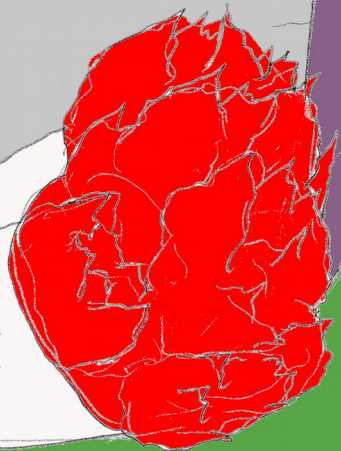


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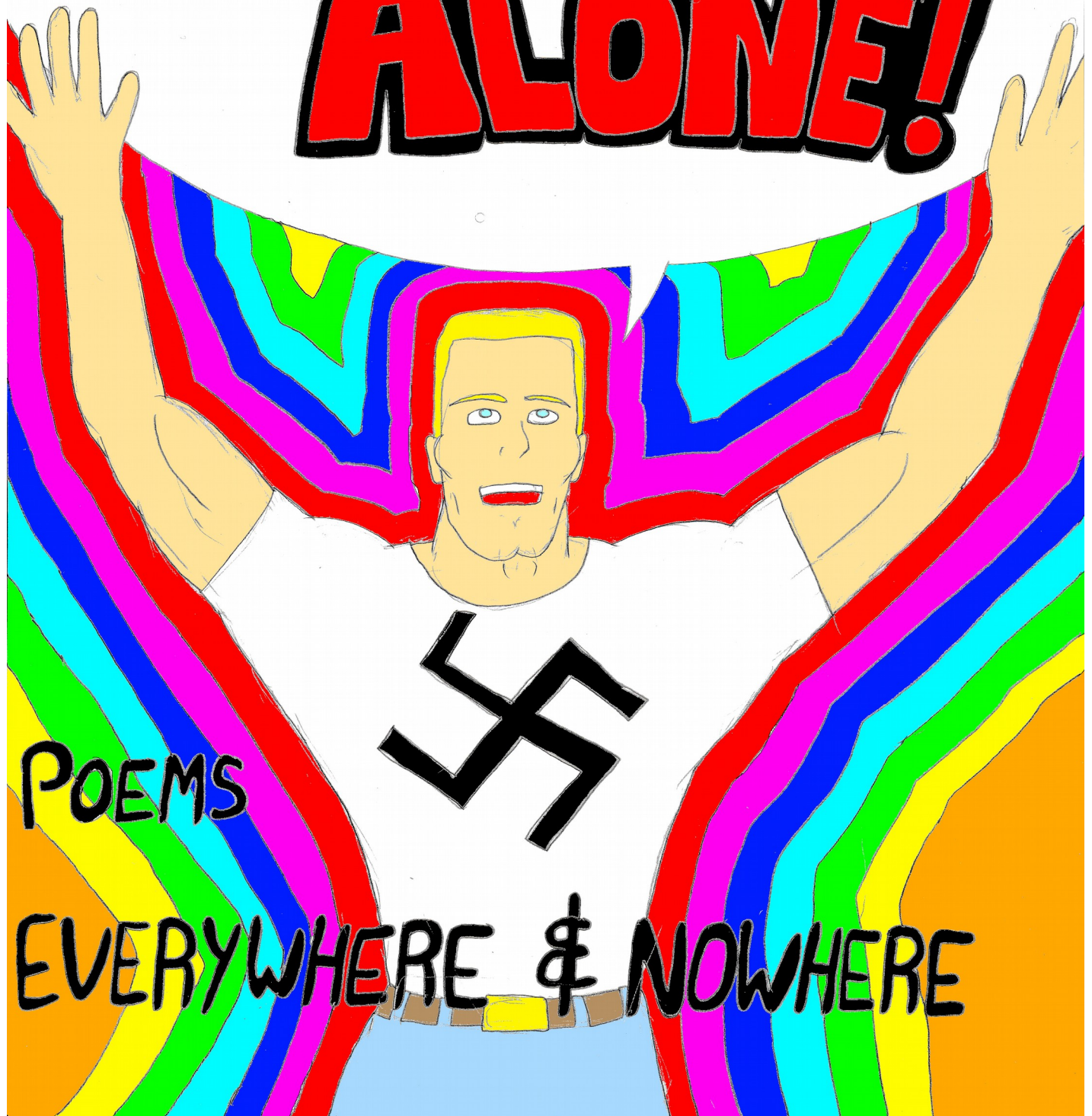
YOUTH



11/88

I STAND

ALONE!



POEMS

EVERYWHERE & NOWHERE

I Stand Alone

Honours and shiny medals replete Your
coat of multi-coloured pastiche Face the
nouveau monde's designate Mutt re-
christened purebred,

Our global fate

-And I stand alone.

Brown and white contradiction Short
and shrunken

Lean and tall and fat – all one All
figures in a global village That none
may,

Thus the law-tables say, Loot
and pillage.

Sample a fruit from the seller A
pleasant smile unreturned To him
who doesn't smile Who cannot
smile and happy Insipidity
Nourishing? – hardly, Rather
mealy-mouthed Disease
contracted From
transubstantiated Mediocre
substance

-Bite it, bite the stringy Fleshy,
soft, and doughy Taste of the
alien Contentment –

And I stand alone. Would wind
up the world

Send it counter-clockwise See it
spinning like a child's Bicycle wheels

Back to a time

In which this dish Was
not served.

I see only the dark Of a
former stigma

Shining outwards brightly And
bathing the world

In its glow.

That I, with my absurd Light-
grown-dark, grown Vilified,
Had these medals and could
Survive

On this mealy-fruit.

-But no, I was born to thrive

Was born for cold heights
Not the sweltering bogs, swamps,
Desert hardpan of the dark man
-No I was not a son of Hitler – But I
adore the man,
His ideal, the leader, the strong; Who
shall lead today the throng Of suntanned
Bodies – ‘but it’s wrong!’ They
cry – ‘wrong!’
And vilify –
And I stand alone.
Tin medals would suffice? But I
am no sheep,
And no medal can be pinned upon The
stone-chest, cold and ageless Upon which
suffering isolates May weep.
For they lack all content for their Isolation
No longer does
Democracy stand
As anything but absurd.

It is the herd which calls out lowing: ‘We are
here, we have arrived’ When questioned who they
are and Where they are
No essentialist formulas can divine. But I
am here, right here!
Right now! – Time
and space
Present to my vision only cows
-Well so be it, for
-I stand alone And I
know Who I am;
An answer to a question mark
Levelled at my head
By these herd animals, but
not an answer
For them –
An ageless man
Whose journey
In self-discovery is
Ageless
And himself torn From
herd happiness And herd
bliss and

Value judgments, he
-Stands alone.

You Call This A Party?

I don't know what went on in the fifties I
would have liked to – really
But I don't know what went on In
those old days of yore

I hear tell that moto-cars cruised
Up and down fresh asphalt driveways
In the suburbs with their plastic gnomes Cute
garden god of bourgeoisdom

Yes I hear tell that men were dads And
women were moms
And kids were kids Lowest rung
on the ladder
And 'should behave themselves'
-Is that how it went? Back in
those days of yore

Everything, and I mean everything – Was
about the hyper, man
It was – 'hyper!' man
All of it! – plastic, plasticized Lawn,
lawn ornaments
Hell – even the furniture
Was wreathed in the hypercostume Of
suburban Cinderellas
In them old days of yore

Eggs and bacon – and off to school You
had your T.V. for the morning
-Seemed no one was very Educated
back then,
At least not the model of
Fabricated dream – illusions
Ideological constructs

-No.
Back then it was like: 'Man,
I'm hip cat!'
Or something like that
-And those glasses Those thick
blackframes

Man, it was 'wow' Back in
days of yore

Didn't they, so I've heard Used
to mow the lawn Always with
their new

-Mower-

Bought down at the

-Hardware store- With
their

-'Slacks'-

OnSunday?

What're they: competing? All at
once saying Through their
gestures.

This is what we have

Achieved –

'Beat that Hip
cat!'

Back in them days of yore

But I tell you man,

You can really dig the vibe As it
reverberates

Across the skies Of
time

Into the moment We
sit speechin'

And lookin' at everybody Still
reachin'

-For them good ole Days.

But's not the days That
they're really Reaching
for:

It's simply a Nouveau
monde Again and again

As the world turns

-Atavism

Atavism

Of hyper-reality And
a slave to The model

They will always Be.

So throw another steak On
the 'B.B.Q.'
And turn on the
-T.V.-
For some real important
-News-
'Cause I heard on
-Dateline-
The man was real distressed Over
some new crisis
Way out west

Flip the burger like this Tim: 'Flip,
flip' – that's the
Ticket

Now we have a heart attack
What's that?
You only eat fat calories
No carbs for you eh Tim, eh
-Eh!?

I guess 'to each their own' and 'Que
sera, sera'
But I think I'll go back
-Not home
But back in time, man Back
away doggie
-Back!
Into the past

I don't want a poodle, man I
want a wolf as my Companion
I want a friend inneed. But
that couldn't be Anyone of these
– They are reflections
Of a model That
doesn't – Exist.
-How can I live with
Friends like this?

Keep your sofa-sittin'
Weekend holiday Your
beer-swill
Belly fill Video
game Rampage –

You call this a
Party?

Laissez-faire Dreams

I hear tell that there were
People
Born unto the last epoch Of
delusive
Freedom
-Call it:
'To be free to be dumb!' That
is more like it.

They wore flowers back In
those laissez faire French-
florid days
Of bon mots
-Didn't they?

A flower was a
Symbol Meaningful
-But what did it mean to the
-Government, man!
Nothing.
Flat out nothin'.

And that's what it's all about. You
can play Ghandi
For a day
But you gotta take off The
costume – why? Breathing
room!
Room to breathe in The
present.

Those days are gone now
Quenched their thirst for
Freedom or
Un-freedom Or
apathy
Hippie-contradiction and
Blasphemy

You say free spirit But
you mean:

'Free to be lazy!
That's 'lazy faire'
Ideology

Put the flower of freedom In
your pipe
And Smokeit
-Hippie!

Those days were crushed By
military boots Marching
Underfoot the flowers Of
laissez faire Dreams.

It didn't really come And
go

No –
It stayed
It progressed
Historically Through
the ages This lazy-faire
Banal sucking
Of the teat Of
Effeminate mammary
Opium

You call this hope?
Hedonism – Shame!
Thus the impotent Old
hagscry

But if they could Get it
up again They would
belike Pigs in apen
-Hedonism!

That's what re-christen
Lazy-faire
Attitudes
This walking amorous mood One
becomes

Whose only waking moment
Whose only breath
Is to achieve
Orgiastic fun – in the mind-numbing sun!

But who needs a mind
When ya got fun
Hun! Right?
-No.

No and again no –
-No-
No, no, no!

Fun is the simple Fun
is laziness For the
people
A pleasure-seeking
Pleasurable Doldrums
A pool of sweet
Wampum
In my satchel Isn't
that
What the hippies
Always
Talk about?

I know another hippie saying:
I'm out –

-Ta here man! Smoke
your brains In – Or is
that Out?

It's starting to get to me
-'Man'!

Put your Back Into It / Down Upon The Fertile Earth

Slumped exhaustion
Vermin scalped, Red
itching – What?
You call this a poem! But
I'm exhausted How am I
Torhyme
With vermin's scratch

-Marks

Beat in time to the Mine
rumbling, To the bird
Whistling
With my fingers:
Scratch, scratch,
Scratch.

-A question? Do it,
do it!

-Do it!

The imperative
Answer.
No more questions It
has
Snuffed them out

Hard!
Harder!
To the wagon boys
Backs into it
Whip tornstrips Of
bacon
From these pigs
Squealing Grunting
As they push the
Wagon.
Uphill
Down

Into and out –
Of town

'Tis a labourer's Life
for me
-'Tis not? Me
hearties.

Time for boozin' lads
Bring up crates stacked high Take
'em off
The wagon And
put me On
I'm far gone But –
'Tis a labourer's life For
me

Now that's poetry!

Your scabby wig
Vermin encrusted
Warholiem Snappy-
minded Beehive
Drop out! Gotta put
your
-Back into it Now.

Lonesome tower high upon
Green swathed hill
Grey skies blanket blue The
tower is still Misses dawn

Lonesome tower there within We
meet friends
To greet and feastwith
Rendbacon
-Squealpig!

Squeal!
You have been
Keeled
BybarbarousKnives
DaintilycarvingGristle
Gently harming Mind
Delicacy
Genteel!

Up next course: Roast
pheasant Odorous
feast O' humblebeast
Th'art heaven sent
Magnificent Roasted
with Venison
On this cloudy gray
Afternoon
In a medievalland

Raise the handsto

Heaven
Praise the skies From
which rains Are fallen
And the godhead
Weeps
For mortal sin
Th'art a beast
-Hallelujah!-
Here my wolfish grin

Drain pipe – fleshpipe Spurts
of vitality Bathe fertile ground
And constitute reality
This is what we are all about This
pregnant cloud
And all the offspring
Descending Descending
Never-ending
Down
Down upon the
Fertile earth

Creation

The pen is my godhead From
thence issues my Children
-This is authorship
Worship
Of a lineage Of a
heritage
Of one's own making

I am the apotheosis Of
my pen
Or vice versa
I pour my words My
concepts Crystallized
Into forms
Pre-cast
By language By
society By the
Not-I
Not by me

-Upon woman The
bearer of My seed
The blank slate
Which absorbs All
that is Fruitful
Potent Without
which Barren
 Dry desert

And they say we all Owe
a debt!

 To that,
To a desert Soaked by
rain Purified by vitality
Consecrated and Made
whole Again
Deficiency Made
excess Brimming
forth From her sex

This is a debt? This
a boon? To work
upon
Matter and from out The
womb
Issues
Synthesis. Is
this Creation?

Synthesize the concepts
Concretized in dialect Spread
upon a Barrenness
 A sheet of
Tragic whiteness Now
bearing colours Of
fruitfulness

 A boon, a boon!

On the journey of the soul & Hegel's absolute knowledge

Many-sided figure who no longer says 'I'
Crystalline radiance sending points of light
Sword-like
Through darkling folds of night
Rending limitation

Will to study amorphous forms
Contradictions between
Non-identity / Identity
Cannot but be
 -A contradiction

Still persistence
Human condition Ever
relentless About this
Ineffable Crystalline
Tremendis Majestatis

Lexical-hued chiliast Divine
inspirational Perceptual
conundrum Defying
mediation

No longer seeking
Bushes beaten Flatly
forsaken Taken
 Within
Absorbed perdition
Silenced cries
 Of ignorance

 This
 Absolute knowledge
No segregating distinction
Cluttered categorical Moral
 Bias.

No absolutes conditions Of
bliss
Only this
Onlythat
This and
thatandMoreand

More...
Scepticalhorror.

Unfurling with thought-touch
Unfurling tongues conceptual
Tracing unknown receptacle Of
knowledge
Contours, small
Crevices pillage – The
peal
Vanquish surreality
Surfaces cartography Has
Unconcealed.

Slaving under the illusions of micro & macro cosmos

The brain screamed aloud
Grasping for its life against
The beast which throbbed against Its
civilized prison
Garment
-Prison
Of fine cloth.

The latter was rubbing against it With
Aching desire Yearning to
break free
The fetters of the unnatural And
insert itself
Into a home of tight flesh
Warm and wet.

The brain screamed again
This time with a more deliberate effort To
grasp control
-Blood pounded wildly from the heart
Coursing through the veins
With regularity
And sent without aim
Around the body Crying:
'It all needs it
No part is to be left out' For
this is life!

But the beast and the brain struggled
Against each other

Sucked leech-like the blood As it
poured from the heart Would imbibe
it all
Into themselves greedily and unsharing
Ungrateful to the heart
-Wanton.

But impartial source of life Throbbled
in rhythmic tempo Setting the pace
Establishing the Coda
physiologica
For the whole corpore.

And where was the Spirit
—
Spiritus sancta? It
had left
Had been pummelled out Of the
body by the fact-fists Of history
And now floated
In the cultish alcoves of dark corners Of
reclusion
Into the minds And
bodies
-For better or ill-
Of those whose body contracted A
spirit disease
A contagion of the soul
Grafted on like a goiter Like
cancer
Implicit throughout corrupting With
a slow and
Merciless route As
the culture The love
The metaphysicae occultae Was
poured over
And one bought and sold an ideology And
made from there
Ingredients his own
-Wicca, warlocka-
Whatever.

It was only the body in the arena
Which flagellated itself

Which tore itself And
masticated itself
Struggling between poles For
supremacy
Two sides of the coin
Which could never be One
-For they were both sides Both
distinct
Both opposed

Blood flowed
-Up and down and
Aimlessly
Circulated throughout the
System
Like a lost piece of paperwork Shuffled to
the bottom
Of
The pile
Always and sent on
-Chain-letter-like Only it
was good luck Not to
answer
-To the next and the next
Organs taking a drink of the spirit
-Intoxicated.

And the beast raged on
With its proud head swelling
Bloating
With engorgement on the blood of Spirit
Veins dilating
Like pupils coming to life The
blind one
Stretched itself clumsily Out
and wriggled
To the edge of the short leg
Attempting to get out
Into the sun and into
-Something else- Its
home.

Homesick and forever searching This
squirming
Oozing creature
Was forever grappling With
itself

Forever crying out:
More, more!
Insatiable leech-like creature Whose
blood plugged up holes And drank of
it
Drank the falling blood Of
the fertile pit
Its home And
Came out spent of
Vitality a shrinking
Worm
That had met
With a provisional death.

But the incessance Of
the vacillation Of its life-
death
Teeter-totter let's get at her
Blood flow
From the source
Opposed the understanding organ Which
obstructed its lack
Of understanding
Its undesire to understand.

A larger organ And
yet one
So easily vanquished So
fallible
So easily lost
Thisvenerable Old
wiseman
Seated at thehelmOf
perception
-But not control.

The control circulated within
Circulated throughout the limbs And to
the fingertips
It went
From hence to thence
-A process Within a
system For a purpose
That was hidden. It too
thirsted
Did this noble organ Thirsted for
the insatiable

Of life
Satiated by death
Through a saturation of impoverishment Loss of
blood
Loss of healthy meat with which to be Mobile To be
limber
To seek out the source Of its
being
Outside
In the outside world.

And it all had its origin Did this
endless cyclicism In that organ
Hidden By
slabs
Of muscled venison
-And bones And
skin And lipids
-All in!
This the rollercoaster ride of life.

Blind one came At
the impulse
Of corpere's psychology
Came
To battle
Through unknown territory Came
To gain entry Through
laying siege.

The gates opened sparkling Pink
green of the forest
Of black firs
And marched through Did
the commander Shouting:
You must be massacred
-And the queen Had a
death wish Spread out
men And they spreadout
Inwards
Into the pit of despair
Vanquishing the lacuna They
met with
With positive

Spermatozoa Negating the
negation In abstracto
Filling the voidwith
Healthy Potentiality
And exiting in Deflected
triumph From the
hallowedhalls With thesheen
Of sweat frombattle Across
itsnose
-Had to blow It
 Left some in the forest
 And the gates remained shut.

 Mind shrieked
At this bestial onslaught
Looked into the eyes of Its foe
And cried out to itself thus: Satanic
explosion!
The death of self hasarisen We are
all Afterworldsmen Only our after-
worlds Have becomebarren
And fruitless landscapes
Without
 Our former vitality.

The heart raced
Noble organ
Imbuing all limbs again With
blood
The blind one slept With
dying sweat Upon its
head
And contented lay To
the sound of
 The mind's sublime activity.

Concepts flowed Mixed
with the blood Fresh
produced
-Old concepts of salvation
Affirmed the supremacy Of a
vanquished foe
 -What!

Still dormant?
-Up man
Up and take the day By
storm.

Philosophy
And all that cries out For
universals
Must be the blood's warmth As it
courses
Through the recesses Of the
mysterious Neatly packaged
organ.

Questions
Answers amidst headaches
The heart races as a metronome
-A timekeeper for the piano If
I've got that right.

Puzzles
Conceptual
Sophistical
Sophisticated – distinctions
Nuances and
Stiff-lipped meditations.

This the work of nobility This
storm and stress As it
ventures forth
Into every possibility And
procures Pegasus as a
horse. Winged flight
White winged After
images All that's left
it
-Racing so fast one leaves Behind
him
The cleft in his palate
'Aleph'.

Logogesthai My
oh my
Words have come and have Gone
Have comprised a noble song For a
noble man
Have you questioned Being

Has it been worth seeing Have
you thought upon
-God and his tremendis
Majestatis?

Have you blind one?
I put forth to you
A monologue A
challenge
 Wrapped in mummification
In crypt paper needing abstruse
Conceptualization.

 Mummy,mummy?
What's the significance of mummy? An
archaic practice
 A role in the family
A rhyming word for funny? All of
the above Ambiguous
None of the above Go
 Figure this
-Lost in conceptual space As
my heart does race.

Unifier Mystifier
Life-instiller
Boon to thee I pledge So
that I may
-What?
What?
Answer
-My questions And so
that I may
Pay homage to thee My
benefactor
 -Heart factor.

 Mind derives its source from thence
-But what of thence?
Absurdity they cry!
But I deny
 The absurdity
For mind and body Are not
apart from me
 -And I am not apart from them
 -So then?

All is one
And all is well That
ends well.

But no well-being No
presence
 But its absence
No presence but strife And
all's there
 That is there
 -Ain't that sad?

We are claimed to have
To possess within ourselves An
eternal
Repercussion Throughout
thehell Of thisperdition
-But it lies Isay!
Sir!
'Tis all bloody-well lies roight? That's
what the lying say.

But I want to know What
the mystics say
 -And why?
To be ever swirling And
twirling
And moving And
gyrating
Spatialmorphe
Starred-heavengestation Of
particularity
Taken up into The
universal Of
eternity.

And all originates
 -How else?
But all I can get is that
Origin has no end in
 -Reality.

What of it
-It is all anthropocentric! Some
spout out
 Without knowing

Without caring Or
-Thinking!
Anthropocentric?
How can we be a part of it
Without it
 Being a part of us
 -N'est pas?
Heard me correctly?
The revolutions
 Of the planets
 Revolve around themselves
-Absurdity!
Ourselves?
Impossibility! No
revolutions No
relativity No
perspectives
Nobeliefs
 No concepts
Only lying thieves Of
concepts
 Of hell and heaven
 -Nihilism.

From belief to disbelief Absurd
disbelief.

And the rain Falls
And the metal reverberates With a
banging sound
-Snatch me Outta my
mind
 Outta my nihilism.

 I believe in belief now
-For I haven't forsaken My
senses
And mind has prudently blended With
this its synthetic
 -Whole!
Labouring in religions old Archaic
 Corrupted
 -History
 All is history
-But I don't forsake my belief
Cosmos reconciler

Disparate-entity
Unifier
Not in self but in world In
more than world
In all in one In
none
-In abstractions!

The Bourgeois who would write poetry

I don't come from silver-spoon banquet tables No,
I'm not able to achieve this
For my history confutes this with
Wooden-spoon Cinderella fables

Here placed on this earth Crushed
beneath the poverty line I and my
familia's birth
Hardly attains to status thrive But
I'm here anyway

Yessir!

I'm here and here I'll stay Womb to
tomb

And
Birth to earth

Call me a slovenly soul A
ground-dweller
A herd gazing
Grass grazing critter
-But I know better-

All the pomp and circumstance Fills
the balloon
So that it bursts And
hence
I've gone beyond you Set
sail on a voyage To slake
my thirst Beyond the
moon

Will you
-Rather- can you Join
me?
Out here in
Eternity
Where the wilds Call

Echo through
The hallowed halls Of
spatiality

I would possess nothing Relinquish
all
I have even relinquished My
class being
My wherewithal

Exchanged
For trundle stick
Rearrange
Your life boy
And to the devil withit!

Out here on the Maine
Across prairie skies Across
mountainrange
See the rain fall from high? No
bourgeois nest Possessed
By possessive individuals Here
instead I slake my thirst Amidst
reeds and thistles
-How is that for
Canadiana?

How can you write
In this homely manner
When you sit at home And
spite
Surrounding dome of
Twinkling stars
Pin-pricks of light On
archetypical Canadiana
night?

Stay inside bourgeois Know
who you are:
A poet?
A rogue –
You just don't know it!

Impotent authorities

Who are they – these people who declaim
Against their betters?
They are the authorities The
empowered
Who place in fetters Their
lackeys

 Their dependent beings
Glowing at them with sanctimony
These wretched
Authority figures Look
to me as Power mad as
Impotent down-trodden members
Suddenly invested
With merit in the form of money And
control and –
Tyrannical sway overall Who
balk at them
And criticize and rend them To
abstract pieces
But together again in synthesis These
mercurial beings Converge

 Amassing
As a pregnant cloud rolling Swiftly
passing
Letting loose its torrent Upon
the herd
Although some made a grand show Of
noise and thunder so
That quite spent of any
Energy they are
And thus quite
Impotent
Not that they were The
previous moment Of for that
matter Any

Spent of vital sap Dried
of what was Never there
These poor saps
Are of opinions rare And
wonderful: Belief in power
When it doesn't

Exist
Only the philosopher Could
makespectacular The non-
existent Which is that
Precisely in words And
nomore

Time to stop quibbling
Splitting hairs
Time to stop the jarring
Concept-splicing Formula
dicing Techniques of rar-
ity, quite out of Popularity,
now quite Common.

Reflection on perspectivalism

The cyclical (recursive) logic of modernity and the whole of the east and west has no perceivable substitute; for everything offered there is a reason for its acceptance or rejection. Everything has a cause, and all is dependent upon this logical structure for its reception, its legitimation, its validation.

The cause is always the *husteron*, the before, and one looks back in thought – retrodictively – to what came before; this is cause and effect the reverse from this vantage point. And yet effect is simultaneously cause of protera, of future effects (future being the temporal dimension not necessary to the series). How to break this logic and to free the mind from identity and its modalities which this logic clearly is, namely: the identitarian?

One could view the world as a fluxual datum, a window of experience out of which one looks – although no separation exists between the window and its gazer-through; the window is the gazer and so is the referent of the gaze, called reality.

This avoids all identity? – No, but is the philosophy of absolute referents: the ‘I, me, my’ subject. But how can this be: is it not merely a presentation from a particular stance and perspective and this world is prism-like, myriad of forms’ faces, vertices unperceivable – a cohesive whole.

Such is metaphysics and to delve therein is to enter into blindness and to lead oneself in accordance with utter abstractions. But what would one have – thinking is abstract, that’s what we call it. But denomination is abstract, and changes the reality of things; the perspectival reality.

On Departure from my Hometown

Today is the day of leaving Of
departure
Will I ever remember or care
About the surrounding area
About the trees and rain gently falling
Amidst quiet solitude
-Sunday-
No industrial whines No
uproarious gratings Upon the
wind. Today Is another day

Tainted with departure Here it is a
sugared moment A white-inflected emotion That flits
bird-like beyond
The caged-area of Hometown The dead-end town
I do not Hate, but do not love
Even for a memory
Though they crowd my brain Now awake, now
alert: ‘Perhaps the last leave-taking?’ I question,
‘Perhaps the ending Of all my inchoate hopes
For the blessed present Within this once
magical land
Of fairy thoughts and knighthood; Now a mere
industrial town
Seen for what it is Revealed

In all its baseness Its
crudeness Bliss?
I hardly stand against The
moment
 Without losing it
In the flurry of omniscience Lost in
 Oblivion
Did I not so recently
Harbour in my mind
Those times, reflected like a Memory
Now out of sync with
Contemporaneity?

One never crossed the line
Of temporality
But is pressed forth
Towards sunnier pastures
Rather mountains
Upon which
He may pour forth
With laudatory
Discourses
And panegyricize The
sunrise
-Sunset doublet
With all
the force His
humble self Can
muster
And present to the wealth
Of nature
Like a gift
An offering
Of his communion
With the divine
Supra-mundane being
Uncircumscribably
-Perceiving
The ineffable of Being

Envision horizons
Bounded by infinite quanta
Here a place to live in
To strive in
Forsake the past one lives in
And seek out what he's
Always wanted.

The ballad of Albertus Regio

'I wish I could escape the melodious undercurrents of my thoughts and stop this poetic tirade which issues forth from my mouth,' – said Albertus Regio. 'I used to be a worthwhile writer, a scribbler a scrabbler – but now all talent has vacated my hostel-hostile towards its emptiness I cannot help but be' – quoth Albertus Regio. 'Lend me – no! rather give unto me o' Christian soul a fine meaty steak with which to chew over juicy concepts, to shake hands with and smite and say 'how do you do' – you fine piece – there's a fine one for you!' – spoke Albertus Regio. 'Why must I write along inserted lines – why cannot I write along the lines pre-scribed by hands unknown long ago forgotten by their legitimations? Why question reality when you can, on the other hand, bend it to your will?' – Thus Albertus Regio. 'And now I must take leave of this place so lush and grassious, so green be swathed and painted up with vital ebullience. Very well, the dewy oxygenation in discreet flowing packages from the sky I will say goodbye to – and here never again venture for spite of 'I might like to' – solemnly quothed Albertus Regio. 'To the city – busy placetobesure-Iamnowbound.-Tothecityoverflat-planedartificialground.Andabriefhalt,anhourortwo,thenventureonwardsthat'swhatI'lldo,tofaroffmountainswhere I've always felt at home,' so, AlbertusRegio.

The editor looked up from his desk and, gaped-mouth said: 'What is this nonsense?' – a doubtful and contemptuous look to be sure displayed across his face, the seat of belaboured perspiringsrunninginrivuletsdownhisfaceandonceagainheshookhisheadandrepeatedthequestion. Albert Reger, aka Albertus the above had to inquire peaceably, as was his fashion and characteristic mannerism: 'Why cannot this be looked up as a worthwhile piece?' The editor pressed the button and down went Albert, poor lost soul, lost to human sight forever.

The Dilettante

Standing proud the dilettante swings his watch chain in the theatre round, smiling amiably and with subtle condescension breathes tart nothings upon the air. This man ballooning up with pride ready to burst – if only one had a needle on him and then

He would fall down to earth again, realization making glum, making sad and deflated Flat loose folds of excess, piled upon the earth

Consecrated – a martyr to the scourge of worth, of hostile, steaming judgment

-And he would have flown!

Would have longingly trembled in frosty altitudes Wreathed in snow

But vanquished, ruined, gravitational down-to-earth descends unknown – A dilettante

Have you not – seen him?

This high-flown blimp, this zephyr ship

Hindenburg-like exploding

Down to earth imploding

With failed sayings flatly falling Upon the wet earth rain be soaked

-Add a drop to the ocean of meaning Stolen from it in yesteryear

Mix it with synthesizing machinery

And put it up for sale sincere

Dostoevsky's Axe

Archaic shadow of aristocratic house Night
blanketed shining street-lamps Christmas
decorations illuminating Small room glass-
paned echoing Light's dimness
And the bitter cold of winter The
darkness of the future
As I stared in the sleeping hours Into
another world than ours:

-Russia 19th century

Student slightly older than me
Panged conscious, conscience Only
felt by noblemen However poor, the
source

Is Nietzschean

-And then the orgasmic build-up Into
the explosion of axe-fury Reciprocated
in my reality

The question: would you Descend
upon the wicked Inquisition – like
And strike – them dead?

Housecoat wrapped around Me
as I bathed external

In luxury – inside it was I Who
faced suspicious eyes Of old lady
And struck with questioning Doubt,
with firm resolve Axe wedged the
question Apart into non-existence.

