality of art [against an insurgent] put up resistance in opposition to an insurgent immorality. At times it seems as though Beethoven imposed upon himself the contradictory task of letting pathos express itself in the words of ethos. But this conception is inadequate for explaining Beethoven's greatest works. [He often merely indicated] He discovered a genuinely innovative means for reproducing the great sweeping arc of a passion; he indicated merely individual points along its trajectory and let the listener *intuit* from these the entire line. Seen from the outside, this new form looked like a fusion of three or four musical pieces, whereby each individual piece only portrayed a single moment in the dramatic course of the passion. The listener could believe he was hearing the older mood music, except that the relationship of the individual parts to each other was incomprehensible to him. Even among lesser composers a disdain for the constructor of the whole set in and arbitrariness in the sequence of the parts. The invention of the great form of passion

led back, by way of a misunderstanding, to the single movement with a wholly subjective content, and the mutual tension among the various parts vanished altogether. That is why after Beethoven the symphony is such a curious structure, especially when in its individual parts it still stammers Beethoven's language of pathos. The means are not suited to the intention, and the intention as a whole [is] never becomes clear at all | because it was never clear in the head of the composer | . But precisely [this: clarity of intention, is all the more necessary the higher and more difficult a] this demand: that one have something to say and that one say it in the clearest possible way, is all the more indispensable the higher [and] more difficult | and more demanding | an artistic genre is; and that is why Wagner's entire struggle is concentrated on finding means that serve the ends of *clarity*. For he does not merely portray a simple passion in his music, as Beethoven did, but rather *intermingled passions*, and in order not to confuse the listener due to the artistic merging and coexistence of different souls | and their sufferings |, he now needs visible drama with its words and gestures for the clarification of the music. With this he achieved something that no one had ever achieved: lending feeling its strongest and most expressive language. Measured by the standard of Wagnerian music, all prior music seems stiff or timid. He accomplished in the field of music what the inventor of freestanding figure accomplished in the field of sculpture. He seizes every degree and every coloration of feeling with the greatest firmness and determination; the most tender and the most tempestuous emotion rests in his hand like something that has become hard and graspable. His music is never indeterminate, never moodlike; everything that speaks through it, human being or nature, has a strictly individualized passion. In his music, storm and fire [have] take on the compelling certainty of a personal willing and desiring. | Flames of *individual* passions, a battle—*total* dramatic course of an action, like a stream—— | As composer Wagner has something of Demosthenes |, the master of passion, | about him: the terrible seriousness toward his object and

the force of his grip, so that he always grasps the object; he places his hand around it, in a moment, and it takes firm hold, as if it were made of bronze. Like Demosthenes he conceals his artistry or causes us to forget it, and yet he is, like Demosthenes, the last and supreme manifestation of an entire line of powerful artistic spirits |and consequently has more to hide than his predecessors|. He has nothing epideictic about him, unlike all previous composers who occasionally make their art into a game and put their virtuosity on display. In the instance of Wagner one thinks neither of what interests, nor of what delights, but rather one merely feels what is necessary as the great result of the [greatest] strength of will and the [supreme] purity of artistic character. No one imposed such strict laws on himself as did Wagner. Just consider the relationship of sung melody to the melody of unsung speech—how he treats the pitch, the volume, the tempo of the passionately speaking human being as a natural model that must be transposed into art—then consider, in turn, the placement of such a melody of passion in the entire symphonic context of the music, then you will become acquainted with a true marvel. The diligence and the inventiveness of detail is of a sort that, upon looking at a Wagnerian score |and especially the preparations for a production|, one is tempted to believe that no real effort and labor went into it. The poets, especially, appear in a curious light as extremely comfortable and worry-free beings who have the easy task of capturing with a stylus the image they have in mind. Wagner also knew with regard to the toil of art why he conceived self-renunciation to be the true virtue of the dramatist.

309, 3-6 *The...thought.*] See Wagner, "Oper und Drama" (Opera and drama), *Schriften*, 4: 441.

310, 9-10 *and yet...forth.*] Nietzsche is alluding to the Biblical episode in which Moses strikes a rod against a rock in order to provide water for the people of Israel during their flight from Egypt; see Exod. 17:5-7.

310, 17-22 *On...music.*] See Wagner, "Oper und Drama" (Opera and drama), *Schriften*, 4: 263-64.

- 313,34 *like Raphael's St. Cecilia*] See the conclusion of the third book of Schopenhauer's *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (The world as will and representation).
- 314,6 *the philosopher*] Schopenhauer. Nietzsche is summarizing the central idea of Schopenhauer's *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (The world as will and representation).
- 315,24 *among*] *Pd; Sd*: among lesser
- 315,35-316,4 *But...clarity;*] See Wagner, "Eine Mittheilung an meine Freunde" (A communication to my friends), *Schriften*, 4: 367-68.
- 316,5 *constraints*] *Sd*: laws
- 316,17 *fear*] *Sd*: anxiety
- 316,17-19 *and he...butterfly.*] *Sd*: as if it were something hard and firm, and not what everyone views it as, something ungraspable.
- 316,28 *the great Ephesian philosopher*] The Greek philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesus (sixth century B.C.). On the remarks that follow, cf. Heraclitus's fragments 8, 10, and 80 (Diels-Kranz).
- 316,35-317,11 *We...foam.*] Cf. 11 [7].
- 317,36-318,8 *Taken...spirits*] Cf. 30 [15].
- 318,10 *epideictic*] A type of discourse intended only for rhetorical display, designed to impress rather than to persuade. Nietzsche views Demosthenes (and, by association, Wagner) as an orator who represents the antithesis to this show of empty rhetoric.

10

- 318,25 *10*] Cf. 11 [32, 37, 4, 9, 19, 24, 35, 37]; 14 [3, 4, 7].
- 318,35-319,2 *He...down*] See Luke 4:30.
- 319,13 *finds*] *Sd*: feels
- 320,25 *depositum*] "storehouse."
- 320,30-31 *the preservation*] *Sd*: the perfection and preservation {The version in *Sd* accurately reproduces Schopenhauer's text.}
- 320,35 *contented.*] Except for the italics, which are added by Nietzsche, a direct quotation from the essay "Der Intellekt überhaupt und in jeder Beziehung betreffende Gedanken" (The intellect in general and thoughts in any way pertaining to it) from

vol. 2 of Schopenhauer's *Parerga und Paralipomena*. In this passage Schopenhauer is describing the characteristics of genius in general.

- 321, 15 *right. Just]* *Sd*: right, and so in the long run to prove to all skeptics that he is right. Just
- 321, 21-23 *and...intended.]* *Sd*: he feels only one hate, that hate which intends to destroy the bridges to that future.
- 321, 30 *arts: everything]* *Sd*: arts, [the news that he himself gave of his plans, which was eagerly passed on, the writings with which he came to his own assistance when he could not turn to example or deed, the students he trained]: everything
- 322, 7 *out.]* *Sd*: out. [He is a moving force of the future, and the present serves these coming times when it listens to Wagner.] The necessity of such speeches and demonstrations does not exactly contribute to the happiness of Wagner's life; he interacts with an age in which he is unsettled and not at home. But out——
- 322, 14-15 *when...foundations,]* *Sd*: wherever he discovers in our contemporary life the stirring of any powerful forces whatsoever,
- 322, 20 *love."]* In *Die Walküre*, Sieglinde, the mother of Siegfried, is encouraged by Brünnhilde to "live for the sake of love" by saving herself not so much for her own sake, as for the sake of the child she is carrying.
- 323, 11-14 *and to look...readers;]* *Sd*: and [to produce a similar instinct by communicating an inflaming knowledge; in other words, attempts at inoculating with instincts] once he has transformed his instinct into knowledge, he believes that he can thereby inoculate his readers with this instinct.
- 323, 19-22 *I know...him.]* Cf. 28 [57].
- 325, 5 *Goethe and Leopardi]* Cf. 5 [17].
- 325, 13 *mistake."]* From the entry dated 11 Oct. 1828 in Goethe's *Gespräche mit Eckermann* (Conversations with Eckermann).
- 325, 16 *spirit]* *Sd*: spirit[, such as those who are neglected by our culture,]
- 325, 36-326, 3 *concerns;...possessions.]* *Sd*: concerns, which force him

to turn to those existing powers who have the will to "channel the sea of revolution into the placidly flowing stream of humanity."