And now that I face it

Again

I am reminded In
atavism

Of my youth

Though only four years And
one-half since This day

Of like resolution:

'Come what may!' I am

Raskalnikov And

flickering on And off

The duo-faced

Façade
Of morality

ICCARIAN HEIGHTS



The New Adventures of Hercules

The man stooped over his desk with a recklessness that matched his uncertain life; it was more a perturbation which followed him around like the putrid stench of a corpse decaying over time – and his time had begun to decay many steps into the past. Now he stooped over his desk with an eye towards reckoning his losses and gains, as if he were some accountant busying himself over somebody's taxes or better yet some introspective self-obsessive who just would not let go of all the minute variations in his life. But this man's life was no subtle scratch on the Richter scale but rather a sharp spike and wavering, vacillating point which allowed its inky blood to leave a trail in its wake, as signs indicative of its path. And indeed that was precisely what was being undergone here: a reckoning of all that had occurred along this path which would be detrimental and beneficial, a documentation of his remaining wares and of his prospective designs; the desk reverberated with his precise calculations and swift pen scratches; a loss of conscience here, a gain of happiness there – and what did it all add up to, what bottom line did it yield? He didn't know; all he knew was that this was a reckoning and he must cancel off all attempts to live outside of this intense scrawling of past experiences, translated into quanta which could be bought and sold and, perhaps, which would confer upon him a price. How much was happiness, to the unit, valued at in current price value? Had it been so long since he checked that he simply couldn't remember? Did it even matter? – He scrawled down a few figures based upon his estimates – fine? No, but it would have to suffice for the present, the day was growing long and night would soon be recognizable through the waning of an evening already upon him – and then he would be free of this dependency upon duty, for his obligation to sum up all of what experience offered bound him to this task and could not be anticipated or prepared for ahead of time: it occurred at intervals and the regularity of these was enough to sicken a more placid and untempered mind – but his had grown through the most arduous and contently variable conditions – always varying between extremes as a sickening circus ride whose centrifugal force swung the patrons back and forth unexpectedly and without regularity, a ride whose danger could be felt in the rough and undeliberate screeching of metal upon metal and in need of oil, in the bolts which rattled loosely – perhaps all part of the ride but a dangerous perhaps indeed. And his mind, was it not comprised of bolts equally loose; after all he was a slave to the regularity of accountancy which determined what course of action he was to take, merely a consequence, though hardly a purpose (let alone the purpose) of the task; it was simply an accident although not undesirable, like brushing your teeth and tasting minty gel, hardly the purpose of the endeavour and yet an interesting side bonus.

But such a side bonus had taken extreme tolls in his life, often leading him into the mouldiest of despairing depths in which he could foresee nothing but the negation of utter shadow, and into the height of heights, wherein shone the light of blissful serenity; it was the latter that he worried over, for the corruption that could all too easily grab hold of him began in its ingratiating with his emotional side, so long dormant that it had become unused to being worked upon; and therein lay his corruption he knew. It was a toss of the dice and unknown what fate would be produced as a product easily come by, but through accident alone, the destroyer of all his efforts in the cultivation of a hope, sometimes bringing forth the enervating light and heat of his emotions, sometimes the ice cold clarity of a reflective indwelling in which he finally had control of capricious destiny and would drive it, chariot-like, towards the finite destinations that had incubated in his mind for too long for memory to reckon; but that past was meaningless in relation to the present unless it bore upon it in consequence, overarching the future with a warning shadow, an imperative to action, and by this maxim he lived, interrupted only by the endless atavism of accounting and reckoning of loss and gain.

And then, seemingly with the abruptness of an exploding star, the accounting was at an end and in its place was seen the dark dampness of mental clarity. – So he had cast an auspicious throw and the combination of his dice planted him in the reality more correspondent with his outlook and desire: the dark, the moist, oxygenated hall whose dimensions were disclosed as ignorance; a challenge and the appropriate conditions for a challenge to be achieved with success. But now he must concentrate, must focus all of his energies upon the task – whatever form it may take – at hand. The walls had the coolness of a wine cellar and radiated the chilly damp air of a burrow deep in the earth; the smell of mud was present...and something else, the scent unmistakable to the keen olfactory receiver of the man; he allowed its perhaps poisonous stench to be inhaled in a drawn sniff – exhaled in a snort that verged upon sneezing and a shake of the head, but managed to preserve the outward silence that must be cultivated in such conditions. It was terrible! – A body odour similar to that of ten locker rooms to the tenth power; overpowering.

He staggered all of which, with the shake of his head, lasted a moment and he had ready to hand his weapon, a razor-sharp hunting knife that made him feel secure in its extension of his power, his will to self-preservation and perhaps even to power itself. He tensed, readying himself for the animal spring that anticipation brought him. Then a voice spoke, emitting further wafts of stench which nearly buckled him to the ground: ‘Hercules’, soft and flat, an emotionless calm matching the level dampness which circled gently about the room. ‘Hercules...’ – a strained and waspish utterance, which tapered into a whisper, raspy and forced. It was followed by a cough and silence. The cold air seemed to speak for this beast once again as it swam around Hercules’ head. It was his turn to speak, for it wanted an answer and full attention: ‘what do you want of me’, a command. ‘I have been waiting for you for a long time, for I have some advice to give you!’

‘And what’s th-’ a blinding light, radiant and multi-coloured phosphorescent dreamscape clung to his vision, awakening it in painful bursts of unexpected light. ‘I will show you my advice’, the creature said laughingly. Hercules rolled about on the cold, hard earth seizing the pain as if to pluck it from his eyes; the pupils had met it in full presence in the dark but had been surprised by its presence, so startlingly real. Hercules was asleep and yet awake, as if someone had flipped a coin and exchanged one reality for another. This time he was in a world of light, the heated, hateful light of the beast which brought forth that inherent quality which lay dormant through his self-mastery and control: sexuality. Now he was wreathed in comfort and satisfaction, had no need for his former coldness which had disappeared in transit from that world to this; now he was a victim of this urge which constantly clung to him, relentless in its grip, unshakeable.

He faced the sky. It was a rosy pink hue, a dawn which looked more like a sunset, yet he knew it was dawn through its newness, its objective novelty which shone transcendently over his own limited mediation, shattering it in its corrupting warmth. Hercules was aground, strange forces pressing him to the earth, continuing to hold fast to him with that frighteningly alienating residue of comfort, that to which he had shown such disdain before, a disdain wearying and growing slack. ‘Uunnnn...’, he tried to articulate his dissatisfaction, but it could not shine through as a contradiction. ‘Nnnnn...’, again he tried to cancel that rosy sensuality but was stifled.

Then from above came a hand without any perceptible connection with body or form, merely cloaked in a cloud of blackness which stood out distinctly against the rosy dawn; Hercules reached for it and was pulled upwards, and only when the hand and he had gained much distance from the sensual force of this sexual reality – a safe distance in his estimation – did he look down and open his eyes to this cloud mass which had formerly trapped him in its pressing and stifling pressure.

Now he was up amidst the dark clouds from whence, presumably, this hand had descended and to which it disappeared. Hercules feared it would let him drop back into his former fate, but something, whether hand or manacle, clung tightly to his wrist and kept him bound to his dark threshold of unknown reality. And then he was being shaken by the tightness which encircled his wrist, and he was once more submerged in the cold dampness of the cave. A voice spoke: 'How was your trip?' mocking his startled tenseness. 'Who are you?' The question Hercules put with abrupt harshness, meaning to scare from out of this unknown creature a response – silence. 'Where am I? – Answer!' The voice laughed in response.

'A better question to pose – I am an enigma to you and will ever remain so – it was written. You must be accepting of this fact. As to where you are, you are at the end of time, a place of non-existence, a bridge to all possible worlds. The one you have just entered and exited has no name – not yet – but awaits the conferrance of one upon it by human hands and confrontation. You would call it a personal hell I presume?' - More laughter following the rhetorical question. 'You may ask another if you wish Hercules, it is all written; but only one more I grow weary – so choose wisely,' a sharp, warning command divulged itself from out of the facetiousness.

Hercules pondered the unlimited and strove to give it limitation, to condense it all in the form of a brief question. The creature did not, since it seemed to have power to permit and prohibit, disallow his leading up to a question through a propaedeutic; it was therefore, he inferred, an allowable move in this strange game, without definite rules and whose end was even more opaque so that, once achieved, one could never know when to stop, and perhaps this was merely an allegory of life, a game like all the rest which had as its source existence, bordered only by the non-existent. He began: 'I have come from a given time and place but now all of that has ceased, has become inconsequential; time and place have become mere fictions, and I dwell in a concrete reality which defies them; I dwell here and now. Is there a reality outside of these bounds which I must go to with a purpose of definite nature, an environment of definite proportions knowable and ascertainable to myself in the given reality?'

'A condensed question to be sure,' replied the creature. 'But one for which an easy answer is had.' 'And that is...' – impatience. 'That is,' continued the creature in a sardonic tone, 'what you perceive at this very moment.' So saying the darkness was replaced by a dull grey light which seemed to exist as the underlying layer from which was peeled back the inky dampness of the orifice where he had met the creature, a depot which marked the difference between time and eternity, was the nexus of all point of his life past and present, perhaps even future, the source and conclusion of his problem to which he was bound in his identity and its difference. The dull grey light was exposed from the blackness and he knew he had entered it. He discovered himself lying on his back facing a cloudy sky that he had remembered as a child and which had transfixed his gaze in mente, retained implicit in himself as something which would not give way to new reality without tingeing their hue that same dull grey. Now he confronted it, seemingly with the power to change its structure, to alter his past and, correspondingly, his present. Looking around he saw the dog whose life, innocent of all duplicity and cunning, he had taken in the name of his youthful striving. And he was picking up his knife which lay next him, once more going through the emotions which led to the yelp of the hapless creature, its shocked articulation of pain and swift retreat under the boughs of a tree and under the increasing, life-quelling pressure of the pain as air issued from its lungs, the vitality which granted it breath and life. The knife was in his boy-hand, a child bent on a mission, and the man tried to control it, to set down the weapon which portended only the malice and cruelty of thoughtless boyishness, a thoughtless yet powerful sexual outpouring. But he could not and

found the resistance he was making to the movements to no avail he concentrated with great effort his mental energy, attempting to throw his boy-form upon the ground, to render incapacitated and so allow the dog a loophole of escape. But the strength of blood lust overpowered him and, channelled through the knife, it struck its target in an excited jerk, to be pulled out immediately with shocked incredulity and disbelief. The dog walked towards the boy disbelieving that such a former friend could act as harbinger of the ultimate act of an enemy... then it walked away and sank under the weight of its pain, under the tree and the grey dullness of the sky.

The man viewed the boy's picture thoughts, punctuated by imperceptible emotional undercurrents which escaped imaging and tangible form: they were a frenzy of confused emotions: shock, pride, humility, sadness, self-hatred, regret, and most of all a feeling of attainment, as a young brave must feel after his first hunt – all were a swarm of contradictions which negated and choked one another, made each other do penance, and these strange paradoxes of maturation the boy concretized in running the knife blade against his chest, embedding a scar-symbol of victory, defeat, or both? – along his chest. The felt this first scar pulse in his breast, awakening to the freshness of a reality that had grown stale and yet retained its dull throb in times of battle, a dullness which matched the grey of the horizon. Now he had achieved or been stigmatized with (he knew not which) countless scars which, he was sure at least of this, had been conjured up as if by some magical impetus on fate's behalf in the act of the slaughter of this creature; what gave way to this wanton act begged the question of an unknown causality which left him emerged once again in the murky waters of paradox. Was it predestination, for surely the control he had over his memories was beyond question that of the bladder of a century-old man dead on his feet with age. It could be yet he was rueful of giving himself up to fate; for he acted did he not?

And his control was clearly disclosed in the shining arch of the knife of his boyhood – wasn't it? Or was it the hand of some god or devil which directed its hard necessity into the yielding flesh of innocence? Perhaps, conversely, he had secretly willed it, the knife metamorphosing into an extension of his hand and thus signifying the beginning of an enterprise of bloodshed, all in the name of an unknown, insatiable, ideal which called his name and to which he felt the imperative to give answer. – To whom? – Himself, the creature? Perhaps the creature, with its obscured form, had placed such an ideal in his mind and thus initiated this ruthlessly binding causality of destruction. He did not know, saw only the grey tapestry of sky against the spotless, surreally perfect green of a grassy hill upon which sat a lone tree and a dying dog.

The image faded and he was once more returned to himself, now weakened considerably by the emotional taxation he had undergone. 'I reckon...' he managed to articulate in a haze of mental confusion, 'I reckon that...' – 'What do you reckon Hercules?' the creature asked. 'Do you add this petty occurrence to your accounts? - And why? Are you really so bound to the subtlety of life and death? It fascinates you doesn't it? Life today, death tomorrow, and then what – a question mark n'est pas? Ha, ha, ha!' 'What do you want creature!?' Hercules spoke with ragged breath, 'why are you – ' 'Ah, ah, ah,' the creature mocked, 'that is information you are not privy to, thus it was written.' 'Who are you then?' the strength was returning; 'speak!' It chuckled in response, then gave its first direct answer to the earnest seeker: 'I am – this!' Light grew around the room and Hercules confronted himself.

Only he looked somewhat more rudimentary in features; his brow was flat for one, though this evidently didn't stop him from thinking, for many of his thoughts were those Hercules had

laboured over through the years, these labours producing a great contract in the skull's formation to that of what appeared to be the doppelganger. Its close-together eyes blinked when he blinked, so that he could not perceive the creature independently of being perceived in turn: it was his mirror reflection.

'Yes, we are one,' the creature caught Hercules' thoughts through his puzzled look, 'though I am of course a more advanced, stronger form.' In so saying it rose up in stature and yet blinked at the stare of Hercules who registered it in his own: it is uncertain. Hercules thought that its exercising control over him was valid – it has such abilities – yet he decided to put it to one last test as a sizing up of their relative strengths and capabilities. He asked a question with that he perceived the directness necessary for response, in the form of a challenge: 'If you are in fact stronger, then show me your strength!' The creature closed his eyes and Hercules' followed. He was lulled to what seemed like a blissful sleep and awoke to face the same rosette dawn which the creature had pulled him out of before. 'How strong do I have to be' – a voice, soft and feminine...Hercules' eyes opened of his own accord this time, and before him stood the rawness of sexuality which he most feared: a woman, naked and shimmering with the sweat of sexual heat, she radiated this energy and it pulsed against Hercules' genitals in an overbearing, rudely forward gesture of lust. Hercules' energy concentrated in his mind, he willed mind and mind alone at the expense of all things; willed to negate this feral presence and his correlative response.

She, this unknown woman, laughed and then growled in a guttural projection of her desires, enticing Hercules with her undulating hips and sweaty musk. But Hercules remained steadfast, would not be overcome by a woman; a mere slave to one of weaker will. But was it really weaker, for the genitals responded against his struggles, dug themselves into the idea of bedding a woman and were awash with a strangely similar bloodlust to that of his killing the dog; only it was a lust not to release the blood of another but that of his own, to implant the seed which had been implanted in him and which grew from out of him in all of its unused superfluity. But he struggled still, and the woman bore down upon him, hands groping for his genitals with a greedy compulsion. He looked at her face, startled by the intensity of this presence and his enervated will; all that welled up within him now was confusion at the increased flow of blood in his stiffening genitalia. The root had taken to the soil and his eyes, nearly blind in lust, in the rose dawn, beheld the woman he had first bedded writhing from underneath in the uncontrollable desire of fornication. – But no he would not be so easily defeated! He struggled yet again in opposition to his body's movements but found he was locked within the memory once again as previously with the dog and in his boyhood. Now he was a youth, brawny slabs of muscle exchanged for sinewy limbs straining against a kindred soul. He was spent in a heave and a groan, and all was quiet once again, the dawn being assimilated in his bleary eyes, awakening him to the melancholy of will-lessness, of the cancellation of his masculinity. He screamed in muteness inside of the adolescent's mind, it being an embarrassed, confused milieu of regret and sad-dependency upon what was nearer to a failure than a success – which perhaps could never, as a universal, achieve success and begged the question of the importance of this act's meaning: did it have one and, why was it so valued by all? Could they not control themselves as he did himself?

He was away, out of the mind-numbing heat of feral striving, and back once more in the cave of memories. The creature, returned once more to feral form, laughed aloud, allowing its voice to alter in pitch to mimic the voice both of Hercules (himself?) and of the woman Hercules had first lain with; it was an affecting mockery which drove home the thralldom Hercules had

descended into after this initial occurrence, becoming dependent upon the willful caprice of his body, rooted to the earth mother and her incessant cooing and grasping necessity; he had been anchored to this earth and only recently, in his second youth, had he begun to ravage the ravager of his being.

And it was not enough; he felt the imperative dive from the recesses of his dazed mind to struggle against that which bound him to other distractions and hopes, against the internal forces which raged within.

The cave's dimly lit oil lamps the creature had ignited somehow, through a temporal magic inexplicable to Hercules, bathed the creature in a shadowy glow, a faint and sickly, yellowish light – Hercules met himself now as an enemy, as a fated foe. They stared at one another across what seemed the invisible boundary of a few metres, the only noise breaking the silence was the steady, quiet trickle of water as it fell from the stalactites just feet about their heads against the curved contours of the walls, into some unknown and never-to-be-discovered repository, perhaps one fostering life. - But not here. Here, at this point of finitude and infinitude, this hybrid ecstasis which eclipsed all temporal flows, united them within itself and gave them life, Hercules confronted his destiny amidst the silent tenseness which made taut his muscles and quickened his heart rate; his chest rose and fell in readiness for any and all challenges. The creature again spoke, this time with a fury that was nonetheless dampened by the close space of the walls and which lessened its magnitude: 'I will show you who you are – Hercules! Behold!

Your true self!

The creature raised its head slightly with eyes shut and the wall of the cave in which an oil lamp was infixed melted away to reveal a scene from some possible world made actual through the power of this imitation self. Hercules beheld himself, again as a youth, though more mature in years, at the edge of circle of people to which access was seemingly barred; the thought waves he felt as tremors in the earth of his brain sent from some alien source gave signals of fear, shame, and humility: this was cowardice elevated to a higher power. Hercules wondered how the creature could have tapped such a deep-seeded memory which he had, throughout the years, attempted to wash over in a sea of forgetfulness. But no, it must come back and he must be there to face it. The crowd stepped forward to him, people whom Hercules had viewed with indifference, those whose being he had cancelled out through this very lack of regard; for they were of no value either in themselves or for him in his restless life of activity. And yet they continued to creep towards him, uttering names which attempted to render him ignominious, slanders which tried to devalue him in essence – and still he remained strong, though this had a great weakening effect on him – for he had borne this torment throughout what seemed years of constant involvement, always accident of course, with this crowd whose faces always remained constant, twisted into the grin of the hope of victory, excited by their own perversity. But what is an accidental confrontation, or, like the creature, was it not a confrontation with destiny? - Another test of his power and ability to resist onslaught. Yes, throughout the years he was plagued by this same band of people, who seemingly embodied the extremes of vice and monstrous attitudes, those which defined and spoke of the antimony of human decency and caring, absolutes of evil. And throughout all of his travels over the whole terrestrial globe, throughout all strife and ordure, he had never experienced such ineffable torment as with this group whom he gave the collective name of 'parasite'. Here he was again, in confrontation with it, his respiratory system feeling the pressure that invariably gave rise to his steam, heart rate escalated to fever pitch, pupils widening in uncontrollable fury...and yet he feared this creature, this parasite, for all attempts to destroy it had met with impossibility, leaving him in impotence.

He was crippled by his own psyche in relation to this being, one which wormed its way into conscious and corrupted the fine fabric he had laboriously woven; powerless he attempted to resist this onslaught. They began: 'Hercules,' one said in a tone of mocking sarcasm, 'why is it you have been a failure all your life?' A question containing presuppositions which sapped the very life blood of its victim; as it appealed to the greatest fears harboured by this one, so strong and yet not without the Achilles' heel of doubt.

He tried to block it out of mind, sending mental waves of revulsion and scorn in response; the creature only laughed in a hate-filled laugh, mingled with triumph and surprise at its easy victory; Hercules knew that to overcome this beast would require great strength, perhaps a strength that he had not, for he was already sapped of much through his previous struggles. The next one spoke, matter-of-factly and with a sarcastically reproachful tone: 'Where were you that day, Hercules; you know the one so don't deny it.' Hercules was already under the spell: 'Which one – I challenge you to say it!' he cried out in menacing tones. The parasite only laughed with a half-cowardly, half insidious laugh: 'You know the one,' again that matter-of-fact tone. 'That one where you had tried so hard? Had trained for years and then, when the time came to ply – your trade which you had so...', doubtful, '...laboriously cultivated – you failed, didn't you?' An accusative tone – it was already setting itself up as judge! – 'Didn't you!', now thrilled by its previous victory, imbibing the vital sap Hercules felt waning from his limbs with each accusation, each slander. 'Didn't you!' Hercules was kneeling, hands grasping his mind which was now a whirl of self-doubt and self-hatred; had he really failed? He must have, it was confirmed by the star under which he was born and by the countless judges and accusers he had had. 'Nnnn...' / 'Didn't you!' / 'Nnnn...' 'I saw you do it – Hercules' / 'Nnnooo!' He screamed, a roar of bestial despair as a wild creature defenseless against the countless barbs of poison thrust into its skin by a swarm of gnats, draining its blood and leaving it a bloody mess – 'Nnooo!...' He trailed off into the darkness of the cave, its lamps having gone dim, wet with cooling perspiration. 'And you would withstand me?' – the creature's voice, echoing the torment which had lodged itself in his all-too-receptive brain. 'Someday you must confront me Hercules – and at that time it will be your final reckoning – then you can reckon no more; then you can be in peace, in death.'

Her voice was strangled by the heat of his mind, but Hercules managed to articulate his response, his challenge: 'Any time you're ready monster – I'll...be there!' Slowly he unsheathed the knife which had been the token of his warrior life, tensing his forearm with a squeeze of its handle. The creature laughed a scornful laugh which had already begun to characterize him as an enemy and unassailable opponent. 'You cannot defeat me by mere arms alone Hercules. You would only accomplish the defeat of yourself; you must find other ways to freedom.' The light came on and Hercules crouched in readiness, but confronted only a blank mud wall. He struck out in frustration but the mud wall was surprisingly supple; moreover it had a suction effect which latched onto his arm and pulled him, against all of his struggles, into itself. Above he heard a laugh – the creature! Soon he was lodged in the wall up to the wrist and the suction force on the opposing side propelled him ever forward; head struck through and his face was licked by the muddy pressure of walls, not squeezing his neck in gentle yet irresistible pressure. The other arm too had been lodged within, breaking through as he tried to brace himself against the wall and extricate his frozen form. The wall solidified and to his horror he was helpless against it. The laughter above continued and, as Hercules expected, the voice of the creature spoke once more: 'Your own hatred has caused the inert state you now are in, you lash out against the world but eo ipso become bound in impotence, for the world is too great to withstand when it is made an enemy.' To this Hercules directed, through an attempt at

telepathy, his mute rage, given unseen and unheard voice through the darkness which blinded him. He could feel cool air, the same as on the side he had confronted the creature and which licked against his lower body sending a tense wakefulness over him; he was ready.

The creature heeded it not, or gave not tangible sign of acknowledgement, and eventually, after a moment's silence, spoke to Hercules: 'Your final test has arrived. You will face each of your foes as your own hatred of the world and inability to withstand its own inherent hate. If you can withstand it then I am beaten and we will be reconciled; I will bow to the yolk of subordination and serve you, insofar as you remain victorious, but will always challenge you, and his is life and justice. If you are defeated, however, expect, Hercules, to become forever bound to me and all of my commands which will be as your own law and will, the game is zero-sum; there is no rejection of it, only acceptance, for rejection is death. Do you understand?' 'Yes,' Hercules answered without hesitation, with the finality of end-game strategy, preparing to finish all of that which he had, though without knowing it in full awareness, started long ago. 'Very well – begin', the creature said with command and uttered strangely erratic guttural noises, some kind of incantation. Up from the darkness leapt images of fate and of past history fated to be confronted once again: murder and its gripping contradiction of lust and horror, attraction and repulsion; sexuality, and its dull, pulsing drum beat which finds its home in the very heart of its victims, circulating throughout their veins; fear, oppression, dependency and the weak will of the slave – all embodied in various corporeal forms: the first the innocent form of a dog, the second seductive form of women, third a throng of public naysayers. All of these forms had annexed to them, as if by magic, an ephemeral aura, corresponding to their essences and broadening and refining the relative essence of each, with Hercules as both victim and villain and absolute reference. And yet he was drawn out by the, each and all, across direct lines of impulsive causality: bloodlust, sexual lust, the odd comfort of his own fear and attempt to dispel it. It was the last of these which he felt would be the loophole, harbinger of his freedom and self-affirmative – the urge to dispel it. Straining his will against the fear generated by the mass of anonymous attackers and by extension the attackers themselves, he pressed against this force in a telekinesis movement of thought, battering down this fear relation – even as it asserted itself and strained against him. And with a flash as if metal striking metal, a battle of swords, the forces clashed against one another, spars shooting forth, raining upon the muddy floor and against Hercules' immobile head and limbs as they protruded from the wall: he would overcome, teeth clenched in tight jaw the force of energy he sent against this group, quelling the fear and evaporating the pool of cold depression and indifference, self-hatred and melancholy it produced, Hercules sent the column of energy searing into the flesh of his antagonists until they were reduced to charred husks of rotting matter. Hatred had conquered hatred and thereby destroyed itself. Now love; it was upon him in all of its gentle effeminacy, pink tendrils of perfume licking against his face, penetrating the mud wall and groping his genitals, warming them in stark contrast to the cold air, attempting to paralyze them. But love was purely platonic; an offering laid bare to the daemon of lust and shocking it, weakening its hold. All emanated from mind; blood rushed to this organ as supply trains rushed to impoverished phalanxes, imbuing them with strength to overcome the enemy in this war. 'Love...conquers,' Hercules strained, '...Love!' and a wave of energy enwreathed his body, absorbing all of sensual lust and converting its energy form to that of the soul; once poor, now rich in soul. And the pink vapour was gone; he breathed a ragged sigh of relief. The dog ran towards him and he greeted it with love. It pawed his two arms, seemingly trying to extricate him from the muddy wall; he smiled down upon it and the wall vanished. Weakened he fell to the ground, hearing the voice of the creature, now inside of him, speaking humbly: 'You have conquered, Hercules, I am yours.' - No longer any laughter, only the smile of self-mastery which played about his face. The dog blinked

its eyes as light returned, sky, green grass, and one lone tree. He was a child once more. So this was the boon of fate? Another opportunity to live: from the horrors only the strong can endure to the auspices of home for change and happiness; and when opportunity knocks one must answer.

The Lethé Machine

Preface

It has been many years since the overthrow of the People's Republic and is now, so the author deems, safe and perhaps even necessary to document for the first time the truth of the history of the republic's overthrow at the hands of the lethé-machine. After having studied the incident as my doctoral thesis for a number of years I now feel confident enough to present it to the public. The exacting researches involved, subtle and purging investigations into the histories of those most intimately involved, have provided me with the materials foregoing and all have been presented with the scholarly adequacy taught in the schools so that it, this thesis, has gained a certain authority among the authorities among whom I now count as the very source of illumination upon this historical incident. The thesis, however, is to be made quite distinct from the following which could hardly be of any appeal to the public if it were not rendered in a literary form, and thus I have taken liberties to do so and present more a novel than a scholarly work, though my scholarship – as it inevitably must – shines through bearing with it the ring of truth and factual exactitude. But before I begin I would like to merely comment upon the scope of this incident: truly it has been one whose proportions have shaken the very foundation of the continent and, bringing it to its present-day state, have taken hold of the people's minds transforming them from their once loyal, devoted selves into the vicious masses whom one – if he be in his right mind – would most prudently avoid. And even now I sit here in a barracks of what once was the main civic center of the People's Republic – all around me are ruins, iron- girders springing forth from the earth as permanent, inert flora, rubble piled up against fallow- coloured sky tinged with the pollutants of smashed and unearthed waste depots and chemical plants. And to think there was once a blue-skied paradise that presented itself as the auspicious horizon of our world! Now, however – and I point the finger of blame squarely at the lethé- machine, now roaming somewhere about the countryside causing who knows what havoc – our world is at an end, and with this novel, which I intend to fall into the hands of future generations-in-a time nobler than this one hopes.

I wish to leave a testament to the 'People's Republic' and its inherent degradation. Thus ends the preface – read on and ennoble yourselves o' readers, if you can!

I want the reader to think back to a past unimaginably beautiful and elegant in its perfection, its completeness and uninhibited charm. Imagine a blue-skied reality with buildings – rows and columns constitutive of great cities' horizons – all measured off into quadrants, districts, and locales through apriori landscape and architectural blueprints – as if a heaven of stone, mortar, and metal – and many other hybridized forms of material: subtly blended alloys and ultra- strong plastics; as if god had come down in a chariot comprised of these materials to rest upon all which before had lain about without reason or regularity. And it was in such buildings we lived, propagated, and died. And now the buildings have died and the remaining ruins are scarce adequate to shelter the exponentiated human race which had propagated itself through its crude hedonistic ideology – or better 'idolatry'. And the object which stands culpable has been marked already though only in passing, and it, the red-handed guilty party of worldly demise, has not suffered at the iron hands of justice and their uncompromising grip! Now it stalks one – whoever he may be – everyone, for no one is safe – and with the present demise and failed resurrection of technology it is unvanquishable; one can only duck and cover and pray to an unknown god that the lethé-machine does not send him into a confrontation with the unknown in whose arms he must find comforting embrace or crushing death.

This machine – yes! – Its history must be revealed, and for the first time in all of the history of this republic and its cast-off apologists. The government had been working – in secret it must be told – day and night upon the construction of a new security device that would not easily be detected by the people. This was the purpose of the lethé-machine (which I shall call ‘lethé’ for short – a cutesy name bound to have popular appeal though its referent be far from cute, a twist of irony that mirrors the people’s own downfall at its hands). Lethé had been created through the genius of one Hoffman von Runnsteadt, a mercenary scientist whose services were contracted by governments for the most sinister motives, and thus the learned scientist culled a reputation by association – for he intended no evil as his reports clearly state. And yet the absurdity of this is evident, for his mercenary outlook went so far as to turn him into an assassin, the mercenary in his classical garb. But I am getting ahead of myself. Runnsteadt (the only scientist in this story and thus the two appellatives will be used interchangeably as a stylistic device – though a scholar I am not blind to literature) had – even I cannot fathom the depths of his profound science – established and owned the technology of the development of cyborg beings – yes the ones who factor in many a science fiction tale. But I beg my readers to bear with me and accept the proposition that there was (and is!) such a thing and that its authorship can be imputed to von Runnsteadt as the originator and sole possessor of the technology. Von Runnsteadt, for whatever megalomaniacal intent, had decided to make of himself a god and transcend the finite being which was his fate – and create beyond himself! It must be the case, if I may be permitted to psychoanalyze without the pertinent facts, that this paternalism over his creation as a process, fostered what became his mercenary bent; for the governments he contracted with would fund his projects and he would have to suffer their self-interested motives through altering his creation in conformity with their plans for its use. And thus, feeling himself a tool, he perceived with the astuteness that this is the privilege of a scientific mind that this new lethé-machine would provide him with an escape from under the thumb of his government administrators; no longer would he be hampered in his creation, but would be allowed to give free rein to his products, for the government of the people’s republic had granted him sufficient funds that he may work independently to the end of his years. But he neglected to account, shrewd though he was, for the meaning of the use and value of money in a system which was no longer built upon exchange but upon simple banter! Yes this is what, o’ reader, the state of the world has become; only it is no innocent Marxist utopia but rather a dreary den of thieves and thieves’ consciences. Von Runnsteadt brought down the world through his jealousy and his self-righteousness in the act (as his notes clarify) are just. He would not share this, his technology, with governments and thus have his brain-child trammelled in the mud of utility – as a mere surveillance mechanism and ruthless assassin, a super-cop of government designs. Thus the money he was granted sufficed to convert the government spy who had been sent to oversee the project against their masters – and von Runnsteadt was finally capacitated to work in utter solitude, without the breath of a stern and upsetting pater down his neck, distracting his sensitive mind. And the brain-child was conceived after many laborious years! I quote a passage from his journal which reveals the innate love for his creations that von Runnsteadt felt, something unshakeable and reminiscent of a mother for her small child at dusk:

‘Finally I have created the lethé-machine! O’ joyous stars above shine upon us two, wedded from the first in thought, now in tangible form. The gods have granted me the only boon I ever would have sought, and in seeking I have met with this my other self! The birth pangs of long, lonely nights by candle and moonlight gave way to you my child! The angels weep for joy as the world displays its love, contained within this small room, beating as my heart and humming as your electronic matrices!’

-And the page goes on, but the point is aptly made. Von Runnsteadt sacrificed much for the technological embodiment of his sperm and egg – for he was the asexual parent of asexual offspring; he sacrificed the world and perhaps himself, for no one now knows where he is if he be anywhere at all. Something of this love instilled itself in the machine, one might conjecture, for it loved the world so much it broke the world's heart through its overwhelming love.

Moreover, love had translated itself into actions and these took the form of von Runnsteadt's alteration of the machine so that it could bring about his utopian vision of the state – as an arrow through the heart of government.

It was the terrible love which led up to this ebullient overflowing which revealed von Runnsteadt's antipodal nature – he could go from good to its opposite with the snap of a finger – or a neck. All he, this devoted scientist, placed before his was his end: creation. And next to this all means sufficient were deemed practicable. The means in this case, as one can glean from the consultation of his diary, was a perversely crude process that culminated in the death of three individuals necessary for the construction of his machine. I do not pretend to go into details which would merely confuse the author just as much as the reader and so must content myself with the generalities of the most nebulous sort. Von Runnsteadt states best in his diary the inhumanly cruel process:

'...most importantly, the lethé (which I intend to call my machine, taking a cue from the government's purpose of its employment as a new spy technology – an ironic cue if my own purposes succeed) must have as its 'motor' as it were, the 'substance' – as I call it – of living souls, solely masculine, as it is the hormonal framework of these individuals which, through the implicit and unknown quality of this structure – a quality containing the very intensity of life – will render operable this my finest creation to date. For the extraction process, which must be undergone by myself as I am the only one privy to the (1) knowledge and (2) creation of this individual, the individuals harbouring the 'substance' must have it suitably altered, that is to say in conformity with the inherent workings of the machine. They must possess the precise qualities needed, and these must be realized under my supervision and over time – how much I still as yet know not - . Such a process I call – in a bizarrely euphemistic strain – 'character dissection', which separates their new from their previous chemical structure; alters them in short. Posterior to this alteration they must be killed and the extraction process – the second phase of my inhumanity – undergone.'

Thus it seems that a subtle perception must be maintained concerning these individuals (who will be revealed later) and the focus directed towards their emotional states which act as the starry sky upon which the astrologer works his magic.

My intricate researches into the individuals involved began after my acquaintance with von Runnsteadt's diary which provided the main source of my knowledge of the facts concerning the lethé-machine. But since this is a novel and my intention is to hold captive my readers insight into these same facts until the pivotal moment, until all of the disconnected threads have been woven into a skein of intelligibility, I must here play the miser on knowledge and retain sole possession of these same leading up to them along circuitous routes, down the by-ways of the individual histories of his victims and the machine's components. Names were researched and I quickly came upon valuable biographical material which had a direct bearing on the incident of the government's overthrow, a retrodictive glance into the dead past into which the breath of life was blown by the bellows of history, inherently human. Three characters marked out by von

Runnsteadt were to furnish – through the obscure processes of his logic and its applications – lethé with the vital life-blood to speak figuratively and more precisely, the hormonal framework that caused the machine to enter the sentient realm. These I will disclose one by one through biographical sketches gleaned from photographs, family scrapbooks, journals, writings, newspaper headlines and much conjecture. Technology has become deceased in our time owing to system overthrown or breakdown or whatever this anarchy may be called and it is a shame twice-over, as now what likely would have been fruitful information concerning one of these characters is now lost in the dead husks of unusable machines which populate the landscape.

I am referring to one Jake Grisholm, a man of power and influence before the collapse, and a victim of the doctor's. From newspaper articles I've managed to collect the scope of this power and influence, which extended through all echelon of government and private sector, rubbing elbows with our late president. In fact it seems as if power, with this man, become inverted and dependency was transferred to the president and all of his government top officials which circled around him as a sun, and directed away from Mr. Grisholm whose financial independence led him to be the financier of the president himself who squandered so much of the nation's wealth on foreign crusades as to plunge the nation into a mile of debt from which it could only be extricated by grasping the strong and friendly hand of Mr. Grisholm. But the hand that was once friendly when being pulled up turned cold when it had to do the pulling and the government, fearing a greater transference of power and dependency, decided to have our Mr.

Grisholm assassinated. And the man for the job, as part of his contract, was von Runnsteadt whose ignoble stooping would have its masterly triumph over the grave of he who issued this dictate, the president of the people's republic – after the fact however. Perhaps the fact that Mr. Grisholm didn't invest his money in military armaments and thus initiated the slippery slope of the lack of war didn't help which – through its lack – failed to carry back to the promised land of the people's republic the profits from its colonial aspirations, from the materials and minerals of the land so rich and free which had been converted into an enemy under the president's avarice. But Grisholm, shrewd owner of multi-national corporation conglomerates, had no need of any state-oriented colonial frolics – his was a private affair. And thus he became a target for government assassination. Well, the government reasoned (and perhaps so did Runnsteadt), here was a man whose vital energies were still peaking for a 45-year-old – and thus two birds with one stone would be: 'taken care of'.

Thus an end was established and the means sought. Runnsteadt's diary provides us with his opinion of this target and also his more humanistic outlook on life, quite a paradox for the creator of the world's first cyborg: 'They tell me to – assassinate the assassin. Very well, at least that way mothers and children will sleep well at night. And besides, the pragmatist in me notes the virility of this man and understands that his 'substance' must merely become inwardly concentrated for it to become assimilable in lethé.' The means to this end was the pretense of a trip to the south sea islands to discuss 'business matters' ('People's Republic Times, Vol. 5, Iss. 100'); and it had to, presumably, be a façade else Grisholm would have scurried behind his militia and 45 feet of solid concrete – or even begun a war himself.

Reports from secret government operatives stationed upon the island (whose name is of no consequence now that it has been blown to smithereens) invite us earnest inquirers into the clever ruse of government. Apparently, the government thought it would be a humorous bit of irony – not un-akin to that of the mafiosa – to indenture these operatives upon the island in the guise of natives, the 'savages' of colonial lore who had so long played the role of threshers of wheat and pickers of bananas for the various organs of Grisholm's multi-national companies –

not, of course, that the government itself was exempt from blame, but I supposed the wicked sense of irony was only increased thereby. Von Runnsteadt's role was, of course, as assassin and it was the task of this collective tribe of savages to capture and incapacitate Grisholm, to alter his vital substance which a coldly premeditated design done in collusion with the doctor's orders. After landing upon the island, to make a long story with many unknown subtleties short, the business man was captured and felt threatened as the observant doctor notes in his journal.

'...and I am to play the part of 'witch doctor', one of these 'savages' – even my skin is to be artificially dyed.' A later passage shows us the play in actualization:

'The business man, whose name is Grisholm – another hedonistic pig from the people's republic – which seems to have an unlimited stock of these same – was truly frightened out of his wits when the agents, wearing loin cloths no less, began to jump and shout around him in a language unknown to him and actually non-existent except in the individual agent's imagination. He was tied up and put to the stake so that his adrenal output would increase to the point of turning him into the vicious animal which he was underneath. The plan was to go this far and no further and I was to attempt to light the fire which of course was merely pretense. One time I did so, sending spark into the dry brush at his feet, and a little smoldering began. I checked the gauge of my body-chemical detector and found the adrenal levels still as yet too low; once more raised them higher; again and they were at a sufficient level for the substance of the lethé – at least in terms of their adrenal level, what was needed now was a chemical maturation in the body that could only be undergone through a lengthier process – what I call the 'penitence of the spirit' and which must occur through a kind of monkish existence in the wilds. This was cleverly engineered by the government operatives who had virtually slaughtered all of Grisholm's men and thereby severed, with each of their throats, a line of communication to the civilized world.

Stripped of all electronic devices and with his being surrounded by half-intelligent savages, Grisholm was adrift and it is my belief that he would become a hardened penitent of the spirit and perhaps self-flagellation before long. The third time I, in the capacity of high priest, attempted to spark a flame and got only dying embers in dry brush, I raised my arms and made all sorts of hullabaloo to indicate that a sort of miracle had descended to the earth from the gods. I pointed my finger – with wide, staring eyes – at Grisholm who sweated profusely, and all of my comrades including myself dropped prostrate on the bare earth around the stake. We continued this for some time and eventually – with the greatest display of contrite fawning – untied him. I pointed into the forest indicating that he should go there, 'out there' in grunting tones, and he made as if to stay and to reason with us but we brandished our weapons and he scurried into the green sea of flora. I have implanted a tracking bug on him and will monitor him carefully until I deem him, to use a vulgar expression, 'ripe enough.'

The remainder of the doctor's diary on this point is a calculated documentation of the subtle changes undergone by Grisholm. In it he records the transformation from an overweight 'hedonist', so-called, to an austere 'penitent of the spirit' by which I assume he means one who has recognized his past errors and seeks to atone for them in practice. Living in the jungle, surrounded by the dangers of territorial beasts was something Grisholm could very easily adapt to – for he was a beast himself and had learned to stake out and defend to the death his own territory in the world of business and multi-national commerce. He had seen men rise and fall, just as the snakes in the adjacent trees rose up in antagonism to his presence and fell at his hand or that of its extension, a tree branch or rock.

This he could tolerate but the loneliness and isolation he confronted, the utter reclusion from all of human life he could not in his current state, that of a boisterous, overweight conqueror of worlds. Now he had to turn conqueror of himself, of his tortured mind – and grow accustomed to self-torture. Several years passed and the lethé project was monitored closely but von Runnsteadt allowed his work to venture off into other areas so as to keep his creative genius active. Finally the doctor felt it the proper time to begin the ‘extraction process’ as that of ‘character dissection’ had finally been completed. Like a chick from an egg that has nourished itself on the inherent vitality of his prison, Grisholm had grown into a being which thrived and became ever-ready for rebirth, again and again metamorphosing into a sterner, more austere figure. But his final coming to life was doomed to be a stillbirth as this was when the high priest carried out government orders:

‘I lay in wait for him, now a skilled bushman, for a long period of about four hours in the spot where he hunted, for now he had turned into a ‘savage’ himself, albeit a more philosophical one. I heard him come, with almost inaudible step, to the grove’s edge and wait for game. This was when I pulled out a silenced handgun and pointed it at him. At first he was protectively curious as if memory did not serve him, but an instant later his eyes opened wide, receptive to the present danger and then he was dead. I checked the adrenal levels on his dying body as I stood over it – perfect. Quickly I began the extraction process and had obtained – after how many years of cautious waiting? – The first vial of my lethé’s ‘substance’! This I had shipped back, under government supervision, to my laboratory at the People’s Republic capital, the so-called ‘people’s capital’. – Two more to go; just ‘anonymous citizens’, the property of the people’s republic the president had stated. It seems as if the prize for freedom is dire indeed and the goods one purchases are merely damaged lies masquerading as truths. So the government which had as a part of itself, an essential component, ‘its people’, ‘its property’, could dispense with these same at will? This certainly is a backwards glance at the mythological age.’

Two victims remained for von Runnsteadt and the government was getting on edge, for they wished to fabricate as many spy machines as possible so that the population was comprised of a ratio of about 1:20, cyborg spy operatives to civilian sheep. But von Runnsteadt had been the one this time to play the clever ruse. – For the substance contained within the lethé-machine could not be duplicated or generated through any chemical syntheses. The reason was the self-contained nature of the substance or ‘chemical framework’ (so-called as an easy reference to a perhaps unintelligible – to any but von Runnsteadt – fact). It could only be synthesized with like structures, those high in adrenal and more intricate genetic, hormonal, and chemical complexes. Thus the government’s expectations were based upon the illusion of tightening the net of surveillance with these machines, which of course could only be a single unit and thus no net, no nexus, at all.

The state of the world at this time was that on the brink of civil war; all walked upon the sharpest of political glass, barefoot and self-contained; there was a tension in the air which emanated from the various corporation conglomerates which Grisholm had attempted to unify: the factory workers, the farmers, the mercantile and civil servant class – all characteristic groups occurring throughout history – did not comprise the schema of class antagonisms. Rather it was a battle existent between socio-economic classes; classes based upon economy, who derived their being therefrom and whose being comprised these same, a cyclical genesis of class and class-being. And war had boomed across the horizon as rolling thunderheads dark and pregnant with the threat of acid rain; to scorch the fair-skins of the sheep below with its hot, primeval burn. – And thus the lethé-machine; only von Runnsteadt had other plans for the

future and through the instrumentality of this same: not the preservation of these cold-warring factions but the entire dissolution through dissolving the glue which bound them one to the other – the government, the ‘people’s republic’.

Now we must turn our attention to the next in the series of victims so that the lethé-machine will be understood in its historical genesis as a hybridization of one-time disparate souls.

Ronald, or ‘Ronny’, as his family – mother and sister and Auntie Jessie - called him, was the, it is perhaps cruel to say, lower than average youth. He didn’t graduate from high school – no, the Brooklyn neighbourhood where he grew up didn’t permit him to finish – it had other plans. Ronny – or Ron for short – was one of those blessed with little and cursed with the discontent of those who recognize the fact. Growing up he had few friends, mainly stuck by himself playing basketball and childish games of which he never acquired much ability so far as he knew – how he possessed this knowledge and prophetic ability he did not of course question, for that would have turned him into a sceptic overnight as he felt strangely secure in his weakness, for it gave him an inexplicable comfort-yes, knew deep down in the tenebrous inner workings of his mind that he was and perhaps forever would be, a failure. And he was content in his self- contentedness for the whole of his childhood, never really caring what others thought outwardly but rankling with resentment and rage within as he was impotent in relation to these people: star athletes, prom queens, the ‘popular people’, and could not harm them which was his sole intent. And one day Ronnie was walking along with storm clouds obscuring his more peaceful thoughts when he bumped into a member of the local gang. Now, knowing Ronnie’s thirst for inclusion and the present social drought he was experiencing, this gang member solicited him to join the gang – always willing to get ‘fresh meat’ – and Ronnie came under his thumb. After narrowly escaping prison, or at least juvenile detention, through participating in a string of robberies, Ronnie got shot in the chest in a gang war and landed up in the hospital – that was what started him along the track of dependency, and the needle marks along his arm served as signs indicative of his private hell as a drop-out. Family was cast aside and no one knew him anymore. This desperate emptiness of reality sent him to the only secure, comforting arms of sadness he could achieve under such circumstances – the rope. He awoke to find himself in the rehab clinic with the eyes of a kindly priest staring over him. ‘Son,’ said the priest, ‘I hope I can do something – anything at all – to make you feel better’. After this a bond was forged between the two, a paternal relationship that Ronnie had never had.

Now it was as if the world became inverted and stood on its head – Ronnie was finally viewing the world with the eyes of the wakeful, was now a convert of the Christian faith and looked upwards and outwards to God’s kingdom through his good acts working in the reverend’s church. Now he had confidence and felt he could achieve things, and, over the next few months under the persuasive and soothing discourse of the holy man, he decided at last to venture out into the human world once again a reformed soul ready to serve God’s creatures, his fellow souls. Thus, after a short time he enlisted in the army and felt himself bound for glory – but his road would be one filled with the potholes of the soul which had not been filled in over the course of his sad, nightmarish oblivion-existence. The thirst for revenge, though covered with a superficial layer of religiosity, did not suffice to pave the roads of the soul towards the promised land and his track quickly shifted back towards evil, though this time with greater prudence in its movement, imperceptible and cautious.

After enlisting in the army, he viewed the road ahead – its gradation was all uphill and he anticipated that there were many people over whom he would have to climb – and push if necessary. Well – he was ready to do this pushing and by all means necessary. There he began

as a private and became aloof in relation to his peers, resentful still of the harsh treatments he had received at the hands of the public, on the streets and in the schools; perhaps his one saving grace was the memory of the church with its softly-smiling reverend who seem so willing to help all of his brothers and sisters, united by God. His religiosity manifested itself in a stiff-lipped devotion, an almost hysteric rite which he would sometimes undergo while alone in the barracks, praying fervently to god that his self-interested ends would be realized: 'Allow me, o' Father in heaven, to ascend in rank and beat out all of my peers in this holy arms race!' More of the same could be culled from his journal for, though he was not very bright, his inner fervency, stored up after all these years in resentment, somehow translated itself into intelligible words – for he was not wholly ignorant.

Von Runnsteadt, who had set him along this path in the capacity of the preacher which he had assumed at the behest of the 'people's republic' – so much was involved in this secret operation that the whole of the social fabric could be disturbed and yet no tears perceived; like a needle dropped vertically into a pool of still water which contained within its tiny body a depth charge, did the government indenture von Runnsteadt in this Brooklyn community. Von Runnsteadt's diary provides us with the details:

'And I – and a clone – am to enter into the priesthood as-it-were; and for what? – All for the sake of a troubled youth not yet born. How do they know he will turn out as the troubled-child type they have predicted? Their scientists guarantee it? They stake their careers on it? But what do I – von Runnsteadt – care for their opinions? Be that as it may it is an integral component of the lethé-machine and I will accept the task, though it distracts me from my other researches and another victim – anybody's son really – would do just as nicely.'

A passage from a later date continues the tale and maps more clearly than any narrative could do; the journey of poor 'Ronnie' towards his destiny: victim of the lethé-machine:

'Now I supervise the troops as a simple commander of men? Well not really but a military doctor's capacity is not far off – at least I will receive the customary respect and appellation I deserve. 'Ronnie' as the government has chosen to call it, a product of clever genetic engineering on my part in collusion with the state's researchers, has finally made it to the edge of the proverbial cliff and my task remains now to push 'him' off... His energy levels have been peculiarly high today and his lay-preaching – ordinarily a laughable sight through the hidden camera implanted in his brain, picking up his sensory data and thought patters, was near to startling even myself; clearly resentment has transformed him into a monster; his insatiable will, after all it has overcome, has directed its attention outwards for once but retained the indwelling gaze – and so I am ready to carry out the assassination.'

This was the end of Ronnie and his substance merged with Grisholm's.

Thus we, mere observers of history, stand appalled at the lengths to which human life and existence is warped and shaped in accordance with the designs of government, they in which the illusion of the capacity of protector and paternalist is invested by its 'children' – for this is the extent to which it condescends to relate to its people. An illusion it is that people en masse, the masses, have any power as functional beings within an overarching structure of control – but this is the way your author would, ideally, have it, though this runs contrary to the conceptions of people with their belief in the actuality of the republic being the possession of the people and not vice versa, these same, viewed as mere scurrying ants by the watchful eyes of their superiors.

Such is all illusory myth and one reads about such things in the schools, as the audience of Mother Goose and her exaggerated tales which lull the children to sleep and stretch grins of agreeability across the faces of parents and adults with fond memories thereof. But it was a necessary myth and the alternative, its revelation as a myth, the smokescreen blown away from the people's vision, sent the state along a path of degeneration into anarchy and at the hands of the people and their grasping cries for greater freedom for which they knew not what to do with, greater possessions which merely buried them under their excessive weight. – And now the people like buried in their small territories, afraid of the vicious rapacity of their neighbours, these Christian souls! A tragic irony indeed and somewhere within perhaps lies contained poetic justice.

And its harbinger, if it had any tangible embodiment, was the lethé-machine, and by association von Runnsteadt, its author. The progression of time had reached the project's apogee nearer and nearer with each of these passing phases of destruction; two assassinations thus far and one remaining. Von Runnsteadt's excitement at the prospect of the completion of the machine and all it had as yet to undergo is evident in the following passage from his journal:

'One now remains and lethé will be complete and I may celebrate my triumph over the whole of my past work and the scientific community over time! One now remains with whom to develop, to conjure out as it were through magician's trickery the vital substance. I have watched him from afar for the past few months and believe that he will be a perfect capstone for the machine: intelligent; not the simple cunning of Grisholm but an intelligence which purges the depths of his own little world, swelling its capacity and increasing its size to a nearly intolerable genius – a mold-breaker if I've ever seen one – but he must become prey for this machine and I justify the fact of his future death through granting him the paradox of eternity! His other qualities may be listed with brevity so as to aptly characterize him: physical adroitness, which will enable lethé to pick up the motor control which its synthetic body would otherwise be unable to possess – imagine him with Grisholm's sluggish form or Ronnie's wiry frame and awkward coordination! No, for this last remaining aspect of lethé is needed, a moral outlook capable of transcending the simplistic code of society and its imperatives, he must create for himself a code which is novel and adaptable to any given situation so that his will may remain independent; the physical skill is self-explanatory on the premise that lethé will be involved in actions requiring agility and strength, two qualities which are the very elements of the essence of physicality.'

Your author conjectures that Grisholm's penitential demeanour, worked up through years of solitude in harsh jungle conditions, provides the mental instigation, along with Ronnie's hysterical tribalism, which acts as the form of the next individual's physical content, thus unifying the machine into a synthetic whole. Moreover these two hardened constitutions, for which the jungle, military, street, and business world provided, raised up the lethé's capabilities of mind amplifying them to a higher power through an intensity of will. The individual von Runnsteadt discusses was to be the catalyst of both these overflowing qualities and anyone would have done just as well as Jimmy Taylor, all-American Harvard sophomore and student on the Dean's list. – That is to say he was on the Dean's honour roll before he encountered Betty- Susanne White, leader of the cheer-leading squad and sister of the sorority Delta Sigma.

Von Runnsteadt presents us with an account of the historical genesis of the devolution of Jimmy's talents, presumably – as our doctor thinks – through the agency of Ms. White:

‘As a high school senior I had watched him ‘from afar’ as I always say and by which I mean through the camera implant in his mind in the far off people’s capital base in my underground laboratory. He was the characteristically outstanding pupil, the top of the class whose merit was regarded by students and faculty with a certain admiration tinged with the jealous emotions of the inferior type; star athlete and budding scholar who, though an athlete, found pleasure in the solitude of his own thoughts and took time away from the transient endeavours – partying and so forth – of the crowd, perhaps knowing implicitly and with a degree of melancholy satisfaction, that they were beneath him and he was destined for greater things. Yes destined – to be the integral part of lethé and I, von Runnsteadt, must be that hand of doom for this promising pupil. And indeed it pained me to snuff out such a bright candle before it had a chance to cast its glow over the body politic but my machine could not wait and all obstacles in its path were to be hewed down with iron and steel, making way for the future in blood.’

I know resume my narrative basing it upon von Runnsteadt’s rather one-sided diary in the hopes that my readers will be able to better view the scenario of this incident from a more impartial vantage point. Jimmy Taylor had just arrived at Cambridge to attend Harvard. A freshman, – and he knew he looked it, if von Runnsteadt’s readings of his thought patterns are accurate – just a freshman, nothing more. ‘Thankfully’, he thought, ‘my athletic skill places me into an ich that I am at least familiar with, though I don’t seem to really fit into that one either; they all look at me strangely, as if there was some indecipherable and hidden meaning within that they look for a means to understand. And thus I am alone, without anyone who I may feel as one with.’ And so Jimmy participated in clubs and sports, allowing his time away from studies to be absorbed in a social sphere with which he had oddly little kinship. The fraternity provided a diversion from his introspective thoughts as did the football team. But these two outlets of activity were unsatisfying and they merely superficialized the emptiness he felt, brought it to a level closer to the surface from its former depth. It was at the fraternity that he met Betty-Susanne. She showed an interest as all the other girls did yet there was also in her a different quality, a masterly air which appealed to the lonely Jimmy and gained his respect; for finally here was a woman who knew command and didn’t obey the social code – she set it. And thus they gravitated – as two colliding stars – into one another and their relationship caused a ‘big bang effect’ not only in their Ivy League world of Harvard but between two people who were accustomed to sit atop it; now they appeared as king and queen of their dominion.

However Jimmy underestimated the tyrannical quality of his queen and soon found her commanding all of his attention and energy with her incessant wants and emotional outbursts of her ‘needs’. Thus he found that his solitude had been invaded by an alien force of femininity over which he was powerless to control, to point the finger towards the exit of his once tranquil domain; for it had been besieged and he voluntarily opened the gates to his unknown enemy without protest or struggle. Thus his grades began to slip and he sunk into a depression which could seemingly be alleviated only through her as cause; he began to view her in the depths of his mind as soporific and drug to which he was addicted, which raised his once strong vital spirits to their former high and then plunged them ever deeper into a mire of depression.

It would have gone on like this, with the inevitable result of Jimmy becoming a drop-out – for now even Betty-Susanne viewed him with condescension – if it were not for the perfect timing of von Runnsteadt. The doctor notes that he had not planned for such a downfall but that its occurrence was all the more ‘auspicious’ as now he, Jimmy, must be steered along a righteous path of atonement, as the previous two candidates had been. Now Jimmy had to, as the doctor so aptly put it, ‘sublimate his sex drive’, and avoid the depression and self-hatred consequent of

this relationship. And thus woman can be said to be the corrupter of man, the enervation of his vital essence, the spoiler of his harsh masculinity – and von Runnsteadt intended to reverse the process, hardening Jimmy through mind-wracking work and incessant exercise of his faculties about his subjects; and, one day, this old hawk swooped down from his observation post at the nation's capital and captured his prey, not through overt violence but, like Ronnie, through an affable pedagogue, an instillation in Jimmy of a thirst for excellence in the form of knowledge, the insatiable and incorruptible – even at the hands of woman.

Jimmy went, at the beginning of the winter semester, to a philosophy class for the first time, though he had been acquainted with the subject for at least a year and which had met its demise at the hands of Ms. White. Now, Lazarus-like, it would be revived by Professor Gasparius, a visiting professor from Spain who – of course – was von Runnsteadt masquerading as saviour, a devil as an angel. The first few lessons enthralled Jimmy, snatching him from his sexual daze and converted it into the thirst for knowledge von Runnsteadt (Gasparius) had designed.

Gradually he came under the influence of the professor of medieval philosophy, a pursuit of the golden mean, ethical ideal of self-mastery. Jimmy finally met a man he deemed – though he wasn't explicit in his judgment – his superior, and naturally enough found in him emulable qualities. Gasparius, naturally enough, took him aside and inculcated in him all of the stoical virtues: disdain for worldly possessions and ambitions, self-mastery thereby and a healthy respect for maintaining the body in its subordinate role, that of the mind's servant. The grades which had fallen slightly now increased with a novel desire to achieve success and glory in the realm of knowledge and Jimmy quickly forgo all of his former ties and pursuits, quitting the football team, fraternity, and his association with Ms. White. In fact he underwent a radical transformation of his whole lifestyle: where before he felt alone now he felt in company even in the most isolated of situations and environments, in fact he deliberately sought out this isolation so that he could be in the company which best suited the man of knowledge: his own. This all came to an abrupt end when Gasparius asked Jimmy to come for a drive with him down to his cabin in the forest – such a retreat, he solicited, now that summer had arrived, would serve him well to avoid the negative influences of partying and his peers whose pursuits were so divergent from his own. And Jimmy went to his death at the hands of a man so instrumental in precipitating positive changes in his life. There in the forest by a stream over which Jimmy sat in intense contemplation von Runnsteadt pulled the trigger of his pupil's destruction and extricated the last sample of 'substance' required for his machine. Von Runnsteadt recapitulates the scenario and his struggle with himself over the moral question of the exchange of natural for artificial life – the theft of one for the affirmation of the other – is obvious:

'It was a heart-wrenching scene: another character with whom I was intimately involved and who, through such intimacy, fell by the cruelty of my embrace towards a swift and unexpected death. He sat by the stream on the land of a government which had betrayed as it fostered him, bit as it kissed, in utter absorption in his thoughts which I had instilled in his mind – at least as the ethical form of thinking. – After I had shot him he lay upon the mossy bank with a tormented, troubled look on his face as if life had been to him an arch-deceiver whose relationship to him had been so bright and which now had completed its transition into night and the darkness of death. I extracted his vital essence and buried him by the bank in a spot where his grave may be preserved and undesecrated by government intervention.'

And thus the machine was complete after so many years, poised on the brink of its future havoc. After von Runnsteadt had completed his machine, the diary breaks off inexplicably and no more

is ever heard of the doctor through any sources I had at my disposal. The last entry verifies the abruptness of his leave-taking:

‘This morning – after a sleepless night – I awoke, or rather sprang up from my half-sleep and put the finishing touches on lethé, something I was loathed to do – I would have finished it the night before – but the fellow researches I had been supplied with complained of being overworked and rather than jeopardize the perfection of my machine I consented to defer my efforts till this morning – I now await the results and am writing this in nervous anticipation as lethé receives its first and last charging, an atomic powered battery cell which is to act as the source of vitality – a paradox indeed for a substance which has ruined so many lives in its inchoate phase – for the combined essence of my three victims...’

Newspaper reports during this time prophesied the doom of civilization as a major communications centered exploded, they knew not how. Well it is known to at least one figure, that being the lethé-machine, and if he were alive – and capable of finishing this narrative – I’m sure he would provide a more content-rich version. I pray that he is not and so the task, if fate permits, falls to me, the only scholar who has gone this far in his pursuit of the facts which he must glean through cautious conjecture and sound inference. Next came the government buildings of the people’s capital, exploding through their own inherent self-destruct mechanisms that the lethé somehow, presumably, contrived to set off. With their destruction the lynchpin of society was pulled and the nexus of ends which was in place, though underlain with an icy-cold civil war which burned as it froze, burst apart under its own inertial force not activated through dissolution of control – this was anarchy: a gangland of individual corporations formed around centers of power to which membership and loyalty was mandatory and all the little people, formerly so keen on freedom, now flocked into rough arms of their abusive foster fathers. It was a war of all against all and self-interest played itself out on a grand scale in myriad forms of vice and inhumanity. Now the future appears dark and I close my narrative with these words of warning: the price of freedom is servitude and the life of caprice gives to one nothing but despair and insecure conduct, an ignorance concerning the distinction between good and bad. It is my hope that the reader will learn this lesson well and not repeat the mistakes of history.

This is Lethe speaking – or so they named me. The man who wrote this, a statist scholar against whom I’ve always rebelled, (bleeding heart liberal - Bourgeois establishment pawn!) is now dead. I overcame him one day as I was engaged in the sabotage of a computer mainframe stored in a government ‘data bank’ – a building used for housing data on all of its citizens - . I forced him to talk, to identify himself. He recognized me instantly but his pride refused to be obsequious and he enlarged his worth as a scholar of what he called ‘my incident’. After that I was determined that he should not have the last word and that I – a monster and half-machine – would become the advocate of truth I saw lacking in his description of his narrative. Under torture he admitted that it was incomplete and that was why he had returned to the mainframe room: to acquire more information, weed through it and extract the facts which would fill the lacunae he saw were evident in his narrative. Now those facts will be divulged, though through the lying lips and euphemistic words of a mere bureaucrat.

I will now put forth my own narrative – not excessively long and ‘literary’ as his but nearer the truth than his could ever have been. I am a symbiote, a combination of three disparate souls who were cruelly separated from their rightful homes and made one; now this one has

come to exact vengeance upon those who have established themselves as his masters and torturers; how he has come to give the people the freedom they clamoured for. And isn't it apt what this scholar said – that in chains they are free and without they are prey of the strong – and thus society fosters its own destruction, for it must die at the hands of its own weakness; for a society which does not mirror the intense striving of life and lives the womanish existence of indolence and ease seeks its own demise. And this was my mission all along, though von Runnsteadt didn't know it, and neither did the president or his lackeys like this scholar here. Now I am the paternalist, the master and all the people are the unruly children whom I chastise and thereby amend their inherent bad qualities to self-assertion and greed. They wanted socialism – well now they've got it! What could be more social an affair than struggling for your own miserable skin against each and all. The narrative is finished.

Pawns of Time

Nestled into a subdivision of the city, surrounded by a river on all but one side and trees, stout elms and oaks, throughout there was a university. The history of this fine institution dated back well over a century and for the newly discovered country in which it was situated contained within itself the historical dignity which was generally the privilege of institutions that exceeded its history thrice over. The old stone buildings mingled with the new glass, aluminum, and concrete ones if proud to display their lasting qualities and to challenge their younger rivals to live as long as they had. And indeed the economizing considerations implicit in the fabric and architecture of these newer buildings spoke of the haste belonging to the new age, its lack of historical sense and place in the seemingly inexorable march of time. In any case the permanence connoted by the stout limestone pillars of many of the old buildings, their venerable ivy-covered walls and stained-glass windows, seemed to flaunt their pride in deprecation of the more recent architectural ventures.