326, 12 *humanity*] Nietzsche draws this quotation, which he has modified and adapted, from Wagner's "Introduction" to the third and fourth volumes of his *Schriften*, 3: 3, 7-8. In this passage Wagner cites the historic role of the Germans, as the people of the Reformation, in turning the force of revolution to the good of humanity.

326, 14 "*Imperial March*"] The march Wagner composed in 1871 to celebrate the Prussian victory in the Franco-Prussian War.

327, 9 *dawning!*] A stanza from Schiller's poem "Die Künstler" (The artists).

II

327, 10 *II*] Cf. 14 [11]; 11 [56]; 14 [1, 2].

328, 28 *amor into caritas*] *Amor* signifies sexual love, *caritas* neighborly love or "care."

329, 5-6 *liberated*] *Sd*: delivered

330, 30 *eyes.*] Nietzsche is citing a passage, spoken by Brünnhilde, that Wagner removed from the concluding scene of *Götterdämmerung* (Twilight of the gods) when he established the final version of the text. See Wagner, *Schriften*, 4: 363.

330, 34-331, 5 *Anyone...past.*] *Pd*: If we let our gaze rove into the most remote distance, we will just be able to see what *Wagner will be*, indeed, what he is actually destined to be: not the prophet of a future order and liberation, but rather the interpreter of the past, *for those* who have this entire process of liberation behind them, and who, like Wotan, like Brünnhilde, like Siegfried — — — Who can say this? — *Wagner himself*. — Is it the human beings of this generation who will recognize in his life the outline of their own biography? Anyone who, by gazing up into this great firmament of moons, stars, and comets, rediscovers in *Wagner's life* something of *his own life*: who dares to discover his own constellation in this? For us he is a prophet and a guide: for later generations he will be the interpreter of the past. The

simplifier of history. See Wagner, "Oper und Drama" (Opera and drama), *Schriften*, 4: 284.

331, 5 *past.*] *Sd*: past; [so that in the blue haze what lies behind him lies in front of us] what transfiguration lies behind him, whereas it lies in front of us: as aim, hope, triumph, and freedom.

Translator's Afterword

Richard T. Gray

Nietzsche's four *Unfashionable Observations* initially appeared between August 1873 and July 1876. Although each text was conceived and published as an independent treatise, Nietzsche indicated their interrelatedness by loosely joining them together under the collective title *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen*. This expression succinctly spells out the common impulse linking these in many respects extremely divergent essays: Nietzsche's inimical attitude toward his "time," understood broadly as all those mainstream and popular movements that constituted contemporary European, but especially German, "culture." Because it is impossible to render the myriad implications and polyvalencies of this title in English, it is easy for this cultural-critical focus to be obscured. The literal meaning of the noun *Betrachtung*, which is derived from the verb *betrachten*, "to observe," is "observations" in the concrete sense of to "regard" or "scrutinize"; however, this word also has a common figurative meaning that is best translated as "reflection," "contemplation," or "meditation." Walter Kaufmann has made a case for the figurative rendering of this word in Nietzsche's title, arguing that these texts were conceived in analogy to Descartes's *Meditations*, and that consequently the translation "meditations" is most appropriate.¹ There is, however, no persuasive evidence

1. Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 4th ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 35.

that can be brought in support of this claim, and although it would be incorrect to deny that this connotation is evoked in Nietzsche's title, it is clearly secondary to the more literal meaning of *Betrachtung* as "observation." "Meditation" implies a kind of introspective searching in which the gaze of the viewer is turned inward rather than outward on the empirical world, and the association with Descartes's works tends to further an orientation of these early texts by Nietzsche within a philosophical tradition that stresses autonomous, self-reflective cogitation divorced from empirical facticity. To be sure, such a—narrowly speaking—"philosophical" component is by no means absent in the *Unfashionable Observations*;² nonetheless, the primary focus of these texts is undeniably cultural criticism. It is coherent with this purpose that the manner of "observation" Nietzsche practices in these essays is decidedly directed at the sociopolitical and cultural world that surrounded him.

The object upon which Nietzsche trains his "observant" gaze is the condition of German culture, civilization, learning, science, and art subsequent to the Prussian military victory over the French in 1871, a victory that resulted in German political unification under a Prussian state guided by the *Realpolitik* of Otto von Bismarck. As Nietzsche makes explicit in his essay on David Strauss, it is the arrogance and self-aggrandizement of the German cultural elite—those whom Nietzsche derides as "cultivated philistines"—in the wake of this apparent victory of German culture that arouses Nietzsche's ire. The adjective *unzeitgemäss* in Nietzsche's title, whose meaning can be broadly circumscribed in English by the phrase "out of keeping with the tendencies of the present time," alludes to the author's critical stance vis-à-vis these new developments.³

2. See Charles Bambach, "History and Ontology: A Reading of Nietzsche's Second 'Untimely Meditation,'" *Philosophy Today* 34 (1990): 259–72, esp. 270.

3. For an intellectual-historical exposition of *Unzeitgemässheit* as a cultural-critical position, see Kurt Mueller-Vollmer, "Unzeitgemäßheit: Zur Struktur der Utopie bei Fichte, Marx und Nietzsche," *Karl Marx und Friedrich Nietzsche*:

To attack events and movements that in Germany were almost universally glorified as supreme political and cultural accomplishments was a bold if inherently unpopular move, and the adjective *unzeitgemäss* communicates Nietzsche's sense of belonging to an isolated critical minority. Nietzsche expresses this overriding hostility to contemporary developments in Germany in a letter to Erwin Rohde dated 18 October 1873, in which he categorically states: "Everything that is new is horrible." Of course, this antipathy for the modern derived in part from Nietzsche's role as a classical philologist; he measured the modern world according to the standards of ancient Greek culture and found it to be pitifully wanting. Moreover, this hostility toward the prevailing beliefs and habits of his contemporaries was certainly conditioned by Nietzsche's great philosophical mentor, Schopenhauer, whose scathing attacks on what he called the *Jetztzeit*, the Today, are picked up and intensified in the *Unfashionable Observations*. Indeed, it is likely that Nietzsche formulated the concept of *Unzeitgemässheit* in analogy to and amplification on Schopenhauer's term *Jetztzeit*. To be *unzeitgemäss* in Nietzsche's sense is to stand outside or above all the cultural movements that attained currency in his time, to belong to a cultural elite whose critical task is to reveal the bankruptcy of this run-of-the-mill "cultivatedness" that passes itself off as "culture" so that it might be swept away and replaced by genuine cultural values.