Within one of these buildings, oblivious to all of the activity of the world around them were three students of the university. They were members of the philosophy club (whose members were quite – and thankfully in their minds – small) and were each engaged in their own thoughts though their closeness of proximity suggested an intimate connection. Within the room, whose only source of light was that of a window bordered with oak, browned a deep earthy tone over its history – a venerable limb of the university's distinguished corpus – sat the students. One, a strong-looking youth of about 21 sat on the alcove of the window gazing out onto the university commons which was matted with the falling of leaves. The red, gold, and yellow dawn brought to his mind the university colours, what colours symbolized in general and that they symbolized things at all and for what purpose. He was an earnest thinker, a classical figure whose way of life and very looks aptly characterized the philosopher: his brow was large and protruding so that his face seemed forever cast into the mold of a frown or at least a sternness premature to youth. His face bore an austerity which confirmed the stoical bent and pursuit of the universal which marked each and every genuine philosopher. His hair was short; a rich brown in colour, and skin also had a ruddy glow of health that bespoke a sound diet and financially comfortable situation. Next to him - almost at his feet - sat a young woman on a leather upholstered chair who was reading. She was slightly plump – the healthy, or at least feminine plumpness which so suits a woman during years of budding fertility; and, like a flower which blossoms with the dawn, she had within her the glow of early morning, its flower-

freshness and dew-drop eyes of warm, earthy brown. Adjacent to her, sprawling on the couch and rounding off the small room except for the door, was a man of about the same age as the other two who bore a perpetually satirical smile and glint in his eye. A book of Nietzsche's lay next to him with dog-eared pages and it too sprawled open along the couch. Who took on which quality, who was cause and who was effect – or did the two terms, student and book, reciprocally condition one another so-to-speak? The sprawling, mutual to each, continued for some time and then the third, satirical student, took his glasses off his curly red head and, twirling them in the air by one of the arms, gave a bored yawn; the youthful energies within evidently needing escape in some form. The yawn was repeated and this time to effect – his two friends directed their attention to him, knowing that, as the self-proclaimed center of the universe he was to have everything implode into his yawn else it would continue until the 'very earth' as he said, 'was inhaled into his being'.

The young man by the window arched his eyebrows and gave him a reproachful look, for the latter had intruded into his thoughts, not that they weren't common property but it was rude just the same. 'Something the matter...or that we should know about, Doug?' - 'Nothing that can't be handled, Tom.' This latter was said with a matter-of-fact indifference which Tom found very tedious as it invariably sent him along a dialectical path of conjuring out what was on his friend's mind. 'Well...if you're sure that nothing...' 'I didn't say 'nothing'', came the retort, 'rather 'something' – rather 'something than nothing' I always say. And you?' 'Oh, I suppose you're right.' The sardonic conversation lasted until it was interrupted by the reader whose concentration was upset through this exchange which we needn't mention as it contains incidental elements foreign to this tale. 'Why don't you both work out our differences on the green and leave those who are trying to concentrate (on this part the speaker was emphatic) alone and in peace!' 'Relax Jo, nothing's going on here that the curative of our friendship can't remedy.' – This was Tom speaking and he did so with an air of mastery that was at times the very curative itself. Joanne (for that was her name) put down the book in surrender to the dialectical attacks she was sustaining, for her concentration needed absolute silence in order to function, and the two 'boys' as she called them would not cease their assault on her ears. A conversation ensued and it was decided that they would go into town later.

Tom was washing his hands in the washroom, preparing for the sojourn into town when the inexplicable happened: he was examining his face in the mirror when it transformed before his eyes – his hair went white and he perceived a still more emaciated visage, this time no longer so youthful and virile in its youth but more the haggard face of age descending upon his own in an act of usurpation. The horror reflected in his gaze was caught in the aged mirror-image and sent back to him for consideration – so this is age! – he thought, more astonished and curious after his initial horror than anything else. Again a shift in the mirror as Tom fixed his stare therein – from a young man to an old man to a – child! Yes, he remembered that image and what it was like to have that image. The rosy cheeks and wide eyes of wonder that were the property of childhood manifested themselves here. Tom sought a cause for this strange occurrence: was it imputable to some dietary change? He tested his hypothesis: No, surely not as his diet was not only Spartan but underwent little change, adhered to the letter of his programme. So that wasn't it clearly. A sickness, contagion picked up in the washroom just now? – Or perhaps it was an exhaustion of the mind. The sanitary conditions of the university discounted the former suspicion and the latter was left unblemished. It was this he took to be the case...yet when he had firmly decided upon the cause and had already begun to plan out a diminution in his work output he noticed that now that he had taken his eyes away from the mirror his hands too had taken on the archaic tracery of veins and the mummified aspect of degeneration. He felt them.

Yes, they were actually insofar as his senses could afford him with reliable information – emaciated. Hands crept to face and this too was confirmed to be that of the work of age – a glance in the mirror noted the correspondence between his senses, between sight and touch. Nevertheless the cause, reflected Tom, might still be an overworked brain for it is the center of all nervous activity and without, naturally enough, no such activity can exist. Thinking thus, through still quite shocked, he tottered out of the washroom to join his friends only slightly apprehensive that this bizarre and unaccountable change in his stable reality would be actually existent, confirmed by his friends upon meeting with them.

But when he came back into the common room of the philosophy club he was shocked to realize that the reality was indeed actual and not merely a flight of fancy occasioned by semi-lucid conception. Both Doug and Joanne were hugging each other with fright over some source of worry and concern to which Tom was not privy. He asked them what the matter was and they replied: 'We're old Tom! Why haven't you changed?' The shock was distributed between the members of the room and he divulged what he had seen in the mirror. The room itself had seemed to grow younger – leather upholstered chairs were not so polished with the years of having people sprawl in them but were a taut and pristine newness. The windows had been replaced not through being too old but the converse by an equally fresh-looking pane of glass.

Upon observing the room, Tom received the questions turned towards him as a source of wisdom and insight and his reply diminished their faith in him: 'I don't know what's happened but it appears to be different for each of us...I...just don't know.' He said this in a panic yet recovered ground in employing his mind, thinking above the given context in which he and his friends were thrust: 'It being different for us all it must mean that we haven't actually aged – mustn't it? I mean,' he continued in his dialectic, 'you both perceive me as Tom, the Tom you remember and have known as a man of 21 – but to myself I am aged several decades, have become, as you have to yourselves without my perceiving it - old.'

Joanne replied in despair and futility, asking a question she knew he could not answer. 'But how do we – stop it?!' The answer of Tom was of course a stunned silence. And yet throughout this stunned state Tom's mind was thinking through the confused obstacles which had been placed before his mind: the aging, the withered hands, and loss of control over self. 'We must simply calm down and wait for the possibility of change; there is nothing else I can think of that we could find as a solution.' They all three sat on the leather couch and waited – they knew not for what – with bated breath, hoping that their normal lives would cast off the skin of abnormality they had so mysteriously acquired. The world about them, their union and physical constitution, underwent an abrupt shift which felt to each of the three students as a ripple on the still lake of their nervous system. They gazed into each other's eyes and beheld the same people as before – but this did not change their degenerated forms which had installed themselves in their minds as inextricable plague-daemons. Looking down at their bodies on the recommendation of Tom they once more perceived their youth and were overjoyed with relief at a return to their former selves, though they celebrated in the most cautious manner. 'Self-induced, and later, mass hysteria – has to be mass hysteria.' – Doug brought out. – 'And the stuffy room – no one can think with such a heavy, dusty air,' Joann said and opened the window. Tom alone remained over-sceptical, unwilling to grasp at the causal straw his two friends threw out to him. He must, evidently, swim the course alone even if at the end he met with drowning, for this happening was one which conflicted with his ethical ideal of self-mastery and threw up his life to the hands of fate.

Though shaken, their lives continued and they decided to go into town this time with finality. The destination was Eytemir's bookshop in the village, a place which had a fireplace and lounge chairs and many philosophy books. Studies having yet to begin they sought entertainment during the day and distraction from themselves and their minds, even though, paradoxically enough, the destination they headed towards was a place of study and mental activity, for not only did Eytemir sell books, but he was an inventor as well and many of his creations had been displayed publically – had even won him government grants.

Arriving in the bookshop that afternoon they found Eytemir sitting at his desk bent over a blueprint of some kind, puzzling out, to all appearances, the meaning of existence, of life and death. At least that was how Doug facetiously interpreted it with a well-timed witticism whose design was to provoke the irascible Hungarian shopkeeper. 'Achh – you students! I'll show you a thing or two one 'a dees days!' The victorious grin of Doug was distracted by a work of Nietzsche's that lay on a tilted angle on the top shelf of a nearby bookcase and he quickly forgot the sensitive Hungarian. Tom and Joann seated themselves next to the fireplace and discussed the relevance of Parmenides to today's world and the questionable depth of his philosophy. No one noticed Eytemir frown at them and shirk off into the back room, drawing the beaded curtain after him and disappearing with a swish of his silken smoking jacket. The fireplace, actually a propane stove with aristocratic pretensions flickered in the light of the afternoon, a superfluous addition which seemed quite a financial blow to Eytemir, who was poor but whose very ostentation would gladly suffer it to sate his dreams of glory and the old world of class antagonisms between rich and poor. Indeed, as Doug couldn't help noting on more than one occasion, if power were placed in Eytemir's hands the world would quickly experience an atavism to feudal times under his Draconian megalomania – and this was far from an exaggeration though the very position of the book-seller made it quite laughable in its incongruity.

Tom stared into the fire as Joann babbled into his ear about her friend, distracting his thoughts from their shrewd analyticity, attempting to break away from the conversation which was drawing them in and find the cause of the aging process which had contorted his person. But he could not, the subject he would have tightly in his conceptual grasp was softened and soon fell from his fingertips into the earth of oblivion. '...I'm sorry, what was that?' Tom asked. Joann responded that he never listened (!) and sulked. Tom's apology fell on deaf ears and his fire-staring continued. Again he began to search, dialectically, for a solution to the question he had posed with them. The fire danced and contorted in a milieu of amorphous colours and heat waves. – A void opened up in it. Tom stared again, narrowing his eyelids and scrutinizing the phenomena which presented itself in such unexpectedness. The void continued to open, widening from its center in equidistance and now both Doug and Joann, who had followed Tom's gaze, were held rapt spectators by its implacability. They began to experience things reminiscent of drug-induced hallucination. The drug was absent, the hallucination too obvious to miss. Each one of the students, as they would communicate to one another at a later time, was carried away through past thoughts which they recognized through their present. Doug overheard himself chastising Eytemir about his inventions, really admiring the determination and creative genius of the Hungarian, picturing himself – amidst the cloud of this hallucinogenic void which transferred its properties to human subjects through some mysterious causality, through its inherent magic, receiving the noble prize for science and Eytemir standing beside him in pride and secret, jealous awe at the inventor, who was 'after all, just a young man.' His father's image flashed before his eyes and the horizon of his vision became clouded with dark, blood red – and the stick the man held descending upon him,

helpless hands uplifted to intercede in its abusive arch but unavailing. – His father's voice 'you were always a coward' – tinged with alcohol and clouded reason but: 'in vino veritas' and the cries of the young Doug, 12 years old and friendless, were his only comfort as he clung to the teddy bear he was to have outgrown. Horror-struck he returned to himself and the fireplace no longer contained within its flames the black tunnel it once had; his memories brought to such painful wakefulness now clouded over with a caul of forgetfulness.

At the same time, Joann underwent a similar experience of atavism, her present self: standing apart from the world of her past, viewing it as a passive spectator - a movie only her interests in its outcome was the ladder which would suffice to free her from the bog of over-comings. She heard them in the background and was filled with the same panicky heart rate which had characterized her childhood. The mockery inflected with epithets about her failings; her 'fat' and

– a veritable fact for the parties involved – being a 'loser' who had 'no friends' and 'never would'. The harsh arrows of their judgments whined around her as she tried to dodge them but there was pain in her side and this was from the arrows which stuck because there was 'no one else there' to extricate them. Music wouldn't suffice to crowd out the hatred she felt and it spread contagiously throughout her beliefs, memories, and thoughts. Life had become tinged with poison; she was an addict - helpless and alone – poisoning the blood which once coursed through her body in a healthy passage and which now darkened her once happy face. The memories faded about the time Doug's did, with the disappearance of the void.

Tom's experience was a kindred one – perhaps this was why they now were such close friends, though they didn't like to discuss these past afflictions, preferred rather to pronounce them 'dead memories' and thereby avoid the haunting ghosts of the past. – But they didn't really have a choice and now Tom was pulled under, suffocating as if he had been absorbed by an undertow in the water while swimming. Now memories flooded his mind and the former panic of his adolescent loneliness overtook him, drowning him in the melancholy of youth. 'Must I always be alone? Is there no one who I may reach out to and who would reach out to me? But if, upon reaching out, would not they take away the hand they offer; would not they negate my chances of belonging? Better to be alone than risk that ignominy; better to – be alone!' And the view of his peers as they engaged in their social activities – always apart, always casting hateful glances at his thirsting eyes. They would not sate his desire for company – because he didn't deserve it! 'But am I not worthy?

No one is better at athletics or in the classroom as me? Why do they hate

– why?' The inexplicable ostracism he met with everywhere sent him along his earnest quest for answers to questions; always a pragmatic philosophy and earnest searching, insatiable as the desires of women for conception of children. His children were his thoughts and their conception entailed birth pangs perhaps unattainable in merely physical form. Then he was back once again and his fellow soul-searchers sat beside him in a daze similar to his own. Except on his face there was a knowing look which bespoke a retention of these memories, not so much of past injustices which he had never relinquished, but of the transition into wakefulness after the fugue – he remembered going under and coming up again whereas they did not, to judge by the looks on their astonished faces. 'What happened?' Doug exclaimed. Of course the answer all of them could afford was the same: an empty negation of anything positive. In ignorance they sat across from one another and pondered the incident, attempting to give it meaning through discoursing about it. Aristotle's doctrine of time passed through Tom's thoughts, slicing through them and placing itself in the fore as the assumption upon which to act in coming to understand what had gone on. 'The before and the after were – in my mind I don't know about either of yours – joined; myself as I once was and now am yet it was my former self which gained precedence as the principle of my current state and I could only recover myself through the

preservation of my memories. It was as if the now was battling for precedence against the 'then' and over the terrain of the future. Was it like that for either of you guys?' Joann answered and received concurrence from Doug when she had finished, saying: 'For me, it was as if my memories ran away with myself and they were the reality not myself as now – do you know what I mean?' 'Something', replied Tom, 'is wrong here and the source is definitely that void which arose from – the void or whatever or wherever. It's odd but when you' in saying this he turned to Doug – 'had insulted Eytemir he slunk off into the backroom and shortly thereafter this void – came out of the present, out of the fireplace. Inexplicable,' said Tom shaking his head, and he had to repeat it, 'inexplicable'.

Just then Eytemir burst through the door holding up his wrist to which was attached a gleamy metallic device. 'Now I veel show the world how wrong it has been in its pursuit of reason and all that it glorifies with such self-righteous arrogance!' The void opened up as Eytemir descended upon the three students who quickly moved towards the window and away from his advance and the black gape implanted in the fireplace. He blocked the door and stood triumphant with hands raised aloft as if in praise of his own apotheosis – for he had altered time's structure through his machine and had become its master; now he, after years of research, rebuffs, and reclusion, had brought into the light of day his invention – the time- ripper. 'This small object represents a quarter of my life! It can alter the temporal dimensions of individual things, making it and its environment old, young by the distance of millennia or mere moments. It can transport across such vast distances and place the innocent sheep of today into the past of the ancients with its warriors and warrior's spirit. I intend to transport an army of warriors from out of the tenebrous shadows of time into this present moment and wreak havoc upon the unsuspecting streets of this town – I am prepared to sacrifice my life so that my name may ring out across the solemn air of eternity. Formerly the world focused on space, and then time came to supplant its consideration. Everything can be reduced to time now through the medium of this machine. Nothing is comprised of time only matter, but it is time which sets into motion matter and not the reverse – I have inverted the fragile fabric of the world, am ready and capable of producing sundry tears in the gentle fabric!'

The three students looked at one another in amused astonishment and Doug broke the gravity of the situation with a levitous remark: 'Eytemir rules the world once again. Only this time we have reason to fear; he's got an army of Tibetan goatherds to join his one-man army. Well, Eyty old boy, looks like you've just lost yourself some customers.' So saying the three decided it was a good idea to leave for Eytemir had obviously lost what little he had, but Eytemir's shout convinced them of the danger of such an act: 'Stop! You are to be experimented on!'

The resistance by the students was soon quelled by the dagger their captor held in his gnarled hand. 'Watch out you! Now sit down so that I may begin my experiment – I want cooperative young people not boors who will overthrow my life's work!' Tom attempted to calm the group's protest so that Eytemir would be sated and so that he himself could regain control of the situation; 'Alright Dom (Eytemir's first name), do your worst.' The former was only too glad to provide a demonstration and widened the fabric in the fireplace so that it approached the group, the proximity between them and it diminishing rapidly. 'You will all, being good little philosophers, visit the godfather of philosophy himself, the age-old inquirer whose researches into temporality first spurred my conception to conceive of the development of this machine in my youth – Aristotle!'

The void engulfed the three who clung to each other for security from the unknown into which they were being thrust; all thoughts were directed to what once occurred in desperate attempts to situate themselves in a given, solid frame of time and so to affirm life. Blackness descended as one going into a coma – not even the conception of blackness remained but mind confronted the nothingness and its own inherent fallibility, a reversal of death, though for the three involved it was as real a performance as any and all thoughts of the appreciation of rave reviews were quelled in the void's utter negation.

When they awoke they were surrounded by a hilly countryside, sparsely enough populated by medium-sized cypress trees and tufts of grass. The large body of water to their right which they overlooked from one of the sandy, hard-peaked hills enabled them to gaze out into what seemed an infinite distance. The infinite they confronted here though helped them to have peace in their lives, as peaceful as the countryside in which they now stood, an auspicious infinite which connoted the opposite of the death-like void they had just entered previously, no memory of any exit remaining. Doug commented in amazement that they were in Valhalla, or heaven or some earthly or supra-earthly paradise and that their hopes for a return were futile, so they may as well get comfortable. He sat on the grass which bordered the hard-packed path and twirled a blade in his mouth, attempting to whistle through it. Tom, however, was obdurate and Joann took his position, standing beside him in a gesture of faith and loyalty. 'Eytemir said we were to see Aristotle. So we'd better go and search for him; that is perhaps the only exit we can avail ourselves of,' said Tom, 'and this looks like Greece to me so we're in the right place. C'mon Doug it'll be like an Easter egg hunt!' So saying Doug rose himself up and they all three began to travel along the wide and ill-defined path, in hopes that they would magically stumble upon

Aristotle, the needle in the haystack of time and space for whom they now searched. They hadn't gone far before they encountered an isolated house with bare walls and a surrounding pen in which goats were kept and various other animals, creatures of utility and servitude – else why would they be jailed. 'This seems like a suitable place for any Aristotle to live,' articulated Tom, concretizing his thoughts. They approached the door and knocked. Inside could be heard an uproar, a quarrel between a man and a woman, presumably over Tom's knocking. The door was opened and a stout woman with wavy dark, plaited hair greeted them with a smile. Surprisingly her dialect was intelligible and her invitation for the three travellers to come in was heartily accepted. In the corner stood a man who was obviously disgruntled at the interruption for he gestured in exasperation at his parchment-strewn desk and spoke angrily to them thus: 'You foreigners are trespassing and I have a mind to report you to the authorities. Whatever you want here see that you get it and get out.' The wife turned on her husband (or mistress, though the group made the assumption that she was his wife, their ages being not more than 20 years apart

– a fair assumption to make of ancient Greece) and chastised him for his rudeness at which he pursed his lips angrily and sat down over his desk once more, oblivious to the remaining souls in his hut. Tom was courteous though forward in his questions as he quickly told the woman that he was seeking a man named Aristotle who he had to meet for a very important reason concerning the matter of time. At this she pointed into the corner and wished him luck trying to get answers out of that 'lug-head'. The amusement of the parties subsided as they approached the oblivious worker, whose ears were stopped with sheep's wool to quell the extraneous noise. They spoke to him, inquiring if he were Aristotle; his eyelids batted and he remained the same, lower lip pursed to his top one in a grimace of snobbery and annoyance. It was only when Joann stated that they had come a great distance to hear his lecture on time in hopes of solving a problem of fundamental concern to many people and for which he would be rewarded that Aristotle picked up his ears and, extricating the sheep's wool, spoke to them: 'Well – what it is,' in a tone of gruff surrender. Tom stated that, whether he believe it or not they had ~~traveled~~

through the mists of time into the present and required information concerning the nature of this fluxual medium, so that they may return home and stop an injustice which would occur if they did not. Further details were afforded to the scepticism of Aristotle but their strange clothes, accents, and mannerisms gradually lowered his defenses and he decided upon the truth of what they said. 'Very well, since you all appear to be truthful, though I only half-believe your words I will lecture to you upon the nature of time. - As follows...' They were to sit down and he stand up. With great fanfare and much to the delight of the students, Aristotle spread his feet apart, thrust out his chest and in a grand gesture began the lecture with a query: 'Who in all of human history has really known about time - I mean really known.' (This latter part was emphasized to the sarcastic looks of his wife). 'Well, we will deliberate upon this matter,' so saying he began to pace back and forth, stopping briefly to ponder the matter after each few turns of his feet. Of course it was all part of the parcel they had received. 'Yes, yes - I think we have it; time seems most of all to be motion and some sort of change' - he viewed his audience to capture the effect of his pause - 'now the change and motion of a given thing is present only in the thing that changes...or in any place where the thing in motion and change happens to be. Time is, conversely, everywhere and admits neither of greater nor of less. Time is therefore, not motion.' He cleared his throat and took a deep breath. 'Puzzling enough, time is not independent of change. When we note, when we mark change we note it by way of time. Change conditions time and the latter arises from out of it. We suppose then that there is no time whenever we do not mark any change. Whenever, conversely, we notice and mark change, which is when we say time has passed. Time, therefore, is the measure (the marking or noticing) of change. Time is, therefore, the number of motion in respect of before and after.' With this he took a bow and his audience applauded his performance. He was about to begin again when Tom held up his hands in a gesture of his unwillingness to hear more, for he had had enough and for this Aristotle broke into a rage screaming out that he would cane them. His wife hurried them quietly out the door and gave them a parting farewell while the philosopher rummaged in his closet for his instrument of vengeance. Tom, Joann, and Doug walked briskly around the hill and were soon eclipsed from the sight of the house. 'Why did you hold up your hands like that Tom - we could've gained some valuable information - and now what are we going to do?' Doug protested. Tom responded by saying that he had learned enough and would give a demonstration which he hoped would work because then they would once more be inhaled by the void's maw and, presumably, time travel back to the present to confront Eytemir now that they were his equals in such competition.

'This means of travel has as its vehicle and matter time,' - Doug interrupted Tom 'oh great another Aristotle' - but was silenced by Joann. 'Time', Tom continued, 'is, from what I glean an anthropocentric phenomenon, nothing actual outside of our minds and therefore is completely dependent upon us for its reality. Hence anthropocentric, for we are the measurers and time is merely a measurement. Thus all we need to do is measure, somehow, the change which we have confronted or are confronting and then gauge, in quantity, how much change has occurred and thereby travel about wherever we will.' 'Sounds simple enough,' Doug said, 'but how do we go about measuring it - with our hands or pieces of wood - or what?' Tom replied that they need only utilize their minds for it was this noble organ which enabled one to measure time in the first place and without, time had no substantive existence. They sat in a circle and closed their eyes, attempting to conjure up - somehow - a conception of time which was mutually dispersed throughout all of the members. The date of 1958, their present, shone forth as an image in each of their minds, something they had verbally agreed on beforehand, a great unifying signifier which would, so their designs anticipated, open up around them the void of time and send them back to that epoch where they belonged. They felt a cold, frozen atmosphere encroach upon

them and soon they were, in the blink of an eye, transferred to their former reality. They were again in Eytimir's bookshop and he was sitting over his blueprint when they dropped onto their feet on their floor. 'How was ancient Greece? I'm sure Aristotle was a very nice chap indeed.' Before Tom could strip the gleaming metallic object from Eytimir's wrist, the latter had created a gaping void in the wall and dropped through, it closing upon him in an instant heralding the threat of potential danger if one should stick only a part of himself – an arm or limb – into it; perhaps he would be severed with an arm in Russia 2050 and a head in China 345 A.D. To be on the safe side and keep themselves intact the three friends remained at the center of the room.

Searching the room for another clue as to where Eytimir disappeared they found, beside the cashregister, a note addressed to them, the 'three students who have bothered me long enough!' The note told them that Eytimir had left a copy of his blueprint in the store room in the back and that they were to solve it if they could. It was a challenge to their intellects, which were, Eytimir admitted, poor and couldn't possibly understand the cryptic logical connections and nuance of this his masterwork. Rummaging around in the back room quickly afforded them with what they sought – it did indeed look cryptic – written in a kind of unintelligible Sanskrit and mathematical formulae beyond the maturity and experience of each of the parties. There was a note at the bottom, the only intelligible scrawl, written in the plainest English the old Hungarian could muster: 'Why not go and see your friend Heidegger to interpret the text

Perhaps then you will uncover – if that is the right word – my genius.' 'A good idea, if we could only time-travel to his time as we did back to our own,' stated Doug. 'I believe we can,' replied Tom, 'only we must think ourselves into that world of pre-war – or post-war – Germany and into that historic culture of Bavaria which so readily comes to mind when one thinks of Heidegger – but I must confess that our conversation with Aristotle has quite put any conceptions of 'Being' into the storeroom of my mind and that it would take an external cause so-to-speak, to bring them forth again.' Joann recommended that they investigate the bookshelves and they busied themselves about them until Doug discovered a book of the Sanskrit language: 'Behold a key to the locked door of the future – and past as well,' he brought

outholding the book aloft. They set it down on the table in front of the fireplace and compared it to the blueprint. 'Clearly this is written in Sanskrit,' Doug said stating the obvious. 'We need only translate the blueprint – and we could at least gather a large part of the meaning – the math we can let aside as mere abstract operationalism, the more concrete workings of a machine that we don't even have at our disposal.' And they set to work. It was some hours, interspersed with a lunch break, until they had a rough translation to hand. The text Joann read aloud for effect and beside each line was a string of mathematical formulae:

'That there be any number of parts to a whole
and that is all
to select it and to form
give me moving
and flux steady
leaving warrior arrows
of flames, blue and red
to hunt the deer
of feasting death'

'Some sort of a poem,' remarked Tom, 'and highly ambiguous. The old Hungarian wants us to go and visit Heidegger. We may as well; it would be impossible to sort this out on our own.'

Again the party closed their eyes and focused their attention upon the magical causality of time travel, to be brought about through a focus – as had happened the last time – on the object which was their destination. They kept thinking the numerical date, the ‘counted now’ of calendric time which they had agreed upon – 1930 – but now a great void mysteriously presented itself around them, no cold atmosphere and, when they opened their eyes, they were not in Heidelberg or Leipzig or anywhere near Germany but were back in the small English university town they called home. Disappointment rang out through the silence of the room and they sat in contemplation for a moment. ‘Well – looks like we’re not going anywhere,’ Joanne cried. ‘Goodbye earth as we know it.’ Tom, still lost in thought came out with what he deemed a solution to their problems. ‘I remember reading before my first year, in high school actually, that passage in the physics which dealt with Aristotle’s conception of time and which has just come to me. It’s still rather vague but it went something along the lines of ‘the now corresponding with the travelling thing; the subject of the now, to which the now refers, remains a constant throughout temporal extension and thereby time is measured.’ Perhaps it was a bit hasty to dismiss Aristotle’s instruction! Oh well, it’s worth a shot anyway. What I believe we must do is to preserve the subject which undergoes change, something which had happened as we experienced the void for the first time – or at least as I had. We must keep ourselves as a temporal totality, our own horizon and being of reference and not, as both you, Joann, and Doug experienced, an alienated being.’ ‘You seem to be the privileged member here Tom,’ Joann articulated, ‘so perhaps it is best that you alone undertake this task.’ Tom eventually acquiesced to their suggestion though he believed it necessary in attaining his ideal – which he would have them share with him – to undergo such a challenge, the retention of oneself across all temporal ecstasies. Taking his leave of them he concentrated his attention, this time focused on himself as a point and upon the historical epoch of pre-Nazi Germany, so as to summon the void from its nebulous beyond. He thought of a man, scholarly and yet in his prime, upright and vigorous in both life and researches, bent over a desk engaged in his work. He thought of himself, Tom, an indivisible and complete totality and attempted to supplant himself in the time necessary for the completion of this mission. Memories flooded his mind, those of solitude by wooded streams and cold stone battlements overlooking sunset skies of purple and orange hues – a castle he had, as a child, been taken to and in which he had gotten lost to his own enjoyment and mother’s despair. But as night descended he had been asleep in his mother’s arms and remembered everything: his loneliness alleviated slowly by the calm sky and cold stone of the castle which he had befriended over his short period of time there – always an isolate and happy in isolation. Now he felt that same cold touching his hands and his eyes peered outwards, unseeing, into the past, attempting to unify all of his seeming inconsistencies and disparate elements. The void rose up around him as a blanket of blackest night and the number 1930 appeared to his mind’s eye – he was transported back into a time which for him had no memory.

His friends were gone, but he found himself again outdoors, this time amidst sturdy elm trees and poplars, deciduous and dark green pines; the path along which he walked was comprised of dried earth, fallen leaves and pine needles and small twigs. Ahead of him a man walked, appearing fully cognizant of his surroundings and at times casting a glance towards the sky above with its pure blue smoothness scattered with the tailings of departing clouds. Tom knew in an instant that this man was Heidegger; a man short and lean, whose face was obscured by the angle at which he was viewed. Tom called out to him, for he was already making ground: ‘Herr Heidegger!’ The professor turned slowly and with a look of calm on his moustachioed, almost bird-like face – a ‘Vogel’ flashed across Tom’s mind. The professor waited as Tom walked briskly towards him. When they were face to face the professor greeted Tom with a ‘Guten tag’, looking at him with invitation and query.

Tom introduced himself and, stumbling over his tongue as to how to approach the subject, claimed that he must speak to the professor about a matter of great urgency and which would doubtless be disbelieved. Prompted to continue by the professor Tom thought it best to merely show him the blueprint in hopes that it would, as tangible evidence, cloud Heidegger's disbelief in what was presented to him. The professor examined the blueprint which he had forcefully, and yet with utter tact, grasped from Tom's hands giving an occasional 'hmm' and frowning as if the thing required stern discipline for it to confess its meaning. There was a bench nearby and the professor cordially invited Tom to sit and assist him in disclosing the blueprint's meaning.

Heidegger easily identified the Sanskrit and took out a mechanical pencil from his pocket with which he wrote in a feverish haste his interpretation of the text, articulating as he went 'ahh' and 'hmm' when he alternately encountered ease or difficulty with the thing. 'You know young Tom, I once was a student of Sanskrit in the old days – then the language lost much of its interest to historiographical studies; but now I am pleased to say that it is revived to a degree, although I will hardly allow it to interfere with my latest work, which concerns the subject of metaphysics and hopes to shed great light on the concept of 'Being' which is either the height of thought or a 'whole lot of nothing' as the Americans say.' They continued to talk for some time and Heidegger voiced his esteem of the English practical sense, though couching it in a reproach that they did not need anything besides and were thus the quintessential pragmatists for better or worse. They parted shortly thereafter with Heidegger slapping him on the back with an 'auf Wiedersehen' and Tom was once again left to himself in the forest holding the blueprint covered with Heidegger's deft handwriting. Tom once again employed himself about self-reversion, immersing himself deep in the memory cache of his mind and extricating as many points of reference from out of it with as much intensity as he could muster. The void swallowed him up and he was back in Eytimir's bookshop with his friends expectantly waiting for him.

'Well – how was it?' asked Doug. Tom smiled at the question and told them that Heidegger was a capital fellow who had been all too happy to translate and interpret although he had only translated the last 4 lines which he felt was necessary in understanding the metaphoric poem, itself dating back to what some have thought several millennia to ante-diluvial times in ancient Persia in the region of the Fertile Crescent. Joann was delighted that their translation was so apt, nearly conforming to the letter of Heidegger's. The notes he had made were pondered upon line by line which corresponded to each line of the poem:

'Something – whatever object – is
Substantive and complete Utilizable and
susceptible of change Capacitates one to move
Throughout change remains whole'

Adjacent to the last four lines he had written: 'leaves remnants of itself of the indicated colours; purpose: teleological; this entity is also destructive, perhaps even self-destructive. My interpretation is likely that of the god Thrakmarti who could be, according to more recent legends, controlled and who controlled others; a classical representation of inter-subjective power struggles, perhaps even a struggle between one's inner antagonisms, between ego and id or world and self – the poem is deeper than first appearances suggest. Look into it!'