Nietzsche emerges in these essays as one of the first critics of popular culture, and his critique is founded on the perception that in the general tenor of the time mediocrity is hailed and greatness stifled. This explains Nietzsche's vitriolic attack on David Strauss's book *The Old and the New Faith*; it was not so much the content of this work that incited his fury as it was the popular acclaim that the book and its author had won among the German educated public. This holds for Nietzsche's

Acht Beiträge, ed. Reinhold Grimm and Jost Hermand (Frankfurt: Athenäum, 1978), 78-97.

campaign against Eduard von Hartmann's *Philosophy of the Unconscious* in the second *Unfashionable Observation*, as well. This is one of the reasons why it is apt to translate the word *unzeitgemäß* as "unfashionable"; if fashion is taken to designate those things that achieve popular appeal and dominate public taste in any particular epoch, then it is precisely an unfashionable crusade against these fashions that fueled Nietzsche's polemical fire. This opposition to all that is fashionable and popular is the lowest common denominator of these essays, resurfacing, for example, in the attacks on public opinion, journalism, scholarship, and historical sensibility, as well as in Nietzsche's diatribes against the present state of philosophy and art. This rendering of *unzeitgemäß* as "unfashionable" can draw further support, moreover, from the fact that the concept of fashionableness itself figures centrally in Nietzsche's critique of contemporary life, a critique that culminates in the Schopenhauer essay in the vilification of "the three M's, Moment, Majority Opinion, and Modishness." The centrality of this critique of the fashionable for Nietzsche's thinking during this period can be seen in a remark found in his notebooks dated summer 1872 to early 1873, the months immediately preceding the composition of the Strauss essay. Here Nietzsche writes: "The ancients were much more virtuous than we are because they had so much less fashion. The virtuous energy of their artists!"⁴ What this note indicates is that in his *Unfashionable Observations* Nietzsche is taking sides with the "ancients" against the "moderns" in the long-standing *querelle des anciens et des modernes*, and that the idea of fashion and the fashionable becomes for him a key concept in this debate.

If these are the arguments that speak for the rendering of *unzeitgemäß* as "unfashionable," there are also reasons for rejecting the translation "untimely" that has come to be accepted as the conventional rendering. Although "untimely" does have

4. Fragment 19 [6] from the notebook P I 20b, found in Vol. 11 of this edition.

the advantage of retaining the stem word “time” (*Zeit*) from which the adjective *unzeitgemäss* derives, and hence of invoking the notions of the present time and of temporality in general, which are so fundamental to Nietzsche’s observations, the English word is nevertheless semantically much more limited than its German counterpart. “Untimely” implies something that is inapt and inappropriate, something that occurs at the wrong time and hence is either premature or belated. Thus in its standard English denotation this word suggests that Nietzsche’s critiques were themselves somehow out of place, that they were raised at the improper time and hence doomed to fall on deaf ears. But this is definitely not what Nietzsche sought to suggest with the word *unzeitgemäss*; indeed, he indicates in the closing lines of the Strauss essay that it is precisely the unfashionableness of the critical attitude manifest in this essay—Nietzsche provocatively calls it “speaking the truth”—that is more timely—that is, more necessary—at the time of his writing than it ever was before. Nietzsche, then, clearly thought his essays could scarcely be more timely, precisely because they were unfashionable. Moreover, in the opening pages of “Richard Wagner in Bayreuth,” Nietzsche identifies an awareness of the timeliness of one’s actions, the careful calculation of the moment when they will have the most far-reaching and profound impact, as a trait that distinguishes great human beings. To deny the timeliness of his observations would hence, following Nietzsche’s own logic, be to deny the greatness of their author.

Nietzsche could scarcely have considered his essays untimely in this sense. On the contrary, it was in part the far-reaching reaction to his polemic against David Strauss that encouraged him to expand the *Unfashionable Observations* into a much more broadly based and extensive critical project. In a letter to Wagner of 18 October 1873, written almost exactly one month after the publication of “David Strauss the Confessor and the Writer,” Nietzsche invokes the “indescribable impact” of this polemic, noting that a series of “insanely hostile” newspaper

reviews have appeared and that as a result "everyone" has read his essay. In this same context he remarks that he has started to give thought to a second essay and that he has already sketched a plan that would encompass twelve further *Unfashionable Observations* in addition to the essay on Strauss. The plan Nietzsche refers to here can be found in notebook P I 20b of his unpublished fragments.⁵ This "Outline of the 'Unfashionable Observations'" is dated 2 September 1873 and includes a list of thirteen subject headings, ranging from "The Cultivated Philistines" (that is, the Strauss essay) and "The Historical Illness" (that is, "Utility and Liability of History for Life"), to topics such as "German and Pseudo-German," "Philosophy and Culture," "The Natural Sciences," and "Classical Philology." Variations on this outline crop up repeatedly in Nietzsche's unpublished notebooks between 1873 and 1876, and although there are some discrepancies in the actual subject matter Nietzsche intends to address, what remains constant throughout these various sketches is the overall plan to compose thirteen *Unfashionable Observations* in all. The importance this project acquired for Nietzsche is indicated by the fact that he came to view it as a task to which he would devote the next several years of his life. In a notebook entry from 1875 entitled "*Plans for My Life*," Nietzsche names the *Unfashionable Observations* as the works that will occupy him throughout his thirties.⁶ Thus what began somewhat occasionally with the biting polemic against David Strauss quickly developed into a broadly conceived critical project that Nietzsche came to associate with the stage of his life that marks his development and emergence as a critical writer. But even as late as 1885, while drafting a preface for the republication of the *Unfashionable Observations*, Nietzsche thought about reviving the form of these early polemics and adding three new essays to the original four.⁷

5. See fragment 19 [330] in Vol. 11 of this edition.

6. See fragment 5 [41] in Vol. 12 of this edition.

7. See fragment 35 [48] in Vol. 17 of this edition. A partial draft with the title

Viewed in the context of Nietzsche's biography, the publication of the *Unfashionable Observations* coincides temporally with the waxing and waning of Nietzsche's enthusiasm for Wagner's plans to build a festival theater in Bayreuth, envisioned as the epicenter of a cultural revolution in Germany. In many ways, in fact, Nietzsche's very concept of *Unzeitgemässheit*, of critical unfashionableness, is fundamentally connected with his assessment of Wagner's art, for it was in Wagner that Nietzsche believed he had discovered a modern aesthetic sensibility that revived the essence of Greek tragedy, as he argued in his first major philosophical work, *The Birth of Tragedy*, published in 1872. It is significant, moreover, that Nietzsche first used the adjective *unzeitgemäss* in a letter dated 17 August 1869, addressed to his friend Erwin Rohde, where it is applied specifically to Richard Wagner. After eulogizing Wagner as his "Jupiter," Nietzsche condemns the meager recognition the composer has received from the public, calling Wagner's life "terrible, rich, and deeply moving . . . wholly anomalous and unheard of among average mortals!" He then goes on to praise Wagner for standing above and looking beyond "everything ephemeral," calling him "unfashionable [*unzeitgemäss*] in the most beautiful sense of that word." This passage makes evident that for Nietzsche the notion of unfashionableness captured not only the status of the outstanding, exceptional individual, which he took Wagner to be, but also the tragedy that, given the spiritual poverty of the contemporary age, this greatness was doomed to go unacknowledged. As Nietzsche becomes increasingly involved with Wagner, his art, and the construction of the theater in Bayreuth, he comes to see Wagner's fate as his own and to identify his own thought with this "unfashionableness."

The seeds that would grow into the David Strauss essay and launch the *Unfashionable Observations* as a critical project were planted in Nietzsche during a visit with the Wagners in Bay-

"New Unfashionable Observation," fragment 41 [2] in Vol. 17, was written in Aug./Sept. 1885.

reuth in April 1873. During this visit Nietzsche read aloud from his manuscript "Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks," and it was during a discussion of this essay that Wagner was prompted to air his censorious opinion of Strauss's *The Old and the New Faith*, which had appeared in 1872. Wagner held a bitter grudge against Strauss due to a public quarrel they had had some years earlier, and it seems that he now sought to make Nietzsche into an instrument through whom he might once more lash out at him. It is Wagner, at any rate, to whom Nietzsche later ascribes the impetus behind the Strauss essay. In a fragmentary preface he drafted in 1875 while contemplating the republication of the *Unfashionable Observations* collectively in a single volume,⁸ Nietzsche sets about explaining the genesis of these works and he cites three motivating forces: the "desperation" he felt when in 1873 it appeared as though Wagner's Bayreuth project was doomed to failure; his sense that in his own reflections he had "stumbled upon the most fundamental problem of all culture"; and words of Wagner's that convinced him to make David Strauss his target. Although Nietzsche admits that at the time he thought Strauss to be too insignificant an adversary, upon returning to Basel from Bayreuth he nevertheless read Strauss's *Old and New Faith* and found Wagner's damning opinion of it confirmed. He began working on the Strauss essay in April 1873, shortly after his return from Bayreuth, and the first draft was already finished by the beginning of May. Nietzsche immediately began working on revising the manuscript, which he wished to complete in time to send to Wagner for his birthday on 22 May. That Nietzsche saw the Strauss piece as a kind of birthday present for Wagner is underscored by remarks he made in a letter to the composer dated 18 April 1873, in which he expresses his hope that this essay will contribute to Wagner's "distraction and amusement." Be that as it may, because his eyes were causing him considerable pain, Nietzsche was unable to meet this self-imposed deadline

8. See fragment 5 [98] from notebook U II 8b in Vol. 12 of this edition.

and the manuscript of "David Strauss the Confessor and the Writer," which Nietzsche dictated to his friend Carl von Gersdorff, was not sent to the publisher until the end of June. The first *Unfashionable Observation* appeared in print on 8 August 1873.

The first notes for the second *Unfashionable Observation*, "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," were put down on paper in the fall of 1873. But already in the summer of that year, before turning to the essay on history, Nietzsche dictated to Gersdorff the text of "On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense," relying on notes that dated back to 1871. For a short time Nietzsche seems to have considered completing "Truth and Lie" as one of the *Unfashionable Observations*, and when in some of his later plans for this project he refers to an essay dealing with language, it is probably this piece he has in mind. Following this interlude, large portions of "Utility and Liability of History" were conceived and drafted in October and November 1873, and the concluding sections were written in the first weeks of 1874. The work was first published on 20 February of that year. If the Strauss essay had created a kind of public furor, by contrast, hardly anyone took notice of this second *Unfashionable Observation*.

Even among Nietzsche's friends this treatise met with a rather cool reception. Wagner's response was polite but far from enthusiastic, and in April 1874 Cosima Wagner sent Nietzsche a letter in which she criticized in some detail the style in which "Utility and Liability" was written. The severe depression under which Nietzsche suffered at this time is largely attributable to this criticism and the lack of public reaction to this essay, all of which combined to magnify his persistent self-doubts. Erwin Rohde had assisted Nietzsche in the completion of the text by reading the proofs and making a number of suggestions for corrections and improvements, almost all of which Nietzsche adopted for the final version. Rohde's critical attitude toward Nietzsche's style probably gave rise to the self-critique voiced in section 10 of this essay, in which Nietzsche concedes his own "immoderation" and "immaturity"; after its

publication, growing concern about the failure of this piece prompted Nietzsche to ask Rohde to subject it to a merciless stylistic critique. It is bitterly ironic, of course, that Nietzsche, who had impugned David Strauss's integrity as a writer and a thinker on the basis of an analysis of his stylistic aberrations, would just a few months later come to doubt his own purity as a stylist and turn to a friend for help. Rohde, at any rate, was obliging, and he forwarded Nietzsche a set of exacting criticisms that cited, among other things, Nietzsche's curious use of metaphor, the essay's mosaiclike texture, which, for Rohde, gave the—not wholly incorrect—impression that the essay was stitched together from diverse fragments, and Nietzsche's tendency to leave too many logical gaps that the reader was then required to fill. Thus "Utility and Liability" unleashed a crisis in Nietzsche's self-understanding as a writer, and this accounts for the fact that throughout his life he considered this study to be one of his weakest works.⁹

At about this same time, in spring 1874, Nietzsche began composing the notes that would form the core of the essay on Schopenhauer, the third of his *Unfashionable Observations*. The reworking of this piece proved to be more laborious than had been the case with the Strauss and history essays, and the text was not completed until the end of August. Whereas the first two *Unfashionable Observations* had appeared with the publishing house of E. W. Fritsch in Leipzig, the same publisher who issued Wagner's works, in July 1874 Nietzsche came to an agreement with a new publisher, Ernst Schmeitzner, for the publication of "Schopenhauer as Educator" and all the subsequent *Unfashionable Observations*. This change was apparently motivated by Nietzsche's sense that in a recent discussion, Fritsch had shown considerable reluctance about publishing the Schopenhauer piece, and Nietzsche was concerned that the future of the entire series might be in jeopardy. Schmeitzner, at any rate,

9. See Jörg Salaquarda, "Studien zur zweiten unzeitgemässen Betrachtung," *Nietzsche-Studien* 13 (1984): 15.

was happy to receive the rights to publish these essays, and the manuscript of the third *Unfashionable Observation* was forwarded to him in segments between 19 August and 9 September. The essay appeared in October 1874 and was received enthusiastically by Nietzsche's friends, including the Wagners, who wrote to express their praise.

Between the publication of "Schopenhauer as Educator" and the appearance of "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth," there was a hiatus of nearly two years. During this period Nietzsche was by no means idle; he spent his free time drafting sections of two new *Unfashionable Observations*. Already in fall 1874 Nietzsche began to solidify plans for an essay on the topic of philology. Entitled "We Philologists" and originally intended as the fourth *Unfashionable Observation*, the impetus behind this work derived to a great extent from the negative reaction *The Birth of Tragedy* had evoked in philological circles. In February 1875 Nietzsche was still working on this piece, which he hoped to be able to complete by Easter, and in March he dictated parts of the manuscript to Gersdorff; shortly thereafter, however, this essay was abandoned for unknown reasons. As early as fall 1874 Nietzsche began to formulate the first inchoate notes for an essay on Wagner, but he did not concentrate seriously on this task until the fall and winter of 1875. By September of that year he had finished the first six sections of the Wagner essay, which were put together from these earlier notes, and by October he had completed sections 7 and 8. However, in a letter to Gersdorff of 26 September 1875 Nietzsche writes of his growing "disgust toward publications" and declares the essay on Wagner to be "unpublishable," while at the same time promising to read sections of it to Gersdorff at their next meeting.