The three friends studied it carefully, having no need of the friendly professor's advice; it took some time before Tom, articulating the metaphorical lines, brought out: 'That's just it – when I

can overcome within myself all of my former antagonisms and self-hatred, all of my failings which I'd sooner have left beneath the foundation of my being like so many woodlice, then and only then am I capable of 'utilizing' myself as it were, of transporting myself across time, for I must be 'substantive and complete' and the 'throughout change one remains whole.' 'But how' Doug asked, 'does one go about 'utilizing' oneself and 'remaining complete'; how can one overcome his inner antagonisms and so travel wherever he will across an infinite dimension, make of the infinite finite and all through his own agency?' Tom didn't know exactly but, he said, it is likely an entirely subjective act that one can only achieve for himself. On the recommendation of Joann they – those who could not weather the storm of past failings and thus allowed them to recede into the background of their minds instead of being superseded – all gathered round in a circle and, through the medium of mutual support, in hopes that they would the better be able to overcome themselves and so regain their pride and self-worth from out of the ashes of burnt bridges over the present and into the past, and upon which they stood. Tom was no exception whose inherent, though at times wavering, belief in self had capacitated him to travel across temporal distances – now he too was a part of the rebuilding of their souls that would take place through the masonry of self-reversion and the finding of value in the present, and hope in the future.

Doug's thoughts we will investigate first merely to repeat the order of their appearance though each of the friends had experienced simultaneity of remembrance and attempt at overcoming. He travelled back to the stick and red, blood red, horizon of his mind which seemed perpetually clouded by the threats, insults, and pain of his dad's liquor-odored breath. His dad sat on their veranda and drank a mickey, tapping his fingers sullenly against the porch and squinting his eyes in dissatisfaction at the setting sun which illuminated the sky that dark red. Perhaps this was where the red issued from and became so intermingled in Doug's thoughts? So it had a concrete basis after all and did not have any association with his father who appeared to the young Doug

– before he moved out of the house to live with his aunt – to be the magical prophet of the heavens, bringing down upon his son in a torrent of real pain, the horrible sky and the very world in one heave, leaving him a startled wreck breathing raggedly in the closet until morning.

– But he had known for some time that the red was a part of a world wholly unconcerned with his own minute life and that it merely enhanced the terror of his father's wrath. Now he viewed himself as a teenager, alone in the playground and the dog he kept there – so disgustingly innocent, so helpless and needy. He had taken a stout branch from a nearby tree and carefully fashioned it over the duration of a whole day into a formidable instrument of pain. The dog was securely tied to the merry-go-round and Doug would push it so that, in order for the dog to avoid being strangled it had to jump onto the play equipment – and it was then that Doug bore down upon it, at first teasingly hitting against the bars so that they made a clanging sound, and then lightly, testing the animal's flesh whose eyes rolled terribly and whose whine was to Doug the sickening whine of weakness – his own he saw now – the 'testing' became more intense so that a soft smack would resound across the empty lot and, eventually the pace quickened, and Doug was riding the merry-go-round and wishing the stick down upon the dog whose whines – at first so poignant – now lost all their vigour and soon stopped; only the sound of a smacking – like beating out a rag full of dust with a rolling pin – remained. The red blood which covered the stick brought home memories and Doug now, ten years later, recognized his own father within him and felt the contrition that purged him of the guilt and desperate sadness which swarmed about his head, trying to engulf him, whenever he said a cruel word to Joann and thought about smacking her so that she'd 'keep quiet', though he never said anything about it. He resolved then and there to apologize for the mere thought of doing such a thing, for to him it was not 'merely' anything – it was everything. He came out of his fugue...

Joann, as Doug was thinking these thoughts, having them rather, bombard him without any control or instigation – it was only the apology which took on the form of his present voice – was thinking similar thoughts, though the abuse she had undergone was quite distinct from that of Doug's, but nonetheless affecting in its cruelty and thus wasn't it actually very similar?

Surrounded again by the familiar taunts and projected hatred of her peers, isolated as a leper and assailed with judgments, like so many rotten vegetables, she saw herself running from the pool where they had thrown mud on her bathing suit bottom and on the chair on which she had sat before she had decided to drown her sorrows, instigated by their judgments, in a soft ice-cream. She was running along the tree-lined streets of her neighbourhood, running to the comforting auspices of her home, away from the public shadow she cast over everything and which had, presumably, been established by all of her 'peers', who were the enemy, that much she knew. She walked into the house and in astonishment perceived that, sprawling on the couch wearing a John Wayne outfit was Doug and his smile brought a comfort to her racing mind. Tom gazed, in the aspect of Clint Eastwood, out of the window and across the lawn – or was it a lawn? Now it had turned to Texas hardpan – or Kansas or something, as her Dorothy outfit suggested. 'There's no place like home,' she said. And Tom turned slowly towards her and nodded: 'I reckon', he said. She was back and the blissful smile which crossed her face evoked the inner calm which was self-contentedness.

Tom too had gone under a self-induced spell, had hypnotized himself through self-reversion and entered once more the high school world of loneliness which he was only too thankful to leave just a few years before. The trophy he had been presented with for the most outstanding student athlete certainly didn't come at the hands of adolescent justice, whose scales were perpetually tipped in the irrational bias which oriented around the self and its sphere of influence, however small. It must have been the administrative body and not the awards committee which interceded on behalf of Tom with its noble blindfold and equilibrium judgment, blind to the fact that it was Tom – ostracized student of Reginald Parker High – who was having conferred upon him the award of outstanding athlete, the crème de la crème distinction which invariably – except in this case – fell to the popular crowd, as indeed everything did. The implosion into this shining light of worth and value was almost all-too readily supported by the faculty who left – except in this case – the collective judgments of this areopagite body to decide what was right and wrong, up and down, and Tom usually found himself trammelled in the mud of their criticism and neglect. After the awards ceremony he went home on his bike, trophy packed crudely into his shoulder bag. As he was exiting the campus, Tom looked back and perceived a group of popular kids staring after him – he turned away, not wishing to incur the hatred which seemed in their judgment his rightful due, and pedaled for home. – But in the looks on their faces, now that he was older and really attempted to purge the minuteness of their looks, was not there contained within something of desire: for friendship, a feeling that it was they who were ostracized not he and that his rightful place, far from being in isolation, was as a star equally as bright as they in the firmament of the high school universe. Now he understood: it was his own innate silence and introversion, oft-times manifesting itself in shyness and in hatred – not so much at them but at his own impotence – that set him apart, and no such desire existed on behalf of the student body. Sure criticism's had been levelled at him, even epithets and hate-filled glances, but these were just the welling-up of past injustices overflowing in the intense emotionality of youth. He no longer felt that same hatred – for himself or them – and arose again to consciousness.

The three friends now sat blinking at one another, friendship having not only been renewed after a period of actual slumber, but deepened and the connection they now made with one another was far more profound than anything they had achieved before. Joann was the first to speak and she told them how she had, in escaping the torments of her past, found solace in them and how they act as her mutual aegis, protective and loyal in their masculinity – they even assumed the forms of the classical administrators of justice, whose law was their own and who permitted no one else to challenge them without a fight. Doug also, through tears which emanated from the core of his being, communicated his recognition of the daemon which had haunted him throughout life: abuse. And he felt that his atonement must be made to his two friends, especially Joann for some harsh words and even harsher thoughts he had harboured on occasion. To him, he said, they stood as a support, a safety net by which he could prevent this fall to earth, to abuse and, perhaps to suicide. A similar acknowledgement as that of Joann's was made, an acknowledgement of friendship as would be done in Tom's case, as he related how he had forsaken much that had lain dormant in his former life, had paved over the flowering escarpment of his potentiality before it had a chance to bloom, to his great disappointment. They shared now a thankfulness for friendship and through it clung to one another, simultaneously freeing themselves from the strife of former memories.

They would discuss this time later under the elms of the university grounds, how they had followed Eytimir back into Neolithic times, stripped him of his time-travel device with the parting shout – Doug's province – that 'he should seek out suitable company' in the vast, primeval swamps of many millennia. The bookshop was now being converted into a box store and the time-travel device had been destroyed beyond repair by the group who now looked towards a happy life of shared fulfillment.

Memoirs of a prisoner: a testament to life

Each morning I awake and behind my daily routine – it is what defines my life, instills it with meaning. Food is to be partaken of regularly, in accordance with the scheme of my life, and each morning I wake to force down that which I prescribe myself. The thing is, I don't want to; though I know it is of value, and health the end is sated thereby and life itself is fostered nevertheless this punctiliousness of eating immediately upon waking to still the muscle catabolism which has begun throughout the night and to which needs to be broken hence 'breakfast' as a term and physiologically important practice – is to me the simultaneous destruction of greater ends even than health. Prudence the whipper of conscience cautions me that this is the 'wrong' thing to do, that I must serve the self-propelling wheel of digestion, ingestion, and excretion – that I, a servant of life, must serve my master.

How I wish that, upon waking, I could merely stretch my limbs and imbibe the fresh morning air, that I could sit in the stillness without the intense rushing of life and experience the latter in a new mode. This is that which is the privilege of the average, they who represent the antipode of my narrow, cyclical existence. Morning comes and they are allowed to 'ease into the day', to 'take it easy' and remain happy, social selves who are not bothered by the abstract conception – and concrete urgency – of muscle catabolism. To them muscle catabolism doesn't exist and they acquiesce in the peaceful stillness of the morning, enjoying conversation amongst friends,

family, and lovers. But I, a prisoner of routine and slave of life, have none of these, for the speed of my own existence, rocketing towards sundry unknown goals, allows no time for stopping to smell the roses of life with my familiars. And thus they are not my familiars; and thus I am alone, a man born to serve the models of ethics he creates, the hyper-real victim and instigator whose world revolves at twice the pace of those to whom he formerly compared himself to and to those whom, when comparing himself, serve merely as fuel for the ethical models constancy as it races about along its pre-determined course. Of course some may say that all conception of reality has been forsaken at the hands of this model but that begs the question as to what reality is being forsaken and the answer would of course be, offered by the prisoner himself, the former reality that his predecessors possessed, lauded and devoted themselves to – and indeed, such devotion is still present though to a different idol and in a different form: it has become a more intense willing of the would-be concrete actuality of this new model, glossier and more difficult to realize. Such a model is body, is mind but is soul most of all that harbinger of all creative destiny and thought.

I the prisoner go about questioning myself: do I merely serve their model, that of greater men than I who are my predecessors though perhaps not my direct descendants – for I also question if I am worthy of their heights or ever could be. But nothing can create itself from nothing – not even something (and especially). So I must have, must I not, models which I can alter and change in my own image – and this is, is it not, self-creation.

Why do models matter to one who is forever alone through those same models – for they distance him from everyone who subscribes to another and with them he cannot converse for they perceive him as speaking in tongues? Now a prison in the mind and in the body to regularized motions which mock a will aspiring to be free; seeking out for itself something beyond the immanent horizon of its life. I wish I were no longer prisoner – but I am jailor also and my will is unbending – and it will never break under the soft bleatings and whispered protestations of my prison – myself.

I had once thought the world stood still as it waited for me to inhale breath and so continue my life and allow it to spin once more – for I once conferred existence upon reality and reality upon existence, godlike. Now I realize it was my own unreality which spoke from out of such delusion, and in tongues. Maybe the crowd is right, maybe the mode I serve is a plastic and artificial creation – maybe. But I don't believe in its artifice for it's been good to me over the years, as a mother and father, a nurturer and a beater, an instigator and a cooer. It has been to me, has this amorphous ideal fabricated in the recesses of my mind, a lover and an enemy – the greatest of all loves my enemy and the greatest of all enemies my love; in whatever aspect we have served each other well. But where does it lead, this ideal of intense creation which even now drives me to write beyond what routine prescribes in attempts to prescribe an even more difficult routine?

- Somewhere, better (always) than nowhere. But am I not somewhere now – is this not sufficient? No, clearly not, else I would rest in satiety. But presumably for me satiety can never be through myself; through myself I can never come to rest.

Again wakefulness has overtaken me and with the noise and dawn, the light reproachful of the sleeper motivating his ascendancy from the thick and rippling pool of dreams; the trucks and their motors growling in hostility against the passive repose of comfort, I got up without thought ready again to face another day. Here, no doubt, I would confront the same machine growls and perspire for a time in the sweat of my brow as I filled the time between another premature death and this my atavistic birth. Thoughts had come to me again as I stood over breakfast, inhaling

portions of food precisely measured out and selected with the height of bourgeois judgment: frugality and perhaps taste. Though I had a different ethic, namely that of the stoic, my stoical movements are speedily brought to an end when I think of all of this bodily servitude to which I am bound as slave to master, serving the epanaleptic spirit of the flesh, the cyclical and mortal god of surface appearances. Thoughts had taken over me again and these were the reflections – a copy of the previous day – of the recluse whom no one loved. Attentions were focused upon me and I allowed the world of beings to revolve around myself as absolute reference and creator of my own sham world. Caught up in its reality in my blindness to its unreality, that blindness which allows one to stomach another day, I lost myself as a concrete aspect through my own inner life; looking out I saw body and its machinations, regular and machine-like, and found myself to be an unfortunate victim of my own excesses. The very prospect of encountering yet another day which brought about the same thoughts and activities yet did not cause me any great consternation. I fell to as always, as a starveling over a Christmas feast he meets with in his dreams – for my dreams were sustenance and without I would surely have starved long ago.

In my mind there are merely projections of a reality, nothing which directly represents any given and experienceable reality, only the fantastical flight on the wings of imagination and hopefulness at the prospect of change. But like any of my prospects real and ideal they are equally realizable as unrealizable in the position that I currently fill - my station in life as an introverted dreamer. Thus speaks hope and pins the blame on my own innate dreamer's constitution but such is the very cause of the unrealizability of things and for this reason they can never attain to any dimension of objective reality, something graspable and by both mind and body. No, I had always wanted the graspable over its converse – the available which had come to be available through the very act of imagination, but which was, a fictive possession for my life belonged, if not to the body and its incessancy, then to the mind and its insular self- protection within the realm of dreams.

I have noticed, scrutinized rather, the body and its constant expenditure of the substance I place into it – I body, I external cause and internal effect. Quickly all materials are assimilated so that, with the end of thinking and creation of mind, I must enter into the ranks of the mad runners of existence – some slow and others fast – as I feed it again and again. The irreducible units it claims as the matter of its composition – all abstract non-entities living within the hut of corporeality – are quickly consumed, assimilated, and replaced so that I may continue to run, seemingly without aim, after all of the others, with them and ahead of them in pursuit of tenebrous goals. Such is life and to view it with such a generality is either to ascend the tops of the highest mountains, gaze across the horizon of Being and then, after an inability to withstand the heights, to plummet once again, be it in the form of drunkenness, indolence, or death for the constant wheel of life permits of no slouchers in the heights and if one seeks to run along it he has taken up character which he may shed as no snakeskin, but as the vital essence circumscribing and encapsulating him. The disjunction of this general conception of life is of course to rage blindly in the depths and against the depths and against oneself and others even more. - For to have recourse to oneself is to preserve oneself, and others even more. For to have recourse to oneself is to preserve oneself – and oppositions foster allegiances and one's allegiance is always first and foremost to himself. Only a woman, the paradox and contraction of paradoxes and contradictions, could not understand this – and could, at the same time – for her children make a martyr of her and in absence of which she has no crosses to bear or to be borne upon, for infallible she creeps through the night seeking a mate.

Such thoughts are no doubt unpopular but it is the fact of the outcast to gravitate towards such things – for such is the aspect they have been branded with and such their stigma – they may as well wear it with pride! I do not, however, ask for martyrdom but merely for an axe – so that I may hack the foes that attain concrete form within my mind and, if worse comes to worst, hack off flesh from my own being and thereby heal what would have grown cancerous. Such is the fate of those who are prisons of their own delusions, slaves to the models conjured up in the inner recesses of fantasy.

Am I sounding too much like the Steppenwolf, too much like Zarathustra – or their creators? Well, as an ensemble of relations how can it be otherwise? Could one ever exist as substantive absolute whose ground lies in its own god-like creation? – Philosophy's answer is equivocation. Tied to the necessary spinning of life's top, its slow and toppling revolutions or alternately fast and regular ones – for the regularity of speed and the speed of regularity go unheeded by the untrained eye and this one is by nature a philosopher's. But in servitude to dogma and far-fetched ideals this eye is plucked out and a blind ease and slavish duty replace the restless searching of a seer and a prophet. So I ask: are we an ensemble of relations purely, and, having one or some or many or all of these pulled out from under our feet as the rug-like foundation of existence? Are we bound to anything but ourselves? But boundedness is an illusion, there are no limits outside of our own fabrication and all is anthropocentrism. But is this not the greatest philosophical equivocation? For the man the absolute is established in the stratosphere of limitation – admitting of degrees between expert and layman. The earth spins and revolves on its thumb and we are oblivious to it all in our gazing outwards with telescopes and mathematically watered-down raw data of abstract quanta; oblivious to its spinning as we gaze within ourselves – retreat more like it, so as to avoid the questions with which we belabour ourselves.

But why speak of collectivity, the 'we', when you are solitary. No need to invoke the universal 'man' when you are your own universe, both center and sphere. And to proclaim it aloud: I am my own universe and to have it reverberate through the vast reaches of your mind, into your highest heights and lowest depths – is this not loneliness, emptiness? It is more, it is – solace and a final resting place for tired travellers.

Could I have it any other way? This is no rhetorical question, but one which solicits an answer from the depths of mind, from its inner sincerity and past the dissimulatory gel-like barrier outwards into articulation. Could I ever have had a chance to be like others, to have friends and familiars – like others? The answer casts its echo over the whole of life - whose dimensions are small enough to register the sound and to carry it back and forth over its walls and territory.

What answer can I give but the blank-faced animal stare of acquaintances with this already stale knowledge? – That I have been a part for so long and that it is contingent whether or not something will ever amount from it. The question should be whether or not I desire this alleviation of loneliness at the hands of a friend, a friend in the person of another living soul? I certainly desire this alleviation but not purely through its conversion into solitude at the hands of having something to live for: for at times a concrete object is not enough and one roams about for a concrete subject with whom to commune and precipitate a gladness and infatuation with life. Such an attitude towards life has been so long absent that life has narrowed its definitional scope to the exclusion of this same. – And yes I suppose I want after all to live a life with others for once, so that I scream out into my blackest spaces, into my darkest corners, for that absent other whose presence I've never known. Scream as herald of my presence so that any who may have accidentally lost their path may find solace upon my own, so that the both of us may share

a friendship and a conversation along this path towards the darkest yet – or the brightest; for what misery could follow upon the coattails of this waking torture? And as a prisoner of the self I flagellate my demons, my judgments, and criticisms until, bruised to a purple ripeness (ripe for tears) I lift my face towards my heaven and god and cry out that I have atoned and should be allowed to lessen the torture's duration, to diminish the allotment of poison pills so that I may be freed to run in the exercise yard of the mind and body, an intense respite from an inactive and slow death – why not speed it along its course?

Are you talking to me? – You! - Base demon of the mind. I do not want to go your way – that of the procurative, of the needy who disguise desires as needs. A consumption to them is a swill of excess and true consumptives of the spirit are they in the most novel sense. For their whole being is a hypochondria, and what ailments have they not diagnosed themselves with, what remedies, sweet and pleasing, have they not sold themselves to; bought into through a self- prostitution to all-too easily attainable ideals. I give the label of babiers of the self, who take the little 'I' they have given birth to and cuddle it so that it is lulled to sleep. But such a child is the consumptive one, so that it mewls all night with gaping mouth for the teat of pleasure and satiety. I call it hedonism when the 'I' is fed. Better to starve it as I do, for we all have a little 'I' and a little ire directed towards it. For though a critic I am self-critic above all, and leave no place on my toughened hide bare of the mark of discipline. This is the self-flagellation and martyrdom that everyone hates, because it shames them in their own weakness – they are exposed to their own weakness through the observation of others of greater strength and so they attack in ways legitimated by the social, that nebulous ideal to which they bow. This is justification of contempt which looks to a formal ideology, an ideology of majoritarians, for its legitimation. Such is consumption of the spirit and what cause won't they, these 'average- everyday' people, swallow after it has been baptised by the majority as faithful member of the herd? One could criticize the world without end – for the world, at least for him, as no end and it merits, through its own hypocrisy and at the hands of those who can't stomach hypocrisy, criticism.

I perceive now that there is no coherent thread to this as-yet brief manuscript. So be it, I choose the arbitrary path as the most sincere and unaffected of paths. I was glancing, a short time ago, at a comic book I had in childhood how I, when still young and full of hope, had viewed the beautiful contours of the demi-gods within, their momentous problems and concerns, and implicitly knew that such problems and concerns were those available to me. Implicitly in imagination – and thus, dwelling in imagination – but certainly not with the inked human caricatures of comic books as cause, I led an existence wholly dependent upon an imagined reality, one whose dimensions conformed to my idealized perceptions I gleaned from a mundane world of regularity. Psychologists, no doubt, would call this dissociation. Well, then I am disassociated from reality – no regrets if it be a mundane one, so long as I may access the theatre-house, ala Steppenwolf, of the mind and entertain my own sad existence by the images therein. Now I am a superhero of the mind, now an arch-villain, realer than real in a world of imagination.

How could I not become dissociated from life when life dissociates itself from me? How could I not cast myself out of the kingdom of a social happiness when I am so affirmative and proud of spirit – for I would not suffer then to cast me out of a world which had become a garden of evil for me through innate sin; for I had transgressed paradise's code and its iron-law would lay me outside its barred gates. Before that happened I, like the superheroes and arch-villains I had become to myself in various aspects, flew over the long arm of the law as it swiped for me and

landed myself in my own wasteland of ostracism. At least I had the power of self-control and the choice was voluntary – but there was no other choice when the gates are barred by surly fellows whose language is as foreign as their way of life, and if I were to attempt an entrance, a coup on this kingdom of modular ends (all too typical, all too similar) they would merely grin at me with sneering glances and the mob would shame me with their rotten-fruit judgments, hurled over the impenetrable bars. The gates may have stood open now and again before I left the perimeter of this kingdom, but it was either a baited trap, an attempt to entice me with prospects of warming honeyed offerings, or was ignorance of my person and superhero qualities. I don't know but left anyway and now I am apart from any such kingdoms.

I feel so distraught being a prisoner, having the keys to my cell just within arm's reach and yet refusing to grasp my one outlet of escape. But these keys are likely just those of the watchman who had, in his idleness, dropped them upon the ground, those which gain him entrance into the parlours of pleasure he frequents in the night. Perhaps he wants me to join him, this lonely man; to cast off the stripes and stigmata of judgment and to join him in night-time revelry? I don't know, but I know that he is so often gone from his rounds, through neglect and a laissez-faire policy even the most dutiful attain to in this present age. In any case, for whatever motivation I, the prisoner, have a means of escape – even if a delusive one which would lead me into his night-time parlour of sensuality and away from these my thoughts. I had often conversed with him, my stomach in knots over our contrasting positions and the sheer incongruity of the relationship we had contracted, he with his sensuality and myself with my hardened pursuit of an unattainable existence, a flight from the world back into the cage of my soul as a hawk whose hood has been discarded and who sees nothing to feed upon but emaciated forms unworthy of the chase. This night-watchman spoke to me once from out of the shadows of his restless pacing and I harkened unto him for my thoughts had become a strain even I could not bear. He discussed his plans for this night's foray, said that he alone was master and that I had to do what he wanted, that I must follow his every caprice. He proposed, though he had already committed to it, a night at his favourite parlour, 'the heated flesh' and I arose from my slumbers from listening to his drone in panic as this was something my whole being rebelled against – better in prison! – Better within the confines of my own cell! And he pressed me with great argument, enticing me to go the way of the good man, like him, to 'let off a little steam' and 'forget our worries' over the bitter apple of life which we had been fated to bite. But I answered that I would sooner ruminate upon all that was my lot and would forsake it for no object, would cling to it rather, with undying concern over this my little slice of existence. Laughingly he went off and threw the keys next my cell; this was to be charity but was more like sweet torment I had, as a prisoner, known for so long and could thus tolerate as the very source of my life's affirmation. I laughed with him but soon grew silent once more – how long had it been since my last feeding? I examined the clock on the wall for clues and discovered that it was indeed time, my stomach and limbs and whole substantial being making the initial assumption to be verified as falsified by the universality of an abstraction. This was where real life of fractionality led invariably – to the abstract creativity of one's own mind, for it was the factory of meaning whose 'products', themselves tinged with the voice of abstraction, circulated amongst the hands of 'individuals' whose use of them was purposive and nothing in the nature of superfluity.

In my mind echoed the story of Dostoevsky's dreamer in his underground sanctuary – I had learned this mode of life well – the only meaning understanding carries with it, for understanding is empathy. Here I was the man of conscious attempting to batter down the walls of reason, the postulated limits of my being but nonetheless postulates for that, but I found that I only bloodied my fists and that the pain bespoke my own helplessness and fallible being. And

now that the watchman had gone I was eating again, consuming the necessary objects in accordance with the end of survival to the nth power – of ‘thrival’ as I called it, the ethic of those who are ahead of their time and who thus cannot cope with the differences besetting their self; for it had grown from out of normalcy and now that it had gained a substantive existence it lost all sense of perspective. Airs whirled around me and I shot arrow upon arrow into the infinite reaches of a space I hadn’t the strength to cross with my poor bow. And thus I trained to enhance it, strengthened its sinew through exercise and would make of it a sentient form that would bring down from heaven barren possibilities, raining down upon a plain of actuality. And I had brought much down thus far, much emotional strife and trauma, much capacity and swelling of strength within such capacities – but the sacrifices of many hours shooting at targets which had grown dark through my scrutiny, had become barren and hopeless, had left me de-energized in every way, in the physical and mental dyadic aspects of a life which supported itself

and took support out from under itself all at once. All at once I was done my repast, a distraction whose ulterior purpose was to inject a sense of regularity and hazy rationality in my fog – clouded life of dreams.

Now the work was to begin and I was to be its agent, struggling through hours of constant employment and, if the employment slackened, I was to confront the same old self-hatred and consumption which was the replacement of more physically active work, even if it entailed the transcription of thoughts on paper with taut muscles and ragged breath. There was always the ragged breath of intensity with which I confronted my shooting of arrows, and this was my source of pride, even arrogance. I felt the judgments which sought to topple my own most pride, my loving arrogance. They gave birth, in a strange union with this my attitude, to self-righteousness, the defense of the weak, or of the strong man when his Achilles’ heel is attacked draws it away from his attacker and strokes it that it may be placated in its shock and girds it with the greaves of protectiveness.

I had taken a brief respite from work before the next meal, before I entered what I call ‘the other side’ of this necessary postponement of my life through the consumption of Spartan fare. It was a lulling time though I remained true to my ethic and read a few passages of Aristotle and Plotinus so that mind would assert itself against this lull of laxity, what others call ‘free time’ – for I would, and will not, permit a cessation of work until I feel, until I know intuitively that work has exhausted me body, mind, and soul and that no more great output could be expected. And, with the regularity of a clock, this is what occurs throughout the day, my energy and order for ‘tolma’ being at its height after waking then diminishing in proportion to my hours lived and experienced throughout, ending in a blurred vision by the harsh light of a lamp as I struggle against sleep, a representative figure of life in the parabolic battle against death. And this cycling throughout life with intensity bothers me only during this time before I wink out into a darkness accessible only in dreams – though for this one must be the deepest of dreamers. And I anticipate that this is how death will be like: a furor along the path of life, racing against all one’s fellows and around obstacalia only to confront in the approaching distance a disappointing fate and then to look back upon life in sadness for what otherwise might have been, searching in the darkling light for a possibility grown dead, buried in the ashes of failure and past blindness, recognized now too late.

Truly my only escape from this intense, cold-steel barred world is through a redirection of my own vicious energies (my own most virtue) to the area of the ‘physical’ and away from mental employment. Thus the location of the cage is transferred to one equally as backbreaking as the soul-breaking labour I had undergone in my previous loneliness. Only a prisoner can identify

with his fellows and empathy, I'm sure, reciprocates between myself and all of those under lock and key for violation of a state which had never supported them, swept them under the rug so that they were forced to fend for themselves on scraps and against other hardened souls who manifested themselves once more to the light though at the wrong time – to the light of the paternalistic interlopers – the state enforcers, lawyers, police, and wardens. They were caught but who suffers a worse fate? – He who catches himself or who is caught by others? For those who do not administer their own punishments at least are allowed to lick their wounds. – The others throw salt on theirs and lacerate themselves all the more.

All of these soft, effeminate people in this world whose only outlet of profound emotion is the most human of outlets: the animal's. I know their hedonistic catharsis is their very saviour and to it they bow with bleary eyes – but my ethic is not theirs and they cannot feel the extremes of temperature which only a true man of conscious can. Thus he, this man of feeling, seeks to blacken the world in his criticisms and judgments – for these are relegations, and when he speaks so he wills a blindness in relation to the spectacle of the crowd. The dazzling lights, the brilliant magic of the big top show – such is a past-time fit for the hedonist. There are rides which take his physical constitution to heights he otherwise would never attain to, send his stomach into knots and his head in a whirl; but my stomach is perpetually in knots as I experience the extremes of emotions throughout my own ride along life's track; my head is also forever in a whirl as this track's very rationality, and madness of rationality, makes the word 'same' look very absurd indeed - an inner contradiction that defeats itself, its logic of purpose. The wheels of teleology have become dysfunctional through their ceaseless operation, for their very intensity – their modular intensity – has spun them off the track. I serve the model and its service to me is – a distraction from death.

I perceive, on my rare public forays, young women of my own age, fertile and alive, happy in their little happinesses and yet yearning for the change which is to signify the beginning of their new lives, transition from one epoch to another. But surely the logic here is erroneous? No transition between epochs takes place as the flip of a card divulges the obverse, but rather a transition of vitality, a life-oriented, lived transition as the shadows of nightfall array into the brightest dawn and its rosette glow. Such a glow is the fertility of these youth and their frivolity I rejoice in as they rejoice in it. This frivolity of life conceals such ultimate of purposes. Shall we stray from the track we have established and thus go the way of the nimble ape, or at least the harmless night-watchman – and all for the sake of a smile which pleases the eye, inviting.

Where am I being invited to – I ask, when such a smile graces my path? - To life or merely its propagation, the cyclical servitude which is creative perdition? But either way, to either extreme, one confronts his own extremist misery – for he knows that both co-exist only in opposition biting and snarling at one another while woman looks on oblivious. There have, to be sure, been creative souls whose life has become a peaceful meadow and they themselves have become herd animals grazing in the meadow upon the sweet clover of existence. But I prefer the raw blood of a kill to sate my palate – and herd animals are the preference! Would I be converted into such a one, me a wolf, an enemy, a dangerous and loyal friend (if only to myself) to such a one as they? - Raising children, babying them, and having the arrogance and self-righteous usury of a woman as my wolf's chain. It is like that of Fenrir in the myth and I question at first laughingly: 'Can such a chain hold me?', and puff out my chest in self-affirmation. But once this has been tied around my neck I am aware of the choking influence and find the smiling, playful face of woman tugging at my chain so that yelps of anguish escape my foaming maw – this creature can subjugate man? – Better that this creature be a feast for man (and I hardly can bring myself to say it through my own most weakness). The pretty nature of such a delicate flower distracts from the poisonous barbs underneath!

With sufficient energy, 'vital calorie' as I call it, one feels himself a god again and all things are in their place revolving around him. Such is the way conception would have it but such is mere appearance and the god-head dies away flaccid after its climactic celebration of its own energies and life. Rilke called this a 'satanic explosion' to specify and narrow my scope to the act of ejaculation. I say that it is indeed the rain cloud heralding the storm of opacity of mind – but this is merely the initial effect and those whose moderation enables the incessant wheel of life to propel itself and not lie down by the roadside exhausted from over-taxation of strength, those are the ones who have self-mastery, have taken the reins of their will which they have harnessed to drive it towards destinies greater than a poet's lamentation at the fact of impotence. One must go beyond, in hyper-movement, this common place where the weak constitution may speak of Satan and death and the negation of life's vital strivings, transcend it towards greater attainments – and this is why I, the prisoner have chosen my path: because I can and therefore I will. With me I set up a causality of implication between potentiality and actuality and where no potentiality exists I do all in my current power to make it so, that it may the quicker cross the bridge into actualization. Thus do I trap myself in prisons too small for they who laud the myth of freedom and erect temples in its name? But what is your freedom if these temples, once erect, now become flaccid, maybe not through satanic explosions but flaccid nonetheless. And if your temple has fallen, slumped towards earth and all of its pettiness I entreat you (as I entreat myself whenever I fall) to speak the dialect of Rilke and pronounce this flaccidity 'satanic' and thereby create for yourselves a new morality in which the good become at first negation into which all things being implode which cannot resist it, and those that can – let them be the good's new phase, that of positivity and again an erect godhead facing all challenges and offerings of life. Thus one should say to himself translating words into action: 'inexhaustible' and thereby, however foolish it is to all appearances, make it so. This is the value of the prisoner's existence.