As is clear from Nietzsche's reflections on Wagner in the notebooks from this period, which begin to exhibit the first signs of a more critical attitude, the love affair with the maestro was beginning to sour. This is probably the reason why Nietzsche became dissatisfied with the finished sections of his study on Wagner, which expressed his uninhibited idolatry of the

composer, and found the manuscript impossible to complete. As a result, "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth" lay dormant until April 1876 when Nietzsche's friend Peter Gast (real name: Heinrich Köselitz), a young musician and devoted Wagnerian, took an interest in the manuscript and convinced Nietzsche that it deserved to be finished and published. Gast's encouragement and the proximity of the scheduled opening of the Bayreuth theater for that summer seem to have come together to motivate Nietzsche to begin work on the essay again. With Gast's assistance, a clean manuscript copy of the first eight sections was completed and these were sent to the publisher in mid-May. Nietzsche wrote the last three sections between the end of May and 11 June 1876, and Gast was responsible for preparing the manuscript of this last portion of the essay, as well. "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth" appeared in early July, and immediately thereafter Nietzsche traveled to Bayreuth to attend the rehearsals for the opening night of the festival. Needless to say, the essay was hailed by Wagner and those who belonged to his circle. During his stay in Bayreuth, however, Nietzsche began to harbor grave misgivings about Wagner, and his faith in Bayreuth as the kernel of a genuine modern artistic revival slowly dissolved.

In *Ecce Homo* Nietzsche vividly portrays the disillusionment that befell him during his stay in Bayreuth. What became clear to him as he awoke from this "dream," as he called it, was that Wagner had sold out to the fashionable tastes of the German public that Nietzsche had tirelessly decried, and that instead of constituting a forceful counterblow that would send German philistinism reeling, Bayreuth itself had become the expression of just this pseudoculture. The close tie between Nietzsche's conception of the *Unfashionable Observations* and his uncritical enthusiasm for Wagner is indicated by the fact that once this disenchantment set in, the plans for further essays in the collection ceased almost immediately. To be sure, in fall 1876 Nietzsche made some notes for a piece provisionally entitled "The Plowshare," conceived as a fifth *Unfashionable Observation*, but

work on this essay never advanced beyond the initial stages. The *Unfashionable Observations*, whose beginnings owed much to Wagner's incitement and to the emotional and intellectual investment Nietzsche made in the Bayreuth project, came to a premature end when the vision of Bayreuth came to be re-interpreted as the crowning achievement of German cultivated philistinism. Nietzsche's rage about his own self-deception is ventilated in the diatribes against Wagner voiced in the years that followed.

The critical reception of the four *Unfashionable Observations* is marked by the paradox that the essay to which Nietzsche himself attached the least importance, "Utility and Liability of History for Life," is today almost universally recognized as the most significant work in the collection. By contrast, "David Strauss," the piece that even later in his life Nietzsche most prized, has come to be viewed as an incidental polemic, which, when not completely forgotten, is largely ignored by Nietzsche scholars. In the section of *Ecce Homo* entitled "The Unfashionable Pieces" ("Die Unzeitgemässen"), Nietzsche devotes by far the most space to "David Strauss" and its reception, maintaining that the "aftereffect" of this text was "invaluable in my life." Nietzsche viewed this essay in an important sense as his philosophical-critical debut: insofar as it established his reputation as a polemicist, it won him a certain critical latitude and freedom that he was able to exploit in his subsequent writings.¹⁰ Even if from our current perspective, we are tempted to see this valorization of "David Strauss" as an instance of self-delusion on Nietzsche's part, it was in any case undeniably a productive self-delusion, for it is clear that Nietzsche drew strength and inspiration from the success of the Strauss piece for years to come. In fact, he took a certain pride in the belief that he was responsible for coining the phrase "cultivated philistine," which gained some currency in German cultural

10. See section 2 of the segment in *Ecce Homo* devoted to the *Unfashionable Observations*.

debates of the 1870's. In stark contrast to this, the history essay tended more to undermine than to underwrite Nietzsche's self-confidence in his calling as a writer, and it is only the judgment of posterity that has elevated this piece above all the other *Unfashionable Observations*. Because of its emphasis on the great individual, for example, this essay had a profound impact already at the turn of the century on the poet Stefan George and his circle, contributing to their veneration of Nietzsche. In his essay "Nietzsche's Philosophy in the Light of Our Experience," Thomas Mann devotes considerable space to a discussion of the second *Unfashionable Observation*, which he calls an "admirable treatise."¹¹ Viewed from a philosophical perspective, Nietzsche's insistence on the interrelationship between history and life had a decisive influence on Martin Heidegger's concept of the historicity of Being.¹² Moreover, scholarly interest in the *Unfashionable Observations*, when pursued outside the context of general introductions into Nietzsche's life and philosophy, has overwhelmingly concentrated on his study on history, which is credited with advancing a substantial, influential, and hence lasting philosophical position.

Although neither the Schopenhauer nor the Wagner essay has called forth the intensive critical response evoked by the disquisition on history, because they treat two prominent figures of nineteenth-century intellectual and cultural history, they have been assured a continuing readership. Of course, since Nietzsche later recanted the position he defends in "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth," this text is often merely read as a curiosity that might help explain Nietzsche's seemingly irrational devotion to Wagner at this earlier stage of his development. Yet it must be kept in mind that Schopenhauer and Wagner as individuals do not form the primary focus of these

11. Thomas Mann, "Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung," *Leiden und Größe der Meister*, ed. Peter de Mendelssohn (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1983), 851.

12. See §76 of Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* (Being and time).

essays, just as David Strauss and Eduard von Hartmann are not the central concerns of the first and second *Unfashionable Observations*. On the contrary, in each instance Nietzsche was looking beyond these individuals toward the more general phenomena they represented for him: David Strauss stands in for the "cultivated philistine"; Eduard von Hartmann is a cipher for the debilitating cynicism that evolves out of Hegelianism and the obsessive historicism in which it results; Arthur Schopenhauer represents for Nietzsche the paradigm of the true philosopher; and Richard Wagner embodies the nature of the genuine artist. Thus Nietzsche can justifiably claim in *Ecce Homo* that he never attacked individuals, but only "made use of" them, as one uses "a strong magnifying glass," to bring larger problems into clearer focus.¹³

Elsewhere in *Ecce Homo* Nietzsche maintains that in the last two *Unfashionable Observations* he employed Schopenhauer and Wagner in the same manner as Plato employed Socrates, namely, as particularly appropriate vehicles for the representation of *his own* ideas. Here he describes the essay on Wagner as "a vision of my own future" and claims that "Schopenhauer as Educator" projects "my own innermost history, my *development*."¹⁴ Indeed, it is likely that one of the reasons why subsequent generations of scholars have treated the history essay as the most philosophically significant of these studies is that Nietzsche struck a better balance here, subordinating the *ad hominem* remarks about Hartmann's *Philosophy of the Unconscious* to his overriding arguments about the potentially debilitating effects of an excess of history. However, even in the other three essays Nietzsche considered the *ad hominem* component secondary to the central themes and ideas themselves, as is made evident by his practice of referring to these pieces according to the primary topic they address: "Strauss" as "The Cultivated Philis-

13. See section 7 of the segment entitled "Why I Am So Wise" in *Ecce Homo*.

14. See section 3 of the part of *Ecce Homo* devoted to the *Unfashionable Observations*.

tine," "Schopenhauer" as "The Philosopher," and "Wagner" as "The Artist."¹⁵ Still, a major problem in the execution of these three texts is the fact that the relevant thematic tends to be dwarfed by the individual Nietzsche took as its representative.

Although the collective title under which Nietzsche joined these essays suggests that they derive from a common impulse and share a unified conception, scholars have tended to treat them as individual works. Yet there is much that ties these texts together. The most obvious unifying trait, of course, is Nietzsche's polemical stance and his attack on the institutions of modern German culture and civilization. Nietzsche himself interpreted the venomousness of his attacks as a way of venting his rage about the various physical maladies that plagued him during these years, as he indicates in a letter to his mother and sister dated 26 March 1874. Similarly, in a letter to Rohde of 19 March 1874, Nietzsche asserts that the *Unfashionable Observations* were the vehicle that would allow him to get "all the polemically negative material inside me" out of his system, claiming that only once this has been accomplished—Nietzsche imagines that this task will take five years—will he be able to abandon polemics and turn to more positive work. In this regard it is informative to recall that in section 4 of the Strauss essay Nietzsche quotes Goethe's comment that Lessing must be pitied because the miserableness of his age forced him to turn to polemics. Nietzsche clearly thought that this statement applied just as well to himself at this time. But it would be incorrect to write off the *Unfashionable Observations* as mere negative polemics. Indeed, the four pieces Nietzsche published neatly break down into two groups: the overweening negativity and satirical vituperation of the first two pieces, and the excessively positive, larger-than-life hagiography of the final two texts. Each of these tendencies represents an integral moment of Nietzsche's critical dialectic, which sought not only an

15. See, e.g., fragment 16 [10] in notebook N II 1 (from 1876), published in Vol. 12 of this edition.

nihilation of all that was fashionable, but also worked toward the constructive end of establishing a truly suprahistorical culture. This genuine culture would become, as Nietzsche saw it, the seedbed that would spawn "philosophers, artists, and saints," for this is what in "Schopenhauer as Educator" Nietzsche names as the supreme goal of all culture.

Aside from being unified by this critical-constructive purpose, these four texts also evince a surprising thematic coherence. In many ways the Strauss piece serves as a kind of prelude to the essays that will follow, at least inasmuch as it touches upon all their major themes: the interconnection of culture and life; the relationship of artistic creativity and power; the attack on historical consciousness; the problem of cultivation and education; the critique of scholars, scholarship, and science; praise of what is uncommon and exceptional. In fact, the thematic structure of the *Unfashionable Observations* bears certain similarities to that of a musical composition in which themes are briefly articulated and then submerge, only to resurface and be further developed later in the score. The principal thematic thread that runs throughout all these texts is the concept of life, "that dark, driving, insatiable power that lusts after itself," as Nietzsche defines it in section 3 of "Utility and Liability of History for Life." As this description makes evident, for Nietzsche life became the privileged term used to designate what Schopenhauer had called the "will," and the dominance of this concept in Nietzsche's early philosophy indicates how tightly interlaced it is with the worldview of German *Lebensphilosophie* (life philosophy). As the word itself suggests, *Lebensphilosophie* posits life as a fundamental principle, as the foundation of all things; it valorizes the vitalist concerns of health, experience, and vigor, and it rebels against the idea that reason and scientific knowledge represent the cardinal values of civilization.

These unifying factors suggest that thematically and conceptually the four texts of the *Unfashionable Observations* deserve to be read as integral parts of a coherently conceived whole. However, on the level of style this same coherence is not so clearly

in evidence. Indeed, those who read these essays expecting to rediscover that Nietzsche who is reputed to be a powerful and painstaking stylist are liable to come away disappointed. From the perspective of the translator this is particularly true of the Strauss and Wagner essays. Especially when he gets involved in the emotions underlying his arguments, Nietzsche's thoughts often tend to balloon into imprecision, and at such times his sentences can become quite unwieldy and awkward. Not infrequently he gets bogged down in his own rhetoric, turning to—and often refusing to let go of—obscure allusions and metaphors. Although at times the argument moves forward crisply and decisively, at other times—especially when he is trying to drive home a point—his language soars into musings that have the character more of mythic discourse than of philosophical. It is at these moments that we see already in the *Unfashionable Observations* the rudiments of that evocative style characteristic of Nietzsche's later works, especially *Zarathustra*. In a sense, then, the *Unfashionable Observations* have the character of stylistic etudes in which Nietzsche began to experiment with and expand his rhetorical and discursive registers.

In the preface to the second volume of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche maintains that all his writings deal with those things he has already overcome, that they address problems he has already put "behind [him]." However, he singles out the first three *Unfashionable Observations* as texts that predate even the issues that concerned him in his first book, *The Birth of Tragedy*. What this remark implies is that the *Unfashionable Observations* ought to be seen—if not strictly in temporal, then at least in developmental terms—as foundational works, as the necessary prerequisites for the entire line of philosophical treatises that Nietzsche created. In fact, some of the major ideas developed in Nietzsche's later writings are already manifest in these early texts in embryonic form. The rudimentary idea—albeit not yet the concept—of the *Übermensch* is prefigured, for example, in the notion of the great individual presented in the history essay, as well as in the conception of the philosopher

in "Schopenhauer" as a being for whose creation nature "takes its only leap, and it is a leap of joy." Similarly, the thought of eternal recurrence is touched on in "Utility and Liability of History for Life" when in section 2 Nietzsche attributes to the Pythagoreans the belief "that when an identical constellation of the heavenly bodies occurs, identical events—down to individual, minute details—must repeat themselves on the earth as well." And even the idea of the will to power seems to find a first, if yet vague formulation when in "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth" the core of Wagner's being is described as "a violent will . . . that desires power." Thus the *Unfashionable Observations* served Nietzsche as much more than just vehicles to vent his antipathy toward the contemporary state of culture; they also functioned as a testing ground for his own philosophical style, as well as acting as a kind of incubator for ideas that would occupy him throughout his life. But it is perhaps the general critical stance Nietzsche developed in these essays that would have the greatest influence on his characteristic philosophical attitude. When in section 7 of the piece on Strauss Nietzsche proclaims that "everything that is truly productive is offensive," he fashions a remark that could stand as the watchword of his entire philosophy. The offensive productivity practiced in the *Unfashionable Observations* becomes the unmistakable trademark of Nietzsche's philosophical posture.

Index of Persons

- Aeschylus (ca. 525–456 B.C.),
Greek tragedian, 17, 273, 292,
313, 384, 386
- Alexander the Great (356–
323 B.C.), king of Macedonia
and son of Philip II, 262,
273–74, 337
- Apollo, son of Zeus and Leto,
god of goodness and beauty,
167, 363
- Ariadne, daughter of Minos and
Pasiphae, wife of Dionysus, 75,
345, 366
- Aristotle (384–322 B.C.), an-
cient Greek philosopher and
scientist, 32, 364
- Auerbach, Berthold (1812–82),
German novelist, 65
- Bacon, Francis (1561–1626),
English philosopher and
natural scientist, 120
- Bagehot, Walter (1826–77),
English economist and
journalist, 249, 359, 365, 372
- Beethoven, Ludwig van (ca. 1770–
1827), German composer,
29–33, 37, 80, 133, 185, 187, 304,
314–15, 323, 365, 379, 382–83,
386–88
- Bismarck, Otto von (1815–98),
Prussian chancellor from 1871
to 1890, 43, 370
- Brandis, Christian August (1790–
1867), German philosopher and
classical philologist, 246, 371
- Brutus, Marcus Iunius (85–
42 B.C.), Roman statesman and
conspirator against Caesar,
254, 351
- Burckhardt, Jacob (1818–97) Swiss
art historian, 103, 352
- Caesar, Julius (100–44 B.C.),
celebrated Roman general and
statesman, 99, 351
- Carrière, Moriz (1817–95), profes-
sor of philosophy, 197, 372
- Cassius, Gaius (ca. ?–31 B.C.),
one of the assassins of Julius
Caesar, 351
- Catiline, Lucius Sergius (ca. 108–
62 B.C.), Roman politician
turned conspirator, 367
- Cato, Marcus Porcius (pseudo-
nym elder Cato, 234–149 B.C.),