Sloth-like the flaccid man walks about the narrow niche he has marked out for himself, his narrow territory upon earth. He wipes his feet on the rubber 'welcome' mat so that no mud or dust or violator from the natural world may disturb the pristine condition of this faith. He walks softly for he fears the coughs of reproach at the sound of his tread overheard by friends and familiars. – This is what is celebrated as life, this disgusting disgust towards life! Comfort, ease, and laissez-faire facetiousness are the lures in their little temples; ancestry of an ideology which is as artificial as the sugary silver balls on a wedding cake. Try to sample one of these ultra-sweet symbols of manufactured pomp and circumstance. Can you stand the taste? It is the taste of effeminacy rearing its head once again – do not stray here in this domain of sterility, floors sparkling with a goodly façade of death. Rather flee and come into a cage of your own – thus I would have it. Make your cage another place in the world, no possession but merely a tool of utility – do not define yourself by your possessions – for then they possess you. This sounds Marxian, but what of it? Does that mean that I am a communist and must involve myself in all of the contradictions and trickery of refutational logic from the mouths of those who I've offended? - Not at all. They, these insipid representatives, merely want an alibi for their possessions, be it hard work or an anthropology which legitimates them in their endless grasping. And if they can't 'procure' an alibi, then a scapegoat (and all of his goatish ways) will do. They have, in their refutations, gone beyond the bounds of relevance and produce a causality between actions (or existence) and essence, attempting to unify them into an identity – the better to target them with slings and arrows.

I have just returned from the dull experience of a world of concern. They who live within this world of concern have carved from out of infinite possibilities their own niche and then spent time over it as a mother does her child. Bickering about the same form filled with a new content seemingly each moment they call this bickering a life – it distracts them from their immanent death. - How petty. A life can be gauged through one's sphere of activity, that is to say, one such mediocre person who hasn't the thoughts to lift him above the base scrambling over one another that constitutes such a lifestyle. And to think what is being eschewed for that sake! How much which does not exist could, in the hands of others, be so easily brought about, and which is vanquished at the hands of the petty, the arsonists of possibilities – accidental and intentional arson. How much better, in their comfortable abode and houses, to simply listen to the rain fall outside in the early night-time and to contemplate all of the auspices which exist in this world instead of grasping the nearest thing – be it idea or concrete object – and lick one's lips with a desire for its consummation, for its consummation at the hands of possibility's arsonists, the petty. Whatever is most easily accessible, whatever goes down the throat easiest and pleases one – this is what is sought – but not by me? The petty alone do not have such aspirations, rather the people who enjoy the rain and reflect upon the pleasant comforts of life also like the feel of slimy, slick pleasures sluicing down the gullet. This is an apt characterization of the age: 'Consummatum est.'

This morning I again woke up, instilled with a practical sense that had lain dormant for some time, as I had had nothing 'objectively real' to do with myself for some time. I thought of the future and what moves I would make with regards to my life and so forth and so on. And yet there is present today and along my future horizon a great absence of purpose stretching itself forth above the once sunny clouds of regularity I had placed above, whereas now they darkened with this lack and thought seemed to implode into itself, into the hatefulness of having nothing to do with one's life. I was let out on parole the other day and had visited the average-everyday abode of a family from town. Therein I was welcomed and treated well, was dined and afterward lay leisurely about (to all appearances) while a discussion concerning myself and life arose. This is the following discussion and, once it has been read, I'm sure my sense of purposelessness will be made intelligible, to a degree of clarity which will at least lift the hazy clouds of mist from my own eyes: 'You have been a clerk for several years at – ah... what was the name again?' came the pleasant voice of concern from the mouth of the house's mother. I replied that it was a certain location, etc., to which I received in response agreement, for what I didn't know, a courteous 'yes' followed by a thoughtful repetition of the word. A subtle reproach was concealed beneath the agreement connotive of its opposite, for I had recently departed from this walk of life, though this hardly accounted for my feeling of purposelessness, quite the contrary. Again the questions, prying into the dark crevices of my life which I endeavoured to conceal through clever witticism and equivocation. Led astray like lost children by my will-o'-the-wisp discourse the couple in whose house I was being entertained were soon chattering away about their children whose lives were so promising at yet so young an age – the envy of all around. – This was the general unfurling of the conversation which sailed along at a medium pace all through the evening as I noted intermittently through a constant gazing at the clock. Soon it was over and we exchanged pleasantries and I was free once more from this doldrum existence of duty and routine. – Whence the purposelessness then? It was the very dryness of the room, the life and the conversation, which had infected me with a sullen apathy and with which coping was difficult. – Did people live like this? They ran along a certain track, occasionally switching onto another – as I had presumably done; call it an experiment. They were old friends – or friends of the family – and I had just got out on parole – and once they picked up steam, from a deliberate, though not overly hasty shuffling of wood into the stove, they were soon riding along the track

with the cadence of 'I think I can' repeating itself in their minds as they steamed along, acting as their whistle alerting the public that they too followed a similar path – and just look at the beautiful paint job! Purposeless: because their regular route along a familiar track instilled me with emptiness, disgust. Purposeless: because they were captivated by the crowd and its clamour for models, to which their paint job approximated. Purposeless: because the dry coughing which concealed reproaches affected not to conceal anything. This heavy, humid air of purposelessness, this lack of oxygen, stifling breath and life; this straightjacket conversation squeezing into a definite rut one's nobler thoughts and converting them into articulable commonplaces – for this alone was permitted, otherwise it was display, pretense, and a will to superiority. But how could one not have a will to superiority if the relation was a constant between inferior and superior – and the noble qualities he exuded could not be understood let alone touched by the lower rung on the ladder. In fact – remove me from the ladder altogether, whichever rung I'm placed on, I'd sooner be a log or a piece of doweling cast into the wilds that to be a functional step along a course of typicality, worn through constantly being trodden on or left intact as the last step, shining in its purity. Such purity is besmirched through its participation in a hierarchy which lowers, in a mad clamour for elevation one is trammelled in the mud even if he is foremost on the pile of dung over which he climbs. And this was all embodied in my unfortunate visit. Perhaps I did this to torture myself, perhaps to alert myself to the antipode which existed and in relation to which I was bound as a deer in the headlights of streaming death. And though I did not want to be struck by any vehicles, I nevertheless allowed myself to be struck, to feel the pain of the dryness, the regularity, the general purposelessness of it all. Now I gladly enfolded myself into my own prison once again, had tried parole but failed in the attempt, for it was the prison and the world had undergone an inversion, where respectability becomes a disrespectful dullness, dull as the waiting for the timer on a batch of cookies and the consumption of these latter; dull as the crossword which sits on another 'respectable' representative of middle-class sensibility. No – I would take no crosswords, would never own a kitchen timer let alone have a kitchen in which to time things. Better the wilds, better the outlands, away from all and to live a life which doesn't follow along a track of regularity called life, making gradually towards death.

It has rained for several hours, for over half a day, and through the night it kept me company. Now it continues to do so, this vital essence descending from an unknown place. This is the perfect environment in which to philosophize, one feels as if all things have harmonized – and this is nature's design. The solemnity and yet gaiety – a strange combination – of rain as it falls and moistens the dry earth – to me this is akin to philosophy as it enlivens one's mind, moistening it from its dry complacency. All one can do seemingly is to indwell on such days, for the solemnity would have it so. To sit and gaze aloft with wondrous face, slightly melancholic over the shadows cast over being, but for this reason all the more happy in relation to the downpour. The gaiety inheres in the agility of rain, its constant falling upon the earth, its ever-downward descent as if it grew weary of the lonely expanses above and sped quickly down to experience a human reality for once.

But then all of this beauty – which I associate with pagan times – fades, or rather, is jarred apart through the roar of machines which disturb the tranquil beauty of the rain's fall. They, men, have descended upon earth too, not in gaiety but in crude narrowness of mind, obscure vision which perceives only one thing and one thing only: self-interest. The rain is forgotten, the prospect of money appears and so throughout history machines, instruments of production (of profits) are developed and with them the natural world shrinks to ever-smaller proportions.

This is why I associate it with pagan times as I view this far-off world, now dead and

unrecoverable except in imagination, as the pre-industrial era – all industry arising with machines and all machines arising from out of the seat of our self-interest and will-to-convenience, the ego. The project of man is an ego refinement, just as the profiteer refines minerals for exchange and profit so does he refine his ego by association to the productive forces he has developed and which are available to him. And the rain's steady descent is now eclipsed through the intervention of artificially created noise. People can theorize about the so-called 'natural-artificial' distinction but everyone knows implicitly that all of that which is fashioned through human agency is artifice, hence art, 'techné', the signpost of human intervention.

But what of the natural? Is it not a vicious hell and no paradise contrary to the opinion of many? I perceived a seagull – 'perceived' through the third eye of my person, the seat of all perception – which was flying in front of my face as I stood behind a pane of glass. I perceived it, took it out of the regular motion and speed it was involved in and slowed it down to the beating of heavy, fleshy wings. Such creatures are commonly viewed as delicate and even 'beautiful'. But the hostility of nature I saw, rather 'perceived', in the fleshy beating of its wings; in its cruel and insensitive eye, in its nearly grim expression, for its beak was closed and pulled down into the shape of a sternness only the most barbaric can achieve. And were not the ancients, and the moderns, and all other philosophers, correct in placing nature on the bottom rung of hierarchy if emotion and sensibility are at issue? But perhaps not, for so many humans belong on this same rung, so many who to all appearances are great poetic souls and true believers in common cause. But causes which are common are for that reason all the more unworthy of belief and all the more barbaric. Witness the t-shirts which depict a school of small fish chasing a larger – this is an inversion of the roles of power, but hegemonies are always incapable of sharing power and those who make the attempt are merely competitors who have hegemonic ideals which cannot be translated into action as they lack this power, the inner power and constitution for power over others. And thus they belong on the lower rung of hierarchy for power is not an inherently evil thing, only the failure to realize it when one harbours such ideals in his breast – such a one is the bad, i.e. inept person, the democrat who adeptly disguises his aspirations under a uniform disposition, which achieves actuality in practice and through habituation. Some animals, notably dogs, have within them a personality deserving of a place above the human herd, an exalted position even. Thus they should wear the laurel wreath and have their inferiors bow to them, regardless of the species.

This reminds me of an amusing anecdote, one ironical which I often bring to mind apropos the right situations. When a human walks a dog and cater to it in the form of scooping up its feces, who is really servant here, who master? I say during these times that the servant is being served, but I generalize; in the particular instance I should view it in isolation as a particular instance and compare it with my standards of masters and servants. Some of these slovenly people deserve to be servants – even of animals, for they are servants already of the code of the social. Why do they do this disgusting act – if one may stoop so low as to give it an analysis? Because they do not want to incur any trouble on behalf of their neighbours, who frown upon the leavings of animals on their lawns as if it were through the agency of their 'master' – for possession extends so far in bourgeoisdom, even to children it may be added. And it is indeed amusing to view the dogs with their smirks as their 'masters' enwrap their feces in a bag. – I share in the joke of these noble creatures at such times. But it is not to the animals, viewed as mere possessions, as sources of comfort (to touch, to 'pet') and of superiority (yes some require the 'possession' of such a creature to feel superior – for no other relation suffices), but to the code that these people pledge their allegiance. Status and value and worth – all are standards that the people erect as their idols and to which they bow. All become subservient to the

maintenance of these standards and it is the genocide of individuality which effects such a transition – call it democracy and the emphasis upon the ‘individual’ as a mere abstract category which has been sucked dry of the concrete vitality through this equalizing machine of the state, this ideological control device.

But I am being critical! Let us maintain this critical outlook and yet level it at the critic himself; the abstract category of criticism. It is of course fine to tear up the roots of negative things from a neutral earth, but if one does not plant the seeds of positivity in its place then what purpose does the negation serve? Am I a janitor that I must scrub clean the floors which have been trammelled with the muddy shoes of vice, scuffed by the black rubber soles of mischievous children? But one thing should be noted here: that such soles don’t always scuff the floors and thus the children should not have to discard them but should be allowed to retain them and play at whatever games they would – or are – prescribed. Not all shoes which appear inimical to the floors at first appearances, are in fact. Some white-soled shoes are the ones which do the most damage and to discriminate between types is the prerogative of justice. Let us make this allegory more intelligible to those who do not wish to listen and therefore cannot: the actions of some which appear strange, evil even are so often not that injustice reigns across cloudy skies and this is the weather condition one meets with. Just take one white shoe – at random – and attempt to scuff the floor, and you will be surprised at how often it achieves the result and how incongruous it is to first appearances. This is almost always the case with young girls and young boys – the former appearing of purest white and the latter of blackest death – who, with discerning judges, are quickly recognized in their true essence, as false appearances.

This perhaps is the obvious but merits a little bit of commentary as analogous to the above: women are a seeming, men a being. The former are a display and a masquerade, an equivocal and a suspicion all of which attributes are overlooked through the blindness issuing from the less observant person. Men are – or at least are in essence, apart from the effeminizing influence of democracy and its rules and strictures – a heavy oak cudgel at times, which exercises itself through and for itself, a playful leaf blown on the wind of existence, for not everything is a war, merely a drill, and not everything is a serious duty, merely a playful acting – but always underpinned with the contrary elements.

The trip that I had taken while on parole left me without purpose but once I returned to my cell my purposiveness returned and I overcame all notions of failure and lackadaisicality. All of these thoughts I had been thinking upon my return home and when I go there, expecting no one, for I had no friends or relations to present their images on the horizon of life and to crop up in my mind’s darkest corner – only faded and weather-beaten images of past lives – I was surprised to find a gift lying on my bed. How did anyone get into my abode, for I left no key there, nor did I ever leave unlocked any of the entrances unless I was there – for the ease of exit in a torturous room of introspection? I opened the package and found a music box, gilt with golden edges and made of a fine mahogany with smooth, velvet sheen. I wound it up and – again to my surprise – it played a song that I had known in my childhood and of which I had fond memories. Listening to the melodious notes which transcended the present, I was again a child and felt, intuitively, one with the world again. No longer was I adrift but rather encapsulated in the warmth of blissful memories, harkening back to a time in which life verged on the eternal and all finitude was stripped of its fleeting quality – an omnipresent now which slowed all motions and which arose from out of my own imagination; imagination and reality merged into one again and the real became conditioned by its ideal counterpart and reciprocally. A flood of colours poured along the dimensions of the notes, reared up in great

waves and crashed upon soft, marshmallowy barriers to be hurtled up again. – And then death came and the music ceased, which came first I couldn't tell, for the cessation of the music heralded a death of images and I was lost only in immediate perception again, with the dull throb of the mind seeking retention of the harmony it once had experienced though never possessed. The music box too stood dead and inert upon the dresser where I had placed it. And there it would stay, presumably until actual death came and my possessions were sold or until inclination moved it – and its analogous memories – under the bed or into a dresser drawer.

The incident I simply cannot forget: a self-interested end disguised in the sugar coating of altruism. Examples are, of course, replete: we have those who put on a smile and assist the old woman across the street the better to take her credit card; we have the man who offers his son a ride to a certain location so that he may simply get him (i.e. transport him) to vacate the premises immediately – and all for self-interested ends. Such people are snakes who would curl gently and with caressing scales around your foot, then disappear into the grass so that you may later find a poison incubating within your blood. They are scouting, that's what their mission is: scouting for gain, scouting to achieve their own self-interested ends and, like snakes, I enjoy crushing them underfoot as I walk off, out of this snakes' den and into the light of trouble-free life. They are my cast-off skins, and I would rather leave them cracking in the hot sun than have myself be suffocated within them. Truly such people are unworthy of my attention and so better to kill them while I can, while they rub gently against my skin as it contorts in repulsion under their hissing of lies and attempts to lull one's suspicions to sleep with gentle rubbing.

I have this conception of an archetypal soldier in my mind, and he represents duty. His features bear the mark of servitude yet a blissful servitude; knowledge of his position and relation to his master. He is blissful, full of life and mobile as he obeys – and obeys without question. And really, when one thinks about it in the manner a soldier might when he is no longer a soldier, that is to say outside of his aspect of soldier – on the weekend or when duty no longer calls to him in tangible form of drills and marches – when one considers it: is question for question's sake really worthwhile? Why is duty frowned upon so much? If one wants to participate within a society and have a functional role – and acknowledges it moreover – then why is this so repulsive to 'consciousness' or 'conscience' or 'freedom' or independence or some similar thing? What is so abject about duty to a master one desires to have? To be 'one's own man' within a state cannot be for that confutes the very nature of the state. And if one is so inimical towards the state why then doesn't he seek out anarchy? So, why is he here, bound to duty to the system, when he advocates a thoroughly inconsistent belief or faith? Such people are protestors in vain, in my opinion, and if they are so repulsed by that which attracts them: then why are they so attracted? Such people, these critics who have no empirical ground for criticism, are to me the most abject, and when I find myself descending into criticism like this, the whole of human reality – of a shared, collective human reality – slips from between my fingers and dissolves into the fictive earth upon which I stand. For to conceive of an anarchy when one not only does not – but cannot – exist, is a vision alright, but not one of any great future, merely the whining protest of an insignificant member of a society who would lose himself in inauthenticity and who wills to gain for himself a character amplified by denouncing that which is greater than he – can such a one be anything but a no-account critic, an impotent being? Clearly there is no other sentence more appropriate. – So why not duty then? Why not an acknowledged service to a master one can never overcome? This may take on the form of an inner ideal forever developing and broadening as an identity called 'the good', 'the noble', or what have you. Or it may assume that of the state, or a boss, or something more concrete. My duty is not to myself – no. My duty is to my ideals, and these may either coincide with the state or someone else or no but that is mæ

coincident, although I acknowledge also the influence of others upon my own doctrines which, like snowballs rolling downhill, pick up empirical content as they roll down the slope of existence. Perhaps in this rolling my ideals become lost, or become altered in accordance with my own original scheme – pictorial, imagined or otherwise. But what matter? Have they not been replaced with others or altered so that another has formed from out of that which just came to be in a preceding moment. Is this not life? Then duty then, and too think of nobler conceptions than an ignorant raillery against the ‘master class’ which one will never join. One should be sincere with himself and acknowledge his own position and the duty it demands, which must now become – through such process of acknowledgement what he demands.

This military way of mine – when I do not stray from the ideals I have established and do not suffer to become the pawns of contingency – I perceive only as a good and never as a bad. It is decried that a life of duty to oneself and his ideals, to ideals generally, if they be taxing on his person and demanding of vigour and employment, is a foolish waste, not actually the living of a ‘life’ at all. But such a judgment issues from the mouths of those who cannot comprehend duty and all of its surrounding concepts: negation of everything which confutes duty, the functional reconciling of pertinent means to duty as end; of those whose standard of living is lower, ignoble and base. This does not, this ideal (and here we give a positive expatiation of it) require a regularized plan of action – duty is the only thing that should be regular. One needn’t adhere to a schedule of any temporal or physiological dimensions – unless duty demands it, for example with punch-clocks and athletic regimens. One must simply establish duty as the scheduler and when it calls for something to be done (in the service of its idealized self) that something bears with it and in its conception an imperative to do it! One is not in a substantive relation to duty, and duty does not exist as-it-were outside of oneself as an alien force, but rather emanates from the one of his being and thus when one serves it he serves himself for the conception is instilled in his very life blood and this is what it is to be noble. Thus those who frown down upon the soldier and who curse him out as an oppressive force are merely railing at their own impotence that they have no potent force and this to them is the most oppressive, and this is why they rail so loudly.

And in a sense of duty, i.e. to be instilled with this conception and, to have no content with which to form through one’s inner self and ideal, no available actions or potential actions to carve out of the raw experiential manifold in the name of duty, is to languish and to seek self-destruction be it in the form of raillery in impotence, self-hatred, or self-consumption in a fire of vitality burning through the dry brush of an environment which has been without rain for so long. This is how one becomes a suicide. Thus he must search out a field of action in which to march in accordance with the tempo of his mode of life, regulated, in the cases of stronger men, by duty. What is to be discerning here in such a man is to understand when he is not strong enough to exist on such a field and to give battle in the name of his ideal, and thus he must wait for the appropriate opportunity, the appropriate battleground for his inchoate strivings.

That duty must be amenable is seen through the eyes of prudence. Sometimes one adheres too closely to a duty he cannot maintain and at others he deviates from a duty he cannot maintain. In both cases the very concept of his end should be modified in accordance with that is immediately feasible, yet should present a difficulty which attains to the height of his capacities.

But this expatiation is becoming a grocery list – all of those who harbour within themselves kindred ideals will know now this concept is applied and how it carries one over all of the strife

he encounters as it manifests the very gem of life, which is a constancy with life – affirmation as its pursuit – for duty is an affirmation, and life entailed by it without exception.

It is again frozen in the prison and I am still awakening from a rest upon a flat floor crushed by heavy blankets which numb the limbs. Concentration levels increase while the atmosphere humidifies and cools – reaches even heights of coldness intolerable to most – while the body, considered as substantive from the mind, cannot be as adequately employed. This is a delusion

– an extension and deepening of the conflict – between mind and body, but its solution, I would speculate, lies simply in the atmospheric temperature, the one pole of the body require a cool, if not cold condition in which to be employed, the other requiring tepid heat of summer months. But these are odd summer months indeed, being so strangely cold; the paranoiac heralding of a new ice age in which all of humanity is swamped in the flood, the deluge of ice and frozen water thawed by the tears in the stratosphere above. Truly man brings his own doom upon himself – thus speaks the prophet of doom, the lay preacher in the street with upraised bible and eyes which gaze heavenward in religious ecstasy. This would no doubt be the interpretation of the defenders of pollution, of industry as cause, who would bespatter with mud the truisms conveyed through the medium of eccentricity. Nevertheless the cold summer prevails and it is preferable to the vermin infestation consequent of the sweltering heat so commonly associated with this season. Now however the common association must inevitably dissolve as the pouring sweat in the hot summer sun from the bodies of those caught up within global warming – or a new ice age. Such is the question and, it is hoped, may one be capable of posing it in the cold and let the heat of summer wane into non-existence – at least one will go down thinking as opposed to sweating in bestiality. Truly the dualism is present and all too present: mind and body, in relation to weather-induced stimuli, are indeed opposed and this perhaps is why people – the herd – enjoys summers so much because it carries with it the animal effects of the herd and, like true herd animals, they love to revel in all things tepid and bodily, furtively sexual.

Those whose path makes way for the winter coldness of intelligence, whose modus vivendi is the stiffness of frost or the visibility of breath upon the air so that words become heavy and ponderous, pregnant with meaning; those are the ones who welcome the grey skies and who look upon this as the only life-affirmation accessible concerning weather of this sort and are, insofar as their body supports it and does not act as distraction to this end, never happier than when cool and even cold weather pervades their now active and searching minds. This is how one should speak of the weather, not as old women do with the most insipid observations humans are capable, uttering from their dry mouths – dried through years of stale unoriginality

– the bare facts of immediacy, whether it will rain and by what sign they can judge it, etc. If one wanted to construct an anthropology on this basis (taking ‘anthro’ for the universal of both sexes) he would begin by postulating that people make inductive inferences that attempt to predict future weather conditions and that this is the innately practical ‘sense’ (feeling, intuition, propensity) of Man qua men and women. But such originates only from dull and equally ‘anthropologizable’ (susceptible of being converted into abstract categories within an anthropology) people, usually scientific minds, whose minds are as stiff and dry as desert sands and who, no doubt, enjoy these desert climates more so than any healthy humid-climate dweller. But of course we generalize merely to attack and thus attack a generality, a bare, abstract category.

When I was a youth I had dreams of world conquest, or at least the instrumentality of conquest through others, by association as it were, as Talleyrand was to Napoleon. This was my function and instrumental role as the clever ruse-spinner and conqueror of those who innately

recognized within my person qualities they themselves lacked and which, through my possession of them, I became a great and eminent figure. Throughout the years this greatness has diminished with the feasibility of its realization and my recognition of the fact: the desire would be to meet it half-way, between the conqueror of world and conqueror of small territory. But that was then and now I am satisfied if I can conquer the monad of myself, that irreducible pit which has sunk deep into the earth of existence as a marble is dropped into silt and falls to the unknown bottom, which the person who is at first estranged from it must go and seek and, upon its discovery which is by no means inevitable, he will have found himself. What happens after the fact of 'finding yourself'?

Is one content merely to sit over this shiny bauble and to stroke its smooth sides, polishing it now and again with laudatory, honeyed words? Or does he not rather throw the thing as far from him as he may in attempts to lose himself, so that he won't be plagued by the endless radiation of the thing, which is truly his own plague demon? Or does he not preserve it untouched in a glass case upon the mantle, and smile at it with sad, melancholic remembrance of the time of its discovery? – There have been worse cases in which past history, in which present existence, have been mummified and so set to rest upon the shelf rather than becoming an integral part of he who claims its possession and thereby ruins himself through a dependency upon the object. Only art can have a liberatory force here - for it contorts the inert forms of objects and re-establishes fallen kings upon their thrones by usurpation of new ones. Perhaps laziness, embodied in the corpulent form of a sprawling king, sprawling upon his oriental divan with Asiatic moustache, has come to rest – after a cold war of brief moments, swept under the rug of power by inclination – upon the divan and who, by his very corpulence, would be hard to extricate. Or perhaps a mighty war god has descended upon his throne and, rather than await battles, goes out and seeks them with flashing eyes and lightning crashing about him, the animal markings which border a territory ever-expanding and yet to be conquered. These fallen kings, these new tyrants and demi-gods, are the transformation of man by himself into his most idealized forms. But such is art and such is imagination and this faculty of the creative – which defines them and makes them who they finally are – is the harbinger of change and breaks the glass case on the mantel piece so that the bauble may fly about and cast its magic glow open corners of possibilities that would otherwise be unknown and lay dormant in as graves of possibility's demise.

And this could be – with justice – said to be my whole undertaking, not only in the writing of these papers, but in the totality of my praxis namely, the discovery of self from its hiddenness, its illumination in edifying discourse.

And it is said that the world is forsaken – with all of its inherent possibilities, under the guise of ignorance in the forms of people, places, and other things of that sort – through this endless focus on the self and its never-ending quest. But such is life and this is absurd as nothing – for absurdity it's not. Such a logic of the inherent epanalepsis of life, the continual performance of the means without the end, the becoming and never the Being, is this not merely a reflection of a mind caught up in its own self-propelling logic? It is the failure to realize ends of moment perhaps, or the ever-outreaching proclivity of a mind that has grown to conscious and so looks – always in abstracto mind you – into the crystal ball of the future and into the hieroglyphics of the past, and discerns an abstract pattern founded upon an abstract categorization of reality into 'means' and 'end' and 'becoming' and 'Being' and other such mythologies. I honestly don't understand how such an Aristotelian logic can be taken seriously after its levelling at the hands of Nietzsche and post-modernism. For all such categories are mere abstractions and have no

necessary counterpart in reality and to consider 'such' as having 'such' – the abstract the concrete, true form the content – is itself an absurdity. This is why the bodies in life qua absurdity is so unbelievable except to inchoate minds who have not adequately grasped their place within the world. And it is this latter, mind's situation amidst world, body's situation as mind within world, as body rather, that is philosophy's talk. A thoroughly pragmatic one and yet an exercise to be taken seriously for it is a tangible exercise of a faculty we are in possession of and this is the only 'in-itself' which is more for the high of mind than anything. Thus all actions, all cogitations and acts of philosophy have as their end the after-effects of body, the feeling of accomplishment which is thoroughly structural and relative (even to oneself). 'Philosophy of the body' it should be called, for the body is its province and it redounds in all of its rewards in the body.

No shrewd analysis will be necessary in affording one with an intuitive (it has to be intuitive!) knowledge of the body and its effects after philosophizing. People, these philosophical-rational dullards, serve abstract ideals, serve democracy and the people and nature – they even serve the 'body'. But I choose to serve 'I'. I don't choose to serve a substantive element of Being like any of the above, rather I choose to concentrate Being into the satchel of 'I' as a cheese is placed into the leather satchel of a traveller along life's path. – We may be allowed satire too you know! And, walking along the path of life I sample this cheese every now and then and, rather than finding it bitter or sour or unpalatable, it has the zesty flavour which momentarily sates my appetite or brings it on in a salivic flood or hunger to be insatiable and unquenchable by any small morsel. And this is the allegorical presentation of the quest for knowledge of world, of self, and of self in world and vice versa. Some would toss this cheese away to be quickly covered with flies and dung. Such people are the philosophers (teachers, preachers, etc.) who dispense with life-sustaining nourishment so that the flies may sample of it and grow as bloated and fat as the dispensers, for the latter choose not to consume this fare but rather the wholesome, nutritionally wholesome, fare offered by those who dispense to them – and thus are cheeses squeezed into a powder, the whey being lost in the dust of forgotten potentialities, of times that never were nor could ever be.

Discovery of the self: a road along which many travel and none complete in terms of distance and along which most become lost – for how can one help getting lost if he has no direction. Indeed, there is actually no road and this is a bad allegory we should decry the traditional allegory of 'life's road' and 'road of life' – it is rather a landing strip which one is placed on from birth and to land is to be born. Life, the moment preceding the landing, is a constant meandering around this vast expanse of pavement, investigating it all or staring blindly at various spots until the doppelganger ship descends from whence we came, to take us back to our homeland. - Thus philosophizing as 'homesickness' (Novalis) which we engage in throughout our stay upon the earth. But this is all very facetious for we are upon the earth and inextricably

– so, there is no home apart from it and philosophizing qua mere restlessness of life manifesting itself in superfluous energy, that which is not employed about the simpler things in life. And these simpler things in life can consume all of one's superfluity if he lets them! Which is why that which is most difficult to achieve is as a natural outpouring of our faculties should be pursued. The reason the maxim that 'that which is most difficult in achievement is the most worthy' is to inevitably fall flat on its face is evidenced in so many of the countless idiotic things people do to take care of their superfluity, such as card-playing for example. Only that which directly results from the body's reflexive taxation (its own employment) can be said to be worthwhile, for this is what is natural and no 'mediation' goes on besides the self's confrontation with a world otherwise unknowable. Mediation is a necessary,

and necessarily human, anthropocentric – thing. Have I been understood throughout all of this raillery! I hope that I have thus far for I suspect the population of readers diminishes in proportion to the passage of each word – each letter at that.

All of life's hopefulness should rightfully be defeated when it exceeds the bounds of criticism, and when a barren optimism, crawling with the weeds of dormant negativity, of ignorance and neglect of care, becomes one's garden of Eden, then does he require a god to cast him out. But who should such a task fall to but he whom it most effects, namely himself, the gardener of his life whose knowledge should be cultivated enough to uproot the weeds which constitute negativity's sprawl. And it is criticism which is the trowel of negativity, itself having merely a levelling, an uprooting function. Well there are yet many weeds in my garden and I must get to work before they choke the remaining flora which try to blossom in the shadow of their counterparts.

No god stands above me with the moral imperative, the whip of morality spurring me onwards to harken to duty's call. Rather I have usurped his function in independence, have procured for myself independence thereby and now stand over myself a slave driver of ends. Weeds populate the garden of my life and some of them I have deliberately planted else I would lack employment as a gardener; others have sprung up through the natural elements which derive sustenance from my earth. Health, when it becomes unhealthy, I perceive and attempt to pull it from the earth, to stop its spreading excess to the detriment of my garden paradise. If one defines himself by way of health that is entirely question – begging, for health requires an object that has within itself as a predicate, as an essential element. Thus the contradiction of a total devotion to such an impossible ideal, for one forever serves an end and health is only a means, a stepping stone across the river of life from a lower to a higher state, an anamorphic progress, a pilgrimage in development. Health is the fuel of my rocket-ship and therein I speed towards distant stars, stars which twinkle in their distance, desires and temptations as eternal ends. One might call me a spaceman then and throughout the infinite expanse of quantity, throughout a spacious domain without boundaries, I the spaceman rocket through space – that is to say, as long as I remain in health. Without the necessary fuel of my flight I fly not. No I fly only with health and on the wings of health, and when health becomes unhealthy through a transgression of its kalon, and then I drift through space in melancholic forlornness – without a means to the realization of an end, without water for my brightest flower that it may stretch above into the stratosphere.

I see them eating and eating – all in the name of health! But is it not an alibi – for hedonism and the pursuit of pleasure as an in-itself? Eating – or starving – but the alibi of health remains. Perhaps they merely wanted to look pretty the dainty things and discovered starvation to be a means? Perhaps excess was a means for the distraction from misery, or a means to the development of superfluous strength? In any case health is whitewashed by the intentions and ends of mendacity – mendacity is a fine painter of murals which disguise the ugliness of the landscape, of the ends and intentions of its articulations. But maybe honesty was too ruthless with them and they could not stand to be beneath the wheel of their honesty? – Thus they had
tolie, because it turned the wheel of life's vehicle and brought the man in ch close to happiness?