- Roman statesman and orator, 347
- Cellini, Benvenuto (1500-1571), Italian sculptor and goldsmith, 176, 364
- Columbus, Christopher (1451-1506), explorer of the New World, 99, 351
- Cromwell, Oliver (1599-1658), English statesman, 364
- Darwin, Charles (1809-82), English naturalist, renowned for his theory of evolution, 39-40, 45, 55, 67, 368
- Democritus (ca. 460-370 B.C.), Greek philosopher, 120, 354
- Demosthenes (ca. 384-322 B.C.), Greek orator and statesman, 155, 318, 388-90
- Descartes, René (1596-1650), French philosopher and mathematician, 120, 362
- Devrient, Eduard (1801-77), German actor and theater director, 65, 345
- Diderot, Denis (1713-84), French man of letters and philosopher, 370
- Diogenes Laertius (3rd c. A.D.), Greek author and historian of philosophy, 135, 246, 351, 374
- Diogenes of Sinope (ca. 412-323 B.C.), Greek Cynical philosopher, 255, 343
- Dryden, John (1631-1700), English poet, dramatist, and literary critic, 350
- Dubois-Reymond, Emil du (1818-96), German physiologist and philosopher, 221
- Dürer, Albrecht (1471-1528), German Renaissance painter and printmaker, 386
- Eckermann, Johann Peter (1792-1854), German writer, assistant and close associate of Goethe, 10, 145, 337-38, 340, 351, 386, 391
- Eckhart, Meister (ca. 1260-1328), German theologian and mystic, 204, 367
- Emerson, Ralph Waldo (1803-82), American poet and essayist, 254, 364, 374
- Empedocles (ca. 490-430 B.C.), Greek philosopher and poet, 194-95, 273, 366
- Feuerbach, Ludwig (1804-72), German philosopher, 358, 379
- Frank, Sebastian (1499-1542), German theologian and author, 76
- Gervinus, Georg Gottfried (1805-71), German critic and literary historian, 26-27, 30, 340
- Gewinner, Wilhelm von (1825-1917), German jurist and philosopher, 366
- Gibbon, Edward (1737-94), English rationalist historian and politician, 159
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von (1749-1832), German classical poet, novelist, playwright, and natural philosopher, 10, 15, 26, 28-29, 44, 59, 61, 85-86, 92, 96, 103, 119, 127, 137-38, 145, 151, 181-82, 185-86, 201-3, 208, 213, 221, 240, 253, 263-64, 270, 292,

- 297, 306, 310, 325, 337-42, 347-48, 350-58, 360, 364-70, 376, 379, 381, 384-86, 391
- Gottsched, Johann Christian (1700-1766), German aesthetician, critic, and dramatist, 159, 361
- Gozzi, Carlo, conte di (1720-1806), Italian poet, prose writer, and dramatist, 204, 368
- Gracián, Balthasar (1601-58), Spanish philosopher and writer, 342
- Grillparzer, Franz (1791-1872), Austrian poet and dramatist, 27, 113-14, 126, 340, 353, 355
- Grimm, Jakob (1785-1863), and Wilhelm (1786-1859), German philologists and lexicographers, 77, 346, 352
- Gutzkow, Karl (1811-78), German novelist and dramatist, 64, 344
- Handel, Georg Friedrich (1685-1759), German-born Baroque composer, 319
- Harms, Friedrich (1819-80), professor of philosophy, 197, 366
- Hartmann, Eduard von (1842-1906), German metaphysical philosopher, 148-53, 156-58, 356, 359-61
- Haydn, Franz Joseph (1732-1809), Austrian Classical composer, 29, 59, 80, 341
- Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich (1770-1831), German idealist philosopher, 35-36, 143, 148, 236, 252, 338, 359
- Heraclitus (ca. 540-480 B.C.), Greek philosopher, 89, 166, 349-50, 363, 390
- Herbart, Johann Friedrich (1776-1841), German philosopher and educator, 372
- Hesiod (8th c. B.C.), Greek poet, 138
- Hobbes, Thomas (1588-1679), English philosopher and political theorist, 39
- Holbach, Paul-Henri Dietrich, Baron de (pseudonym J. B. Mirabeau, 1723-89), German-born encyclopaedist and philosopher, 342
- Hölderlin, Johann Christian Friedrich (1770-1843), German classical poet, 17-18, 135, 185, 338-39, 356, 369
- Holtzendorf, Franz von (1829-89), German jurist and law professor, 132
- Homer (9th or 8th c. B.C. ?), Greek epic poet, author of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, 340, 342
- Horace (65-8 B.C.), Latin lyric poet and satirist, 338, 360, 382
- Hume, David (1711-76), Scottish empirical philosopher, 93, 350
- Juvenal, Decimus Junius (ca. 60-127 A.D.), Roman satirical poet, 371
- Kant, Immanuel (1724-1804), German metaphysician and philosopher, 26, 34-35, 66, 69, 184, 188, 239, 243, 273
- Kleist, Heinrich von (1777-1811), German dramatist, 185, 187-88, 366

- Lagarde, Paul de (1827-91), German orientalist and philosopher, 363
- Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm (1646-1716), German philosopher, 342
- Leopardi, Giacomo (1798-1837), Italian poet and philosopher, 94, 325, 350, 391
- Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim (1729-81), German dramatist and critic, 26-29, 42, 51, 59-61, 67, 181, 361, 373
- Lichtenberg, Georg Christoph (1742-99), German physicist and satirical writer, 22, 39, 42, 63, 340, 342, 344
- Lucretius (ca. 96-55 B.C.), Roman poet and Epicurean philosopher, 248
- Luther, Martin (1483-1546), German Augustinian friar who initiated the Reformation, 107, 304, 365, 386
- Mandeville, Bernard de (1670-1733), Dutch prose writer and philosopher, 364
- Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, Felix (1809-47), German composer, 65, 345
- Merck, Johann Heinrich (1741-91), German scholar and critic, 62, 344
- Meyer, Jürgen (1829-97), professor of philosophy, 197, 366
- Meyerbeer, Giacomo (1791-1864), German operatic composer, 298
- Moltke, Helmuth von (1800-1891), German field marshal, 43
- Mommsen, Theodor (1817-1903), German historian and writer, 19, 339
- Montaigne, Michel Eyquem de (1533-92), French philosopher and essayist, 24, 181, 271, 365
- Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus (1756-91), Austrian Classical composer, 32, 80, 133
- Newton, Sir Issac (1643-1727), English physicist and mathematician, 138
- Niebuhr, Barthold Georg (1776-1831), Prussian civil servant and historian, 92, 103, 241, 350
- Parmenides (ca. 515-? B.C.), Greek Eleatic philosopher, 380
- Pascal, Blaise (1623-62), French mathematician, physicist, and religious philosopher, 47
- Passow, Franz (1786-1833), German classical philologist, 253
- Philip II (382-336 B.C.), 18th king of Macedonia, 337
- Philo of Alexandria (ca. 15 B.C.-45 A.D.), Hellenistic Jewish philosopher of religion, 120
- Pindar (ca. 518-446 B.C.), Greek lyric poet, 159, 361
- Plato (ca. 428-348 B.C.), ancient Greek philosopher, 32, 161, 241-43, 293-94, 362, 382-83
- Plutarch (ca. 46-119 A.D.), Greek biographer and historian, 131, 181
- Polybius (ca. 200-118 B.C.), Greek historian, 96, 351