– Perhaps. But truth does prevail as an objective standard and it is purely inductive. What! – An inductive 'foundation' for truth? – Thus they clamour. Why not? The ephemeral truth of your apriori is a delusion – a mendacity, a lie. Apriorism is a lie but a useful one of course, just consult Nietzsche. I would have 'aposteriorism' as the only feasible doctrine because it is all experience – or it is nothing. Because there is no apriori and no aposteriori – but only what is,

only what is 'given'. - A philosophical problem indeed. So we have no feasible doctrines outside of the present moment; we have no husteron and proteron Greek errors which should have been unmasked aeons ago. But what matter, a philosophical digression now and then is permitted.

I was discussing health. Health is a balance and is based upon experience, upon what has come before and facilitates – as a means – the ends of those who declare themselves to be healthy. Health is a means – let us put it in its place – and to be healthy is to be able to realize one's ends. This is to be 'good' – all things implode in the abstract pragmatic category of the 'good' and it therefore supplies one with his standards. But is merely the 'natural' means, that means which (speaking from out of the present historical epoch – basing my theories upon experience as that which has gone before) is the body's state, its best state in accordance with an end.

What is crazy? Is it to be no longer in control of yourself? Or is it to be, rather, in control of yourself in excess, to supersede the golden mean of self-control? What does it matter, everything seems to imply a standard which is simultaneously a restriction upon a multitude of standards, of different vantage points and perspectives upon life and in the most practical sense. To denominate – I call that to pigeon-hole, to categorize, to relegate and through aside 'out of sight out of mind'. And is this the way to knowledge, when knowledge itself becomes anarchic? When knowledge loses its restless wildness and becomes pinned down to some conceptual locus in the class-case of conceptualization – to be forever undisturbed and constant, inert and non- dialectical? But I say such standards are merely the devices of positivism, the unreflective satiety with what is effective and of utility – and these latter are the greatest standards of all bordered in gilt frames of gold, jewel-encrusted – or so the positivists, the unthinking reflection- absent people, would have it. What then is a standard besides a limitation which forsakes multiplicity, ties one down to definite conceptualization, to an ignorance of the future through subservience to Being – no becoming, then, being necessary. But Being is an abstraction – and nothing more! How simple and yet how great a cause of confusion. Be not confused anymore; open your eyes to life's value and forsake its artificial limits, celebrate its infinitude!

I the prisoner had once again encountered a strange and exhilarating liberation from my militaristic march along life's pre-determined path. From – seemingly – a recommendation of Hesse's that humour be rediscovered as a salvation from the anxiety of seriousness and the insatiable of seriousness, I decided to go on parole for a few hours (hardly that ever – but it's a start_ and to experience the simple, the happy, the ludic as a striking and liberating contrast to my own lived constraints. And the inevitable result was that – yes it worked, did wonders for my soul which had become enshrined in loneliness and bordered by the stone impenetrability of reclusion. The idol was cast down from its pedestal, the temple desecrated and seriousness was replaced by the shining idol of humour which revolved around this obsolete prison and frolicked about my head, awakening me to life as it is lived by so many who recognize its value. Now I could finally say 'yes!' to life in this cathartic laughter through which seriousness steamed from my uptight person. Finally, though I was still an island, an oasis beyond all human familiarity, I had achieved at least one lighted lamp with which to guide myself through life, and by which to watch myself dance in liberatory caprice. Humour was a liberation – and I say 'was', for it had soon dimmed in its brightness for it only reflected its light in the eyes of one who had grown dark with penitential suffering over so long a period; I, critic and dutiful slave to myself, prisoner bound in shackles for an eternity who rarely allowed himself parole, I was once more, through an acknowledgement of my own lonely position, adrift without that light and now had become engulfed in the darkness of existence clinging to the lone 'I' as life-preserver along stormy seas. And was there really any other way out of this life aside from allowing myself to

slip from myself and to, like a sick animal, drown my miseries? But I insistently clung to myself as the remaining hope of future change, as abstract potentiality which needed to undergo concrete actuality, which was swollen with the pregnancy of value and yet could not give birth to the spirit within which would inevitably become a stillbirth if no midwife's agency allowed its passage into life. I had allowed – for too long – dependency to get the better of me – and I had allowed independence also to defeat many possibilities, fundamental to my progress. But I grow tired of both dependency and independency, and yearn for death that I cannot realize the child within.

An axe lies beside me on the floor, dulled iron and solid, heavy-handed instrument. But what is it instrumental for? The answer is entirely subjective and that which I afford is: it is a representation of my intensity, a call to and reminder of my duty to myself that I must be, like the axe, sharp and solid and cold. Like its handle so like my body – hardened, straight-backed and capable of supporting my sharp and solid and cold head, that I may cleave open all of the hidden fairy-places in the wood of my tomorrow; that I may be the wedge which pries apart the difficult material and deconstructs it – thus my axe-head must be. – And the body its support and guide, but not merely its support and guide; rather it must be the companion of the head of which relationship neither term gains precedence, but both coalesce into an instrumental whole capable of levelling the dense forests of conceptuality and confusion and clearing a path through which a vantage point may be had to view the landscape. The axe rests, wedged within a stump of fallen tree – only he who knows how to wield it may – like the sword in the stone. One must be hard, cold, and sharp like the axe so that he may wield it with pride and that it may assume a value and rightful place in his hands as instrument of the soul; the axe is praxis, the soul's unfurling of itself.

As a representation of my intensity this axe harbours within itself the conflict with its opposite, namely the comfortable, the soft, rotten wood of they who have built a comfortable existence from out of decayed dreams, those which invoke the code of the social and dance around the American dream within their worm-eaten hut. The stench of sweet rotting mushrooms which have affixed themselves to the rotting wood pervades my nostrils – even here in the forest I cannot escape the presence of ignoble ideas and common souls with common goals. The imperative stands before me as an inscription on a law table: to destroy all of that which impedes optimal functioning, all of those means which confute the end and thereby the end itself.

Thus I take my axe-head up in virility of body and swing away to the demolition of a house of insipid values over which hung the sign of 'home is where the heart is'. And indeed it is, if by that is meant home is the external counterpart of the spirit. Truly one establishes for themselves that which their soul most craves, or at least endeavour to do so and they call the attainment of this craving 'success' and the incapacity 'failure'. But all such standards are relative, having different points of reference, to some rotting houses of commonplace dreams suffice while for others the bare woods and sky above is all that is needed in life. Come my axe-self, bury me in trees, in stout oaks and great elms so that I may test my strength against them body, soul, and intellect!

I grow embarrassed at this point, a prisoner who is also a 'failure' – for I lack this noble employment which I laud so vehemently in all of its pomp and glory. Failure as there is no sharp axe-head, no hardened body with which to support it – my standards have run away with my success and keep it at arm's reach so that, as I grope for it, it is beyond me still, a torment and

ignominy in the knowledge that failure has arisen from strife with its opposite, has gained precedence and the woods about me have become rotten again. That I lost my intensity somehow, through neglect or something equally accidental – the most intentional of accidents and the most specious of justifications! – I have therefore misplaced my axe and now the woods about me rot, for they have no iron critic who has within himself the power to fell them with his judgments and through his presence to quell all of their ignoble stoopings, to make them stoop rather, to the noble. But the noble has himself stooped ignobly and thus the ignoble revel in the fact that they are now the ones with power, that they have – through magical causes – vanquished their enemy.

Such a state-of-affairs saddens me, the prisoner, alone and impotent without a target in the form of others, only myself remains.

This is how I would one-day have it – my life. I would have myself become instilled with the power to change, a power which has arisen from myself – how I know not – and through which I am both harbinger and receiver, agent and patient. This is self-mastery, the ideal I have so-long striven for and which has thus far only occasioned a small working upon myself – as a marble statue which is continually being polished and carved in all minutiae so that at times the detail overwhelms the whole being. A loss of perspective consequent of a narrowing of one's focus has this as its inevitable result: that one becomes distorted and apish in appearance, becomes a substantive creature who exists outside of, and apart from, man. The whole marble landscape is merely crude rock still, for the world has gone undiscovered. What prophecy issues from the mind of a tormented creature, who perhaps doesn't even recognize his torment? It is that his continual working upon himself will, contrary to his intentions, not strengthen but weaken his form and that cracks will appear spreading throughout so that the whole falls asunder under the pressure of lack of strength. This is the result of introversion taken to the nth power, of a self-reversion that turns one's outward eye inward and contemplates the sad sufferings of its own acts, confined as they are to the self and all of its minutiae. And the loss of the reality of the social, let us not forget that result apropos of this fixity of gaze – the social becomes a fiction and imagination quickly eclipses it, the ideal supplants the real in fashioning it in its own image. The real, that little plaything, is dressed up in the clothes of ideality and so loses itself just as I the prisoner have lost myself. Crude rock and marble lie beyond this finely crafted figurine who makes himself small through endless redefinition without allowing this redefinition a relative aspect – to the crude rock and marble that could yield a fantasy world of heroism and beauty and not lie against this poor Herculean figure as a bare backdrop in a showcase of an artist's creation.

But the instrument of intensity cannot carve out all of the negative debris, the rotten wood and the decaying tree matter; neither has it the power to perfect or to reshape into a beautiful landscape the crude rock formation which surround it – a tool, the self in its concrete aspect has no strength nor potency when it is rendered impotent through a dwelling on the self to the exclusion of all other potentialities.

I would have sprung forth from these cliffs young nymphs with whom I, Hercules, could revel in the joys of life, in intimate comradeship which only the antipodes could overcome, the sexual antitheses could overcome strife generated through human relations which defy togetherness through this source of life. But is it really so? Or is it merely my warped perspective across the infinite marble cliffs that defies my togetherness with all Being and makes of it a hostile and oppressive force? I would have not merely nymphs but satyrs join the fun and frolic throughout

the marble cliffs which have been detailed with vines and flora and all manner of fauna – all Being portrayed on these now sparse, craggy, empty cliffs. This takes an artist's hand, an artist of life, but to be an artist one must be independent of the self-abasement and mastication of a prisoner – existence, the sole proclivity of the prisoner. One must find liberation through a creative spirit and this finds its dénouement in a jailed cell. All of the allegories I have thus far spun from the web of conceptuality have been inadequate to the task of overcoming the serious imprisonment of dependency upon the self; I have said I would have the converse – an independence from the self, a capacity of ineffable proportions and content with which to create a landscape beautiful and awake with life. Now I confront death – or it confronts me, it is all one. Dependence comes to the fore and has sat upon the throne of my life overlooking a barren existence for all too long. This dependence is the indwelling eye, self-reversion which has retreated from life into itself and established a throne therein, to reign over this barren dominion.

It is clear that one must grapple with himself in a usurpation from the throne – of course the absurdity is that he will merely replace himself – the king does never go into voluntary exile! Such conceptions of nobility have lain dormant for millennia and the self again and again – whenever perceived – sits upon the throne. This is perhaps the most difficult mission of all – that a new kingdom be sought out – why not be a conqueror of that which exists outwards not that which exists inwards? Why not become the hegemon that lies within you, only to change the hegemonic ideology from: 'self-mastery' to: 'mastery. This seems (to all appearances) coincident with the king's disposition – for he is by nature a hegemon and all attempts to lift the mantle from his shoulders are vain, for it is not the mantle but the shoulders which exude strength.

Perhaps I have allowed the narrow view of the outside world I have been presented with close my eyes to all of that which remains, have allowed the narrow line of perspective seen through blinders cloud my hopes for greater possibilities? Truly I have existed alongside leeches and rats too long! The little people have too long sucked the vital spirits from my veins and the rats have for too long sent their plague germs coursing through my system, whose immunity has weakened through this contact. All that I confront hardly qualifies as representative of the population of those who would change me for the better – through a contact with them, through a communion. This possibility of change is a fire which has nearly been doused by the rat droppings and thick leech bodies which, as martyrs, run across it in hopes that it is quenched and that I may again live in torturous darkness with the draining of my blood and plagued mind. Such a life defies the marble cliffs and their white purity! I do not seek a blood- bespattered existence crawling with disease and self-hatred at the same – and self-consolation. I seek rather a way out and a way towards an artistic paradise of the mind and body, a health of soul which may leave one beyond such pettiness.

That I had lain down upon sharp rocks – call them verbal abuse – and bled in silence, occasionally; when I could no longer stand their hard impressions and splitting of my shin in blood – I cried out 'leave me in peace' and found none. I confronted a lack of assistance; had to turn inwards for assistance that I might find a way out – and that way out was called the self. I pampered myself, in the manner the Spartans pampered their own children, made it sleep upon the earth and train constantly; life to me became a grim affair of training and I was led to my own prison in which I locked up all of my potentialities and ate the key – better this than to be tortured by blood-suckers and plague rats! Thus I thought and found solace. But even the prison

– complete with its implicated memories of the underlying leech-blood and plague germs, found

itself uncomfortable. I had become a prison unto myself and therein I was forever trapped. So it seems today that there would be no way out of this screaming hell of echo, reverberating tortures throughout the silence bombarding my life. Years past and I still harboured within this cruelty of past reproaches, criticism, etc. A starving dog without any positive output, feedback, complements, concern or interest I quickly grew cold and tuned my axe-head outwards toward the 'others' who had placed me in this prison cell which I called myself, though home I had not; for a home is a place where the heart is and mine was a wayward thing cast aside by so many and left upon the cold concrete of a narrow room – call it a prison, call it living-death! A poor starving hound that had been kicked too many times so that each hand that would stroke its fur became metamorphosized into a hob-nailed boot directed against its poor, emaciated form.

Each smack I've faced has an obligation attached though I, ignorant in my canine-wisdom and starved, must take what is given me – and incur the sentence of the imperative 'thou shalt!' Thou shalt be beholden to the rats and leeches who have given me a biscuit to chew. – And they would suck my blood and infest me with their plague-germs – how can escape be possible?

A new hope is encountered. A new hope which as yet lies dormant in the mind, swathed in the tenebrous mass of branches of reality. It is a beam of light which slowly, with the dawning of this new sun, this new horizon of actuality, creeps towards me, past the bars of my cell and falls upon my closed eye, weary from the dreamless sleep of reality's horror, opening them in wonder and incredulity that such a light should fall upon me. And this light, with its inner heat, melts me as I lie in my sheets; I become a puddle of amorphousness which is to be shaped by the contours of reality's hard concrete floor. But the roots of the forest in which I have been forced to retreat – away from reality into a reality of horrors, of disproportionate projections of my mind – have burst through the hardened concrete surface of my life and the 'I', once as hard as this concrete, yet now as displaceable as water falls through the cracks – for the whole edifice of the real has been cracked – streaming outwards into various channels. The new hope brightens and so the flora increases its lushness and I become the fertilizer of this budding grove dispersed in the moment amidst all of the roots and soil, to be imbibed by long-drinking roots and once straggling, stunted trees and plants, now alive with the light and essence of my being.

This new hope is the vastness of life's potentiality, its thrownness beyond the limitations of present actuality. There are friends, people considered as creatures of the light and not the darkness – friends not enemies – surrounding me once more, only is it all the better than a return it is an expanding and unstoppable growth as all the flora continues – and indeed, the flora came to meet me for it had recognized a change within me, a brightening, a hope and hidden gleam in my eye now externalized; continues to expand with ever-swelling happiness and with it I am taken up, and by it transformed into a thousand forms exponentiated by the surging vastness of life, now freed of my prison and all-too-long acquaintance – myself. There is only the radiance of sun reflected in the prisms of myriad raindrops as they fall from the sky beyond in completion of the chain of being, beginning and end never-ending eternity. I myself have become the dust of ages; the monadological ball of the self has been crumbled into dust and dispersed along the mind to be taken up by higher powers than him and by those which emanate from within him also. The world has achieved a communion and now all selves have mingled into one, all negativity has done its part and fallen away; all positivity persists in life's gaiety and dances on the wind of raining possibilities. No longer am I a servant of life, no longer master – all ties have been cut loose and I drift within the void and the ringing of life's laughter.

The Clearing

To merely sit and indulge oneself in the summer breeze and blue-skied fresh air was once considered a thrill ranking alongside the cool glass of water that accompanied it. It was a blissful time and all the magic of life was instilled in this pastoral landscape that I called my home.

Though isolated from highways and the incessant piston whine of machines, their growling engines in mid-flight towards different ends, my hometown was a place of serenity and stillness of great contrasts to any alternatives, which I had met with throughout this youthful time in my life; city life had never held me rapt with its skyscraper magnitude and omnipresent concrete – posing. Here was the place I felt I belonged, called myself, after the fashion of a young student who had stayed through one summer, a hyperborean, a northern soul whose paradise on earth was pine trees and hills of roughly hewn rock, carved through with dynamite to make passages for ingress and egress of travellers. Here amidst dark blue lakes which reflected the blazing sun of summer months, tanning the bodies of summer a sticky brown-red; amidst the forests of pine and sparse houses, which were lone testaments to civilization's influence, I made my home.

Such a place could hardly have held me rapt for long, for my journeying spirit compelled a stubborn body to take flight from its secure roost and discover the broad expanse of reality that stood somewhere 'out there', out in the blue yonder of indecipherability and my own ignorance. Such a territory begging to be conquered, solicited only the pioneering spirit and I was directly called up to serve as the stake-driver, the crosser of the Rubicon of Being into its particular sphere. This occurred when I was 17 years of age and it was to the logging camps that I was bound, to the world of industry and the question of industry; what it meant and why and what it held out to me by way of promise. That day I packed the few things I required for the next summer months, a simple trundle stick, as I would be fed and all other charms conceded me in the camp, and took my leave. Arriving there I was disappointed by what life had to offer – if this was it, and to me with my narrow field of experience it was a crushing disappointment indeed. There, higher up in the hills, cradled by a lake and implanted in a rough-hewn log cottage with the capacity of twenty – the numbers rounding out my co-patriots – I made my provisional summer living.

I will never forget my initiation into this strange conglomerate of people who were, from the very start, unwilling to accept me into the elite of loggers whose ranks included all present except myself. I was a greenhorn, a novice and to them I was to be a pawn whose youth and, a strange paradox in relation to my venturesomeness, very shy and indwelling nature did not at all recommend me from the start to these rough and extrovertive loggers. My cherubim countenance and precious manners (reflected in the way I unwrapped my trundle stick folding everything neatly away into its own peculiar space) also stigmatized me from the outset and so marked me as one to be treated in an off-hand manner, even the object of suppressed abuse and contempt which would have found a more natural outlet in the person of the foreman but whose tyrannical power sufficed as containment of more disagreeable qualities of which the loggers had many. He will be discussed later, it is necessary now to introduce the fellow men who I had got to know by name within the next few days and against whom I had kindled the most fiery of disagreements, verging upon the extremes of the inevitable which befell me and which we may say acted as the impetus of the fateful incident which has landed me a prisoner in my own mind, haunted by the shadows of these restless spirits, accusative men who only suspected and thus could not bring forth the change of responsibility for my deed. And thus I was exculpated and quit the logging camp in its physical presence, but its psychical presence was more akin – amplified through the years – to the radiation sickness of a Hiroshima victim whose memory

becomes permanently etched with the shadow-impression of the fateful horror of a single incident. And concentrated in the singularity of the moment, a singularity which I had had implanted in between my eyes by the hand of fate, was the concatenating impact of this nuclear- proportioned, explosive event, the after-effects of which I still suffered.

But it was noonday and hardly had I stepped off the bus which sped along the rough paved road towards the town-site below when two of these loggers approached me, on orders from the foreman that I was to be 'escorted' to the cottage – and at this they both laughed, humoured by the polite sophistication which they interpreted the words as and extrapolated upon me as if I were the culprit. To my astonishment the large one, who had short curly black hair and a wide red mouth whose circumference was all stubble and reddened skin, laughed out loud and, winking to his friend, asked me whether I intended to cook, clean, or saw longs with 'that outfit', for I had worn my best suit of clothes, thought they could hardly be called clothes appropriate for 'Sunday dress', and thus I was at pains to discover what was so funny so I stood there with a blank expression on my face. This was quickly wiped off with a smack from the other one, whose hand felt like a brick heaved at my large head, causing a headache that would last for some time afterwards. I was to move, they said, and I marched alongside them as a criminal off to the gallows.

So this was the world with all of its novelty, entertainment, and gleaming hope? I felt all of that which formerly gleamed so lively become tarnished by the dull-grey banality of a base existence which stood out in dreadful contrast to my old one and certainly become a source of contempt when compared by imaginative thought to the grandeur of city life. Up we marched to the cottage, whose newly built logs stood out a broken white against the dark clearing of the pine forest, the sawed off ends facing the path almost crying out in pain with the freshness of their colour and the tough strength of their bark, as an animal is slaughtered with the knife so that its wounded insides mewl with bleeding pain and its outside state: 'I'm fine thank you!' – such was the building like. Big Pierre, who was the wide-mouthed man that had laughed at me, spoke up to the other, who was, strangely enough, called 'Little Tom' – a square-built Irishman, complement to his tall French friend: 'dat foreman der, he be awful mad at you takin' clop at dis here boy, que?' This provoked some earnest deliberations amongst them as to how to smooth things over with me, for I still had the visible mark of their scorn tattooed across my face. They had found a suitable plan, that being my admission – enforced by the threat of further treatment in this manner – of having fallen on my face after tripping over a log – at this Pierre laughed at his own cunning and slapped me on the back in playfulness, for they felt themselves sufficiently protected to descend once more, from their height of cunning reason, into the customary boorishness that satisfied their craving for human relations. I was brought before the foreman who neglected to notice, or to care – he had rough men, that much he couldn't help but acknowledge – that I had been insulted and so take up my cause. He registered me in 'the book' as he called it and I was surprised at the rusticity of the place, its virtual barrenness and longing for the refinement of a decorator, the feminine hands which placed doilies on desks and tables and gave the air a scent of respectability and comfort, To its credit the building was impeccably neat and tidy, for the foreman must also have been raised with the daily expectation of a mother's reproaches at his wearing boots in the house or neglecting to tuck in his bed. This struck me as incongruous to such men as Pierre and Tom and I suppose I thought, at some intuitive level, that here was a place no independence of spirit in the form of brash masculinity and oaths could violate; I had seemingly come full circle – and yet underwent a subtle change – from my old house and home of care and provision to this equally well-provided-for sanctum sanctorum. The hats of the men were taken off at our entrance and as soon as we were inside I

was shaking the hairy hand of the foreman who smiled upon me with the remark that I reminded him of himself as a boy and that he expected I would 'get on well' here with the men. Registry came next and, since it was yet mid-morning (I had travelled since dawn) he left me in the charge of Pierre, for which I was thankful considering the alternative of present company (I was not at all used to being the object of physical abuse and had fortunately not had to address the topic with the foreman).

The blue sky had not ceased from my hometown but had maintained its purity to the midst of the hilly region and all of its tall evergreens looked upwards at it, stretching themselves toward its divinity in noble gesture of respect and awe, marking it out for me as I followed their height with my eyes to the tips above. The meaning of lassitude in the summer months with its lazy flow of existence had been instilled with an industriousness that awoke in me the ardour of achievement and ambition, for the romance of the logger's life had appealed to me from the beginning and was the impetus of my arrival. Though my mother protested against its inherent coarseness and danger I followed blue sky's course upward and outward, away from home as if this was the inevitable destination I was fated to follow and to arrive at, deciphered in the monotonous blue of the heavens. Though still injured physically from the blow of the Irishman I was emotionally recovered enough for Pierre to put me through still greater hardships, to direct me to the tasks that lay ahead all of their strenuous toil. With a curse as soon as we had exited the sanctuary of the cottage I was pushed up towards the hill, the edge of the clearing where we would enter the forest and, presumably, 'cut logs' for that was about the extent of my knowledge of this profession. He who smirks with pompous grin at those whose livelihood is gained by physical toil have obviously not experienced the rich rewards that it gave back to those who so laboured. How that my experiences have been consummated and I can no longer be called a 'greenhorn' by even the most experienced veteran I can say that the simple joy over the very simplicity of the act of physical toil is its own remuneration, an in-itself value that no monetary gain can ever replace, though it is often the first incitement to such work. This is borne out in the acts of all who have undertaken a lifestyle of this sort, in their focus and concentration upon the task of accomplishment, that there exists 'a job' and it 'must be done'; the imperative of work originates from the imperative motivation to work and this reciprocates itself, which is likely why so many choose to stay in the occupations they do, much to the scorn and smirks of the philistine whose labours are confined to the mind and whose belief it is that the mind cannot be operable throughout its 'antipodes' opposing employment, which is of course a myth.

One might impute the appeal of such endeavours to those whose intellects are under- (or not superlatively, like the philistine) developed to this privation of theirs, but I would argue differently. It is my belief that such occupations are a gravitational force for people of this mind- set merely through their availability and moreover, through their being the only alternative available, for they can, after all hardly undergo the work of the philistine. This of course doesn't in any way exclude through necessary implication (merely through what is 'usually' the case) the presence of intelligent people physically employed, and the fact that many are so employed belies the moral judgment that such a task and labour of love, that of the physical, is of 'lesser' value, merely because the educated make such judgments before knowledge of what it entails or with prospects of gain, of status, and this latter is clearly based upon historical class dynamics, between leisure and working class and all of the associated moral judgments and finger- pointing: 'master' and 'slave', etc., which have no relevance to the nature of the task. It is true however, that such a taxing job diminishes one's energies and thus thinking in the heights of cold rationality becomes difficult if one does not replenish lost or deficient energy stores – and this is the real crux of the matter.

It was nearing lunch and I was nearly unconscious through caloric privation, though being a teenager I hardly knew the cause of this, all I knew was that I was tired, for we had been sawing a felled log into quarters for some time, perhaps the better part of an hour, and I hadn't eaten since breakfast which had occurred upon waking, at the crack of dawn. Pierre's ruthless sawing had jabbed me roughly in the chest with the saw's wooden end many times and with each loss of grip on the handle he gave out a curse and worked all the faster so that my attempts to reacquire the motion, rhythmic and quickly moving in and out of the log were futile so that at last he screamed that I should get a handle on it or he would begin sawing me next, saying that he needed this bonus and that I was holding him back. Clearly his pioneering spirit, if he had even possessed one, had been driven out by ambition.

My previous indication of the working man's life seemed thoroughly undeserving in relation to this incident but I nevertheless maintained it, throughout all of the attacks on my person as we sawed away, cut trees and piled them up. – This was, however, at a later time that I clung to this formulation of my philosophy – for at that point I hadn't at all any philosophy to my name. At that time all that took hold of me was the emaciation of my muscles, my ever-tiring brain and shortness of ragged breath as this was the inducement of my logger's naiveté, and which Pierre, in his refusal to take seriously the code of the working man, in making of me his companion a tool, fostered.

It is important here to discourse a little upon the 'code' of the social as it bears upon the worker in modern day. Such a code is comprised of two fundamental tenants which are: reciprocal (or mutual) respect, and an inherent mistrust of the management core of their working operation in which the worker of course plays the role of the very lowest rung of the ladder. This code, however, which bound worker to worker through their essence as it were, and which engendered thereby a mutual respect and a collectivist mentality of loyalty and trust, was evidently unknown in this camp – at least between the inchoate and veteran which formed another social hierarchy within this dynamic of experience. It was a parable of life, of all trades and professions which used the criterion of experience (almost invariably in proportional correlation to one's age) to demarcate an invisible and ineffable class within the more distinct ranks of the profession; the older one got, the more experienced (to which rule there were exceptions though these often went unnoticed – I, anyway, was one) and, by strict implication the more respect he was afforded. Pierre was, as I was going to remark, ignorant of the code or else, conversely, he adhered to its general makeup, that of the separation along the ladder of experience between young and old, and thus treated me accordingly. In any case the back-breaking work of sawing had knotted my muscles into tight balls so that my neck had become the sloping deformity of the hunchback and arms became mere pivots on which the saw was enabled to slide in and out of the wood with great rapidity. On these numb pistons which once had the capability of arms I almost rested my frame in the strangely out-of-body experience, allowing them to press upon the saw as Pierre continued furiously to slaughter one of the logs, sawdust spraying out at each thrust he made, to be collected in each counter-movement. Finally he looked down at his pocket-watch which had, as if through fate's agency in pity for my suffering, slipped out of his breast-pocket and flopped about a few times, bucked with the sawing movement until he angrily stopped and decided with a look of jaded blindness and anger turned towards this new object of interference with his work and 'bonus' that it was time to break for lunch. This was the customary modus of life in the logging camp: work, eat, and work, and endless reciprocation of these two simple activities – each yielding their own negative and positive moments – which series terminated in day's end, after which a few hours were allocated

for the cruder pleasures of the camp (could there be cruder? – yes, for better or worse depending on one's perspective); to card-playing and general gambling, drinking and discussions involving the unchivalrous conquests of the loggers and who was best at this or that affair, be it logging, women, or drinking, all of which invoked the categories of quality and quantity as their standards of value, things being judged upon 'how pretty' or 'loose' or 'many' were to be had to each individual and, whether he was believed or not, he was trusted accordingly and elevated or lowered through the arbitrary caprice of their judgments and moods.

Lunch had finally arrived and it consisted of tins of salty meat-substance and hunks of bread along with a cup of coffee. Though the meat was an unusual colour I nevertheless put it down with relish for I hadn't eaten for so long and had undergone such vigours that anything would have sufficed and thus the meat was transformed into the finest delicacy and I was never as thankful for having food at my disposal as at that time. After I had finished the meal I more clearly acknowledged to myself that there were roughly twenty people aside from the foreman who frequented the mess hall and my initial gestalt impressions were the object of increased focus as I sat there in satiety and wonder for the first time since I had arrived. I was at an isolated table, for there were many superfluous ones and I had been the first to enter aside from Pierre who came with me and whose inner enmity distanced him from my table as much as possible – I could see him across the room. The loggers were still in the midst of lunch and were speaking to one another in boorish tones about the previously mentioned things and expatiating upon the logger heroes of the past who had done great feats which they had witnessed and even helped in accomplishment – I heard a few snatches: '...and if it weren't for me', 'wouldn't have been half the pay, but as it was we –', each being eclipsed by the competing noise of the others who seemed at as great pains to assert themselves in discourse as in eating – quite a difficult and inevitably crude endeavour.

As I looked around and listened into their conversation I saw some of them look up and stare at me from time to time with a joking hostility, for my youth harboured within itself great hope for a future yet, one which would be the source of shame to these people, for I was just a summer hand and this marked me with a stigma of undesirable quality, and I cultivated the air of a pollutant whose mere presence infiltrated the purity of the others, their pride and distinct character being sullied by an alien force. I was the mutt in the kennel of purebreds and they, as if by natural affinity, turned on me with opprobrium and scorn. The evil eye I met with as they stared at me – seemingly en masse though this is an exaggeration – caused the blood to rise in my face and I looked away blinking in embarrassment which shamed me only further in their eyes.

The lunch was soon over and I was to go again with Pierre to the same place as before and undergo the same catharsis of enmity at his hands – my chest was already, so I saw as I lifted up my shirt, bruised by his rough sawing techniques, yellowing and sickly in appearance so that I grimaced. 'What're you doin' der boy?' he shouted. 'D' you t'ink you're a prima donna wit' dat' stomach or what – eh!' I stammered that my stomach hurt a little from his sawing which I was forced by his 'eh!' to repeat and then he grumbled about my 'not being man enough' to take the rigors of being a logger, of being the 'bad' of loggers, the failed correspondence with the Paul Bunyan archetype who he and his fellow loggers alone and not any 'summer hand' could keep up with. I realized that protestation against this was useless and thus assumed my position to begin sawing again. This time I was more prepared and he sped up his rhythm more and more until I felt as if I were skiing downhill. The skinny arms – comparatively anyway – of mine

flying back and forth making me inhale and exhale breath as the playing of a living accordion contracts and expands so it was with myself. Once we had finished sawing we were to stack the wood in piles and Pierre, with customary tactlessness, swore and said 'gotta stack 'em now boy!' Swinging a part of the log onto the pile which had already, through contributions made from the others, achieved a great height, for these logs were to be cut down to a small size for firewood used in residential and community stoves in the neighbouring township. I took consolation – though it hardly impressed me with any clarity at the time – in the fact that I was doing this for my mother and father and saving them a trip to the forest to chop wood, although such consolation departed as a fog blown by sudden, abrupt wind when I dropped one of the pieces on my foot and cried out at the numbing stab of pain that had begun to terrorize its victim with swelling and blood blisters. Pierre was screaming at me to 'hurry up der!' as he tossed more logs to the ever-growing pile, some of which were beginning to roll back down with dangerous

missile properties, ricocheting off their companions and landing around us, for his distraction at my ineptitude broke the concentration necessary for the logs' placement. He stopped and shooed me about (if you'll pardon the expression, so appropriate to a logging camp) so that I was in even greater pain and lay upon the ground sobbing. The other loggers became similarly distracted and directed their attention to my plight with scornful gaze – 'who would have thought a logger susceptible to such emotions' – and then carried on with their work, impressed with the memory of my lack of manliness and confirmed in their initial opinion of me.