- Pythagoras (ca. 580–500 B.C.), Greek philosopher and mathematician, 100, 351, 374
- Ramler, Karl Wilhelm (1725–98), German poet and aesthetician, 159, 361
- Rancé, Armand-Jean Le Bouthillier de (1626–1700), French abbot, founder of the Trappist monastery, 191
- Ranke, Leopold von (1795–1886), German historian, 19, 355
- Raphael (1483–1520), Italian painter and architect, 144, 145, 313, 390
- Reimarus, Hermann Samuel (1694–1768), German philosopher and man of letters, 72
- Riehl, Wilhelm Heinrich (1823–97) German cultural historian, music historian, and composer, 21, 30, 59, 339
- Ritter, Heinrich (1791–1869), German historian of philosophy, Göttingen, 246, 371
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1712–78), Swiss author and philosopher, 61, 201–3, 344
- Sachs, Hans (1494–1576), German Meistersinger, poet, and cobbler, 76, 134, 265, 383
- Sanders, Daniel (1819–97), German lexicographer, 64, 344
- Savonrola, Girolama (1452–98), Italian Christian preacher, reformer, and martyr, 140
- Scaliger, Joseph Justus (1540–1609), Dutch classical philologist, 24
- Schiller, Friedrich von (1759–1805), classical German poet, dramatist, and aesthetician, 26, 28, 78, 96, 116, 127, 253, 265, 292, 327, 340, 346–47, 353, 355–56, 376–77, 392
- Schleiermacher, Friedrich Daniel Ernst (1768–1834), German Romantic philosopher and theologian, 35–36, 73, 148, 356
- Schopenhauer, Arthur (1788–1860), German philosopher, 16, 32, 34–37, 42, 52, 63, 65, 69–70, 98, 151, 169–255 *passim*, 269, 273, 320, 342, 344–45, 350–51, 360, 363–73 *passim*, 378, 390, 391
- Schubert, Franz (1797–1828), Austrian Romantic composer, 319
- Shakespeare, William (ca. 1564–1616), English poet, dramatist, and actor, 114, 119, 271, 360, 363
- Shelley, Percy Bysshe (1792–1822), English Romantic poet, 185
- Sinclair, Issak von (1775–1815), German diplomat, poet, and philosopher, 356
- Socrates (470–399 B.C.), ancient Athenian philosopher, 122, 231, 241
- Spinoza, Baruch de (1632–77), Dutch-Jewish philosopher, 358
- Staël, Madame de (1766–1817), French authoress and critic, 32
- Stahr, Adolf (1805–76), German writer and literary historian, 344
- Stein, Charlotte von (1742–1827), German writer and intimate friend of Goethe, 368

- Steinach, Erwin von (?-1318),
German architect, builder of
the Strassbourg cathedral,
103, 351
- Strauss, David (1808-1874),
German philosopher, theo-
logian, and biographer, 3-18
passim, 149, 182, 336, 339-46,
353, 372
- Swift, Jonathan (1667-1745),
Anglo-Irish author, 127, 249,
355, 372
- Tacitus (ca. 56-120 B.C.), Roman
historian, 345, 358
- Thiers, Louis Adolphe (1797-
1877), French historian and
statesman, 130, 355
- Typhon, son of Tartarus and
Gaea, a monster who engaged
in a battle against the gods,
201, 367
- Vischer, Friedrich Theodor von
(1807-87), German literary critic
and aesthetician, 17, 19, 338-39
- Voltaire, François Marie Arouet
de (1694-1778), French Enlight-
enment philosopher and writer,
57, 59-61, 72, 132, 343, 356
- Wackernagel, Wilhelm (1806-69),
German philologist, 141, 358
- Wagner, Richard (1813-83),
German operatic composer,
dramatist, and theorist, 184-
85, 222, 224, 257-331 *passim*, 356,
367, 369, 374-86, 388-93
- Wallenstein, Albrecht Eusebius
Wenzel von (1583-1634),
Austrian general during the
Thirty Years' War, 26
- Winckelmann, Johann Joachim
(1717-68), German art historian,
28, 340
- Wolf, Friedrich August (1759-
1824), German classical
philologist, 253
- Zeller, Eduard (1814-1908),
German theologian and
philosopher, 246, 371
- Zenge, Wilhelmine von (1780-
1852), fiancée of Heinrich von
Kleist, 366
- Zeno of Citium (ca. 335-263 B.C.),
Greek philosopher who
founded Stoicism, 243
- Zeno of Elea (ca. 495-430 B.C.),
Greek Eleatic philosopher, 380
- Zeus, supreme god of the ancient
Greeks, 138
- Zöllner, Johann Karl Friedrich
(1834-82), German astronomer
and physicist, 128

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IN TWENTY VOLUMES

- 1 The Birth of Tragedy/Early Writings
- 2 Unfashionable Observations I-IV
- 3 Human, All Too Human I
- 4 Human, All Too Human II
- 5 Dawn
- 6 The Gay Science
- 7 Thus Spoke Zarathustra
- 8 Beyond Good and Evil/
On the Genealogy of Morals
- 9 The Wagner Case/Twilight of the Idols/
The Antichrist/Ecce Homo/Dionysus
Dithyrambs/Nietzsche Contra Wagner
- 10 Unpublished Fragments:
From the Period of *The Birth of Tragedy*
- 11 Unpublished Fragments:
From the Period of *Unfashionable Observations*
- 12 Unpublished Fragments:
From the Period of *Human, All Too Human*
- 13 Unpublished Fragments:
From the Period of *Dawn*
- 14 Unpublished Fragments:
From the Period of *The Gay Science*
- 15 Unpublished Fragments:
From the Period of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*
- 16 Unpublished Fragments:
From the Period of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*
- 17 Unpublished Fragments:
From the Period of *Beyond Good and Evil*
- 18 Unpublished Fragments:
From the Period of *On the Genealogy of Morals*
- 19 Unpublished Fragments:
From the Period of the Late Writings
- 20 Unpublished Fragments:
From the Period of the Late Writings

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Unfashionable Observations*Translated, with an Afterword, by Richard T. Gray*

Under the title *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen*, Nietzsche collected four essays published separately between 1873 and 1876: "David Strauss the Confessor and the Writer," "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," "Schopenhauer as Educator," and "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth." The title, newly translated as *Unfashionable Observations*, spells out the common impulse linking these essays: Nietzsche's inimical attitude toward his "time," understood broadly as all the mainstream and popular movements that constituted contemporary European, but especially German, "culture" in the wake of the Prussian military victory over the French in 1871.

The *Unfashionable Observations* are foundational works for Nietzsche's entire philosophy, prefiguring both his characteristic philosophical style and many of the major ideas he would develop in his later writings. This is the first English translation to include Nietzsche's variants to the published text.

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