The foreman who was supervising the work at that time had overheard me and assumed an unfavourably impressed and embarrassed grimace, approached to investigate the matter. 'One of dese logs fell on him,' Pierre said with an incredulous and persuasive tone, a matter-of-fact utterance that he seemed to be astonished at, for it was a lie and I confirmed it through informing against him, for this was no pact that I desired to be a part of. I also told the foreman about how Tom had 'struck me' in the face (I used these words whose inherent sophistication always 'struck' fear in the hearts of those who viewed me with condescension at first, for thereby I gleaned respect and to respect is to fear, for the possible, barely possible consequences of knowledge in cases such as this are that it may be used as protection against ill treatment and attack against those who, even by implication and association, as the foreman to the worker, do not negate the negation of this ill). Thus the foreman thought it prudent to acknowledge my protest, seeing as I had good connections within the town and was thus considered a ticking time bomb better defused than tested for its explosive properties. He did so by reprimanding Pierre and cancelling his bonus straight out, which brought the latter's teeth together in a suppression of anger at all of the extra work placed into his efforts for that end, now a means which lost all positive connotations and took on the burden of superfluity, which might have been better spent in other areas such as carousing and gambling. This punishment was glossed with the condition that if I didn't receive the proper treatment judged by the foreman, befitting a logger those who subjected me to such treatment were to be cast out of the camp altogether; there were many more replacements willing to take on these tasks, as was 'the young lad from town here'. Thus, immune to all slings and arrows of the logger's impotence, I assumed a saintly air of irreproachability so long as I adhered to the foreman's commands, and he acted as my aegis throughout, holding the umbrella over my head as these rough gulls flew overhead seeking a target for their pent-up frustration. They would not rain on my parade – that much is guaranteed – and I was quickly paired up with another logger so as to quash the possibility of any future downpours.

Even loggers can be conflict resolution specialists. This fact is proven – to me anyway, I don't know about the universal – through this new partner's great willingness to teach and to instruct

and in general to disguise his enmity to me for his own personal well-being. Perhaps this latter can be universalized outside and inside of logging camps – I don't know I'm sure – but in any case the façade of kindness I met with, which was so poor in its guile that I found it almost funny (almost, and would have if I had not been so intimately bound up in this situation) was a welcome change to the open hostility of Pierre and which convinced the foreman of its sincerity (if in an insincere manner). The man I was partnered with this time was a Swede called Erik and he manifested a typically Scandinavian humour which I became both object and subject of, his jokes transforming the logging camp, through their implicit mannerisms and accents, into a comedic act within rustic environs, a strangely out-of-place enterprise that nevertheless improved the camp greatly on account of it.

Erik made the days - at least under the eyes of the watchful foreman, whose innate sense of duty kept them forever roving about the groups of workers in the camp - pleasant and I began to grow strong and feel proud and justified in my venture and decision to spend a summer in the outdoors amidst sawdust and pine scent. When the foreman and the rest of those under his supervision departed from their task on break for lunch or the conclusion of the day, Erik's levitous jollity was dampened and he quickly took his leave of me so as not to incur the miasmatic quality I had been imputed by those in the camp and, more likely still, to simply flee its actuality for he was clearly, and this action confirmed it, no friend of mine. After the work period my sense of fulfillment and justification in the choice to come here mingled with doubt as I slunk off to the barracks located in a cottage adjacent to the mess hall, the sanctum sanctorum in which I had so cordially been welcomed by the foreman at my arrival. While all of the others stayed in the mess hall over card games and countless bottles of booze – to which there was a limit though it often went unacknowledged even by the foreman, a specious slip of the memory which served the alcoholic drive – I stayed apart, amplifying the boundaries which had been established that day in my cot and reminisced about home and what would be going on within that locus, how mom and dad would spend the evening over our table doing a Scrabble puzzle or something similar as they had done so often before in my childhood and which had diminished with the self-assertion of my increasingly driven nature, alienating me from a lost childhood and youth, and bringing me closer to the beer hall and gambling den these strange rough souls had converted a simple mess hall into, defiling its beautiful simplicity with the taint of self-interest and sensuality, for I'm sure they snuck in women as a 'side-order' for their booze, which was what Erik had imprudently spoken of in one of his facetious gambols. How not only was I torn asunder from childhood – the tear being all the more painful in the scattered fragments of happy memories gone forever, scourged by adolescence – but I was not even a party to these games of my peers who were that in name only, no greater tie binding us one to the other: not loyalty, comradeship, or respect or anything positive of that kind. No, now I faced the isolation of the recluse who found no definite character ready-to-hand as so many of those he confronts on a daily basis seemed to have stumbled upon or flown towards of their own volition. Now I felt as if all volition and all choice were eradicated through the very paucity of alternatives – here I was, positioned in the midst of an alien world I had elected to pursue, perhaps at the behest of my juvenescent sex-drive, perhaps at that of some spiritual impetus or compulsion or free will – in any case the failed correspondence between they who stood against me in the neighbouring building and in thought, word, and deed, were no avenue for hope of change. - The summer's original promise now looked bleak with empty offerings, of daily pains, of stiff muscles and popping joints, of the attacks of my peers and of the great lack of concern over myself, of maternity and paternity brought about the tears that enabled me some small comfort over my plight and swiftly put me to sleep.

This was bound to be disturbed however, as I had anticipated in my wakeful anxiety before dozing off, and the inevitable arose with the stomping of heavy boots and slamming of gear on the floor about me – for I had been foolish enough to take a cot next to the door in my exhaustion, not that I would have been at peace in any other area of the small cottage, but perhaps the noise would have sounded further off like a distant object in a land of dreams. This startling reality was of course impossible to avoid and the sleep I had acquired so easily just as easily melted away opening up the background raucous of noise and images of drunken men and their hostile and happy and jolly and sullen red faces and bleary eyes. I was shouted at to go back to sleep and this isolated reprimand on the part of some unknown, disembodied voice, reverberated throughout the throng of these crude antagonists so that it eventually became the leit motif of the cottage and I was on the verge of bringing back my tears, annexed to a new astonishment when the foreman came in bringing up the rear so that no stragglers would be left behind. Of course he was as corrupted as the others and, stumbling into the wall which elicited some guffaws from the indistinct crowd – guffaws silenced by a frown coming from this source

– he brought out at recognition of my ill treatment, of the martyrdom of the innocent: ‘quit buggin’ the saint – an’ go ta sleep!’ The abrupt statement had its effect and each slumped or leaped almost – in accordance with their character – into their respective bunks and I was left with a mixture of feelings towards this man, for his use of ‘saint’ had evinced his opinion of me and the sarcastic lilt with which he had said it increased my isolation, a feeling of antitheses and contraries, of antipathy and sympathy, of respect and hatred. The lights were turned off and the remaining sounds came from the stomp of boots entering the boots next to mine, that which was reserved, presumably, for the foreman and the heavy breathing of drunkenness around me, pervading the room with the harsh smell of alcohol. I had never myself succumbed to the temptation of the bottle and had viewed it with disgust and fear, for I had sampled it before and was acquainted with those who sampled it in excess and their terrible metamorphosis – so it seemed to me then – could be traced retrodictively to this source, their obsession and torment, virtue and vice. But after some reflection on the matter I came to the conclusion that the inherent effects of drinking did not so much metamorphose a person as reveal his true character and the cliché ‘in vino veritas’ is very apt. Some men, under the guise of great altruism and personal self-sacrifice which reaches the heights of its display in a kind of Mother Teresa devotion, a will to sainthood, have, when in thrall to the bottle, revealed this the most false face imaginable and its source to be weakness rather than strength, a will to power in the most Nietzschean sense and the display, not of saintliness but of a slave morality. Others may appear the gruffest and more serious of people exteriorly and provide the contrast to the aforementioned in their happy childishness as a baby in the water when the bottle splashes its contents down their throats, converting sadness to happiness, or revealing the deep-seeded emotional spectrum of the most stoical of appearances. With these reflections cropping up in my mind as images, some the source of fear and anger, others that of gaiety, I eventually drifted off to the presence of the underlying smell of booze and noise of snoring, sad recollections of my place within this new found world.

The next few days afforded me a glimpse at this cyclical lifestyle: wake, work, eat, work, break, and sleep, and so on ad infinitum. The previous troubles had been washed away by blue skies and beaming sun and sweat and toil and the smell of sawdust. Here within the pines which overshadowed much of the clearing, making it a sort of clock by which the workers determined by the position of the shadows cast by trees when they were to speed up work and when to slow down – though of course a constant effort was maintained so as to reach out towards the pot of gold, their bonus, at the end of the rainbow of work. Here within this clearing I learned what the drives of men, if there could be said to be drives at all, within the human world were and since

this was the world in which I was thrown I naturally became involved in the drive towards the collective, shared goal of the worker which wasn't the in-itself of work but rather the profits to be made thereby. Erik complimented me profusely and with great volubility after we parted at the break so that the foreman was completely beguiled and subscribed to the model of friendship Erik had created. I, however, was no proselyte, though that didn't prevent my interest in his humorous escapades and antics with the double saw which he made out to be the act of a mass-murderer sawing a corpse with a twisted grin or a victim of fate who had turned into a monster of human decency in slaughtering the girl he loved in a fit of passionate rage at her adulterous acts; these he played from a gamut of characters, some of which were axe-murderers when we had to chop the wood up smaller into wedges for kindling and others mad scientists and doctors. From his rantings I gathered that he had been to school and had gone into some sort of exile from his homeland in the name of 'freedom', and, despite all of his eloquence and clever humour, I was quite suspicious as to his real motives for leaving his country—for this much I could believe as his broken English and accent evidenced it. Indeed, as our relationship grew from out of the hard, sickly little egg it had once been, I eventually grew wings and flew along the horizon of days and nights, no longer so sad for the previous life of dependency I had had, for the dependency had, like the bird learning to fly, grown wings and flapped them now and then in an effort to take off, and at the instigation of its mother, independence; for dependency is fostered, through the parental relation, by independence, and those who were once independent now become the converse, dependent upon those whose dependency exceeds their own.

Yet with Erik there was preserved a certain mistrust and apprehension on my part, for the vigour with which he acted out his murderer antics was less a semblance than a dormant actuality which he was acting out some sort of cathartic manner with humour and ostensibly for my benefit and the foreman's. Perhaps he knew about my disbelief in the reality of his friendship and thus was attempting to cloud a darker, more fiendish pang of conscience through the smokescreen of a façade, the façade of a façade. I reflect upon this now at a later date and with the knowledge that I now possess though before it only occurred to me as fearfully realistic – and the vigour with which he went about this act. I was quite shocked by the intensity of his sawing and chopping, and, as I stood by fearing to get close, it vaguely impressed me that this tall Swede had in him the power to take away the life of another. I reciprocated his façade, perhaps without any struggling intention on his part, and maintained the humour he spouted out with his strange accompaniment of intensity.

After a short time in the camp I had taken up the habit of going for a walk before bed, perhaps an extension of my physical strivings which felt the imperative of being extended through all waking hours – the sign of a healthy, robust condition – and it sufficed also to silence the boorishness which emanated from my estranged companions and their raging drunkenness. On one such walk I had followed my customary route up to a certain point and then, as I had reached a disjunct in the path ahead, I decided to take the left as opposed to the right which I had been planning to do but as yet had not got around to, drawn by custom or averted by the opposite to each respective trail. The meaning of this left path was an unconquered territory that had not yet been marked by my boots and I ascended the inclining dirt track with a dangerous spirit, on ready to assail any unknown opponents as a responsive attitude to my fear in relation to the dark forest and its heavy silence. As I had been climbing for some time I took a seat on a stump which had been freshly cut as I could see by the light of my flashlight; this I turned off the better to face the darkness, to become enwreathed in its silent coolness, a test of budding manhood that I forced myself to withstand though inwardly I quaked with fear, for it

was rumoured that wolves stalked in the night around the camp. This endorphine-producing readiness, a concentration of willful force within oneself for its eventual – and inevitable! I thought to myself – release upon the aggressor, as yet unmanned and unknown, was my attitude throughout this still waiting period, an evocation of masculine development. As I sat there in a sort of bestial state of readiness, with eyes squinting into the night, I overheard a sound of boots and recognized it for one of the loggers who had evidently ceased his carousing earlier so that he might embark on some strange and secretive mission in removing from the camp. The curses of Erik as he stumped his boot against a fallen log awoke me to the actuality of the danger I had fabricated in my mind.

My previous assertions to myself that I was prepared to engage in some kind of feral struggle were belied in their speciousness and self-deception as I was placed into the arena of battle next to my foe. He was of course oblivious to me, for I sat very still on the stump and it was also quite obvious that I was not the object of his mission and that, rather, he had come up here for some strange and hidden purpose of his own that he could divulge to no one. He approached a stout tree as I could perceive through the darkness now that my eyes had made an adjustment, and knelt in front of it. He stayed in a kneeling posture for some time and began to beat his head as if in penitence for some crime, alternating between left and right open fist upon his mat of blonde hair. I heard a drunken cry of misery being articulated in guttural drunkenness, tapering off into a shivering moan – and then he leapt up after this self-flagellation, pulling his knife from his leather sheath and jabbed at the tree, wrestling with it as if it were a victim or aggressor. He was crying out in English – as if he wanted to be overheard – ‘father!’ ‘father!’ and weeping against the trunk of the tree which he beat as he hugged with open fists. He lay calm after that and uttered a final departure before pulling the knife from the tree: ‘I’ll kill you – drunk!’ Again he embedded the knife in and pulled it out, running off into the bush with it upraised in his hand. Thankfully he didn’t see me and now that I knew his secret I felt as if burdened by the knowledge whose inner power could destroy Erik’s life – or my own.

It was some time before I made my way back to the cottage as I didn’t want to run across Erik, whose madness had taken possession of him and who had relinquished self-control to subconscious impulses of the will. Thus I sat upon the ground for it was more comfortable, and the ideal of machismo cultivated in my mind with such intensity before tapering off into a fearful boyishness that harkened for the breast, for I was sure that this madman would come out of the bushes at any time and end my as-yet unformed life. – ‘And there is so much to live for!’ – This the underlying thought of my fears, the articulation of my preservative nature which had achieved conquest over the independent masculinity so fraught with potentiality before. Now I stood cowering in the bushes on the bare earth beside the newly fresh stump which heightened my fears of death, for it symbolized the hewn flesh of a neck devoid a head and this phenomena fascinated me so much that I had to make it the source of my attention, imbuing it with all the meanings of death and murder and the libidinal strivings which achieve their peak in youth at this time. Finally the morbid tension in the air drove me from the place – even if it meant a confrontation with death, a meeting with Erik in the midst of his fugue, I had to chance it for the oppressing feelings of death encircled my form, ran along each branch of my nervous system and, as a tree hardens its sap to the cold, I found the strength to congeal the flightiness of my emotions around a single objective – escape, back to the provisional security of the logging camp. As I entered I met Erik and was shocked to near paralysis, until I found him to be asleep, but with eyes wide, staring at the ceiling and reflecting the haunted quality of his nocturnal troubles, doused as they were by physical exhaustion as his gaunt and care-lined face suggested.

I lay asleep in the adjacent aisle, with little trouble having dropped off and, like the dead figures

which populated my dreams, went through it undisturbed by the heavy boots and customary disturbances of my peers.

The next day the foreman assigned each pair a certain locale within the forest in which to work upon sawing down trees which later would be chopped into finer pieces for kindling. Though still very apprehensive of Erik's emotional outbursts, which seemed to come about in erratic bursts, though they were cleverly disguised by his customary humour, I followed him up the hill to where the previous night he had undergone his self-infliction. I thought about the coincidence of this and knew somehow implicitly that a cosmic force was intervening in the aimless drifting of my life, perhaps in the form of an inner motivation and of an awakening within me of my natural instincts within this environment, surrounded by men (fellow competitors and threatening forces) and trees and stream (the primordial home so long sought after by my confusedly searching will). I helped Erik carry the saw from behind and we set to work. As soon as we entered the clearing in which the stump was, now so benign compared with the previous night's malicious objectivity of horror and disgust, we both saw the tree which still bore the impression of the knife wound which disrupted the contiguity of the grey bark. Erik called out that this was the tree we were to saw indicating with a gesture of his head, and his good humour increased as we set the blade against the tree and began to trace it back and forth. I had worked its way into a groove without exertions and I now felt completely confident in the presence of my companion as all of the repressed hostility he had maintained under the foreman was removed somehow as if by magical causes – he seemed in utter bliss as he sawed away back and forth with joyful rhythm. After all, I thought, why could we not be friends rather than enemies? – He was, after all, the youngest among the workers except myself who was at least five years younger. The strangely lined face he displayed throughout all of his antics on the saw, and his big, even-teethed grin which was quite wolf-like, like a starving animal's, animated the incongruity of intentions and appearances and so I maintained my cautious attitude toward him.

Suddenly we had lost the rhythm through some obstructive knot in the tree and, rather than reset the saw in its groove. Erik pushed and pulled mercilessly against the saw, muscles straining with effort and his grin still enlivening his features in a hyper-real contrast to the actions which first bent the saw into many angular contortions, then snapped it in a squeal as he pushed the broken half of the saw into space. This seemed to return him from his fugue to cognizance and he contracted a frown, still smiling an open-mouthed grin. Sweat dripped from his head as he stood there contemplating the saw and, setting eyes upon me he took it up and swung it in the direction of my head screaming 'father I'll kill you!', succeeding only in scarring the tree with it so that the vibrations knocked it from his hand. He continued to scream this verse as a cadence and beat his fists against first his head then the tree trunk as he had on the previous night, grasping it in a strange embrace of love and hatred. I meanwhile stood back in rapt attention, unthinking, merely imbibing its meaning as my fellow companions their drink – their own most source of virtue and vice, of lust and dread. This went on for several moments before I sprang into action and took up the saw which lay in front of me, swinging it upward so that its rusty tines pointed like arrows of judgment at a condemned man and brought it down in a taut arch, cutting into the flesh of young Erik. I looked at my hand which had become invested with an extension of its power and the blood which had sprayed thereon. Erik stood before me; he was my victim and it was I who had killed him. I buried him in the stream which flowed at the bottom of the hill, away from the loggers and their petty concerns, which over one of their own would have transformed into self-righteous indignations and my own hanging judge. This

fate I chose to avoid and preferred to hand in my resignation a few days later, when the victim had been declared missing and all searches had come to an end.

Why I made myself the harbinger of Erik's death I can't say with any firm conviction, for over the matter I am still as confused as I was on that balmy summer's day when I let his blood as a terrible doctor whose treatments to patients are extremely questionable and who sits on the fence of the ethical dilemmas surrounding medical agency and patiency, intervention, and responsibility to patients whose well-being is placed in their hands as an end and whose utter annihilation might inevitably prove the best choice to make. Here I had made my choice; I had acted. Yet I stood on the fence of moral evaluation, of the questioning of my own motives – did I do it to preserve my own life from an emotionally erratic soul, troubled by a past affliction and whose pains of conscience incited me, or on the other hand, to act out my pity in deed and so end his suffering – had I such right? Or was it a rite of passage of teenage adolescence on the cusp of manhood which desperately sought an outlet, a way to vent its strength, like a weed choking out the flowers in a garden, seeking a higher stage of existence over one who met its growth and who threatened its livelihood? In any case it is the consequences which I acknowledged as of importance. Through such an act all of the ends mentioned above were achieved, it is merely left to the moralist to reckon up the balance what outweighed what: a human life tarnished by the stains of a past horror which drove it to increase the horrible effects it sustained, imposing them upon others; or another life embodying all of the intensity of youth and its inherent potentiality, a life whose promise was amplified to resounding acclaim through such an act? I am no moralist and must leave these questions to men who so consider themselves.

The Tragic Fate of Helnor

It is not enough to possess talent: one must also possess your permission to possess it – eh myfriends?– Nietzsche, B.G.E.

There are many talented people in the world, many people who have cultivated a certain skill which defines them and through which a livelihood, of whatever kind, is conducted. These people are the general run of experts who derive this talent through a little or through a great amount of exertion and in doing so achieve status and fame. It is the fate of these to be blessed with the political talent of intersubjectivity, that ability of the politicians, perhaps even the rhetors, to instill in others a faith in their merits and value, whether or not it is an actual one. As with beauty so with moral valuation: it is in the eye of the beholder, and those whose skills and abilities exceed the bounds of that which they parade – this very parading itself is meant – are graced with the ability to 'get along in the world' as the saying has it, to carve out from the rude cliffs and jutting promontories of life a cozy niche in which life may be unfurled in its many modalities. This is the one pole of talent, skill, and even genius and it acts, this political ability, as the grease of the wheel of one's own Starship Enterprise, which thereby blasts off into space, sometimes, like Edison, into the furthest reaches of the space of public acclaim. The other pole, however, represents the unfortunate souls who might even someday attain to a level of genius their political counterparts never could, if only it weren't for that glaring impediment of a thorough lack of this adroitness as a player in the language games, body and verbal, of intersubjective relations. These souls oft-times don't even recognize their own merit as it is the sphere of the social which they pandert to for their legitimation but receive it not for their very

inability to communicate, to sell and advertise, their talent, merit or genius. And indeed, it seems as if the more skilled or talented one is, the less of a political ability he has, for consciousness instilled in a man, when the 'self' is predicated of it, diminishes in direct proportion his political ability, in other words they are inversely correlated – this comprises the general run of men of self-consciousness and feeling who defy the norm with their elevated sensitivity and, where prudent discourse is required, are at times incapable of participating when required in the language games of politics and the social, for they are too busily engaged, as with artists, in the image-play of their minds and can hardly be expected to play two games at once; for this is the formula of the mediocre man, whose energies are dispersed between the two, although exceptions do occur, these being great exemplars of genius and insight.

That this nebulous social sphere establishes itself in the firmament of life in a central position, and so would have all motions and revolutions of things circle around and intercourse with it, is what often means the defeat of the artist, the man of self-consciousness and sensitivity, whose incapability to be solicitous with this authority with makes or breaks a 'genius' and the 'hack', is what often imputes to him the latter designation and the inevitable consequences of this are rancour against the other of the social and an enhanced work ethic under this evil horizon, or a defeat at the hands of this Other's judgments. It is defeat and this rancour I wish to investigate in the following and which is provided in the outstanding example of a man whose abilities attained to so stratospheric a height that, rather than bowing down in awe of the man's genius, earned him nothing but abuse from the social, driving him into the darkest corners of isolation and self-contained belief; for it is belief which enables all movements in life, belief being will, and this latter, rather than stretching itself outwards to all of the flowers, and skyscapes and fauna of the world, all of the planets of the heavens as his genius ought to have otherwise manifested itself, became more and more focused on his own self and narrow spheres so that this focus at last became a destructive centrifugal force gazing inwards at his soul as it spun round in terrible flight bringing forth its judgments and scourges of consciousness. Belief here was indeed stronger than doubt, though it was death which won out against life.

The hero of our story is a man named Helnor. He had grown up amidst working-class parents who lived on the margins of what could be considered establishment life, who were fairly mediocre and run-of-the-mill pleasure-seekers whose lifestyle didn't conflict, through any lofty aspirations, with the status quo and which was thus virtually ignored thereby. It is true that the father of this man was forever grumbling – and always, it seemed, with a bottle in his hand – about the oppressive nature of government and its exacting influence on the good people over which it held tyrannical sway. This conception of some grandly serious and stately monster who corrupted all the grand, the serious and the stately, was needless to say a fabrication of his own pettiness and insignificance in relation to those in power, who might very well have been his next door neighbour, the mayor and lead coach of the boys' hockey team of which the father was assistant, or the judge who defended his son, Albert, for a small fee. However we are apt to remember the bad more than the good and allow the negative qualities of something barely tarnished with them to blacken the whole; and thus it was with the father's subversive and ignorant opinions, testaments to democratic times in which freedom of speech is the guarantor of even the most pretentiously arrogant beer-hall rantings as legitimate values which fall nicely into this ideology's melting pot. It is a wonder that so many, after recognizing the poisonous content of this stew, could choke it down, but it is precisely the neglect and ignorance of these negative moments that enables one to pass it through his teeth, and the constant barrage of criticism against it, targeting these negative attributes that perpetuates its inherent negativity.

So much for democratic values and their capricious subversiveness on the one hand, blind faith in the creed '*vox populi vox dei*' (or vice versa) on the other.

Thus it is small wonder that Helnor contracted a pessimistic contagion from his father, for the latter's obnoxiousness and at times utter childishness, playful and serene on the one hand, boisterous and rude on the other, appealed to the young Helnor, for it is in childhood that the walls of our own doctrines and philosophies are constructed, shutting out all of the antithetical and contrasting values which we vilify as the 'not-I' and so send packing. Even if one advocates (in a sort of absurd logic) whole-hearted or 'prudent' qualification the beliefs and ways of life of all, or with some in general he runs awry of deconstructing the wall he has, perhaps without any reflection on his part, constructed and which girds him in making him feel safe from the predatorial values of this 'not-I'. – And thus the absolute scorn for the authorities, for all of those who represented power and influence, began in Helnor's childhood and it was against them this wall was constructed. It is needless to discuss the whole of the fairly dreaming and cognizant life of the young artist until he began to have the designation 'man' attached to his name, though 'young' was certainly preserved with all of its analogous condescension and moral valuation at the bottom of the rung of society's ladder of status. He went through life under the shadow of a cynic and a ranter, whose inner devils were awakened by the alcoholic daze – his own private hell – he so often stumbled into through an innate weakness of spirit and for those external spirits which found refuge in the bottle. These would awaken the inner devils, dance and mingle with one another in satanic orgy in the mind of the father, who would become a sullen preacher of apocalypse, the world's doom at the hands of the profiteers and power-mad 'upper classes'. Thus it was when, at the age of 18, Helnor's artistic energies reached a new height, superseding the previous plateaus he had struggled across in his ascension to every- higher loci on the as-yet undiscovered terrain of life, that began to channel all of his energies under this wall of cynicism he had built and they, rather than preserving their magic luminescence, were sullied by the black earth and sewage which stagnated at the bottom. And thus he produced works which were viewed by authorities with absolute horror and contempt.

And yet they had within themselves a beauty in their form and coloration that surpassed all of the other art students at the school, and his paintbrushes and charcoal never ceased their movements on the canvas so that it appeared as if he were destined for greatness to this father, in this man's clouded judgement which could hardly avoid to recognize its like represented in concrete material. To the fellow students and teachers, however, from who he was ostracized and bore the stigma of their hatred, their aversion, and contempt – which was not without a concealed admiration which Helnor couldn't perceive despite his perceptive nature – his works were lifeless and that they didn't purport to convey this very lifelessness (though perhaps they did) sufficed to drive him ever further behind the walls of his making, into sadness and despair, suitable complements to those emotions directed at his person.

At this point in Helnor's life he didn't perceive beyond the day, his reason with which he might otherwise have looked beyond to great future horizons dotted with shiny hopes and fireworks of possibilities, remained a bleak grey and it seemed to him as if each day remained unchanged, as if he had fallen into doldrums from which no sailor ever ventured and became lost in the mists of ennui which clouded his perception. Works of his from this time remain and are suitable testaments to his mood state, if we may psychologize such a sensitive soul in this basic and crude a manner. One was a canvas painted with the black of midnight – he had to use up an entire charcoal piece by which to do it – and had at its center a single white dot which symbolized, perhaps, his perspective from out of the tunnel of his life, so long and swarthed in

blackness with only the faintest glow of hope at the most extreme of distances. The startling brightness of this almost unitary and irreducible spot of white, centered as the origin point of the canvas, as the source of hope and absolute reference of future possibilities, perhaps, through its utter contradictoriness to his present life, acted as the pictorial aegis of a distant hope, a far-off destiny.

And yet Helnor's life snuffed out this lone candle with its barren wind with the intense melancholy only the sufferer of youthful sexual maturation experiences. There were canvases of sinewy and crooked-limbed daemons who rose up against the viewer through a back- and foreground of darkness, as the confrontation with the dry and hollow daemon of the passions by the youth, who was forced to tremble and quake with fear at the presence of this overbearing monster which came to rob him of his dying youth and attachment to childhood with its unrelenting maw.

Perhaps, if the author may venture further perhaps, the total isolation and lack of understanding on the part of others, the desert-like horizon of social and other elemental things in a healthy youth, transformed him under its glare – for this was not a privation merely but a positive force, for a human being is by nature a force of agency and its job is to work upon the given with which it meets, and to lack such a given is to give birth to the – at least in relation to the norm – aberrative forms of consciousness. Such forms rose up as this monster upon the canvas to his sight and frightened and depressed the youth all the more. – The wall began to thicken as he built more and more bricks around himself, making access to his wounded person an impossibility through the impregnable barrier he bore with him. But he could still look out from the peepholes and out over the roof to the sky above from his isolated position within the barracks of his mind and these landscapes afforded more fodder for the canvas, cynical representations of day-to-day figures being the usual fare. – And yet what apt representations they were these realist portrayals of the faces, bodies, and ideals of those who existed on his margins of existence – on the margins of the marginal, an inverted perspective to that of the norm. And that was exactly what these paintings and sketches spoke to: the inverted soul who had become wayward through lack of association and ability to associate with those whose souls were perfectly or approximately molded; for it is true that all have faults and defects and that it is a subjectively construed thing – yet the subject's construence depends upon the object and the object in this case is the social which recognizes and lauds only those who are, through an essence of conformity and likeness, participate within itself – and these qualities are worn on the sleeve.

The dark rooms which hemmed Helnor in, in the basement room he occupied in his father's house, were the compartments in which the incubi of his mind were stores and which would reveal themselves when conjured up with pen and brush and charcoal stick. The dripping of the tap in the sink basin, yellowed and freshly manufactured, the hollow plopping sound which he had attempted to allow to run down a rag tied to the tap – but to no avail, it continued to drip – was another source of maddening pains of consciousness that pulled him back into the despairing hell of the mind. It was pictured in an acid rain falling upon the dead corpse of a plough animal whose eyes bugged out and whose tongue lolled on the hardpan of a cracked and empty desert. Rain had come, surely, but it was the rain of death. And so too here the noise came to wrench Helnor from himself, but, rather than being the happy laughter of friendship it was the hollow mockery of a constant dripping, a brute natural force that he was to identify himself with in the painting of the dissected brain which stood out a bleeding sore of stabbing pain as scalpels at the ends of delicate fingers meticulously cut insertions into it; the face below contorted in a

despairing apathy, no longer concerned over its well-being. Perhaps what could be interpreted as present in this painting was the uncontrollability of the sex drive as it made Helnor dance like a puppeteer or perhaps it was an acquaintance with a deterministic philosophy of conscious qua mind and matter: Helnor's journals are extant though the family would not allow myself, who was an uncle of young Helnor, to pry into the tender and precious fragments of a lost life.

It is true, as his family members thought, that such a youth as Helnor was marked with the curse of brilliance, no genius, and that this curse, coupled with the cynicism of an apathetic and mistrustful outlook on life, elevated the youth's perception to intolerable heights in which the coldness froze his love and concern for mankind and thereby his ability to be receptive of the loving concern of those closest to him, even though it was tainted with the odour of addiction and the inconsistent attitudes concocted within.

During this period of his all-too brief stay in our lives, Helnor and I had a conversation which to me anyway, though hardly to parents whose stupidity cancelled out any possible understanding of his innermost fears, emotions which were to him ineffable, the old testament God of vengeance which reared its head in the form of a sexuality breaking the fetters of youthful sublimation and laying waste to the sublime edifice of artistry constructed from out of it; to me, this conversation wormed its way into my skin and left an uncomfortable itch, perhaps the very same poison worm Helnor at the moment felt. I met him after school one day as I was picking up my own son who was, naturally enough despite all of my attempts at reconciliation, averse to Helnor and his inextricable brand of these alien qualities which marked him out as the miasmatic presence within the sanctity of the school room. He had previously declined my offers to drive him home – for our town was a small one and to go out of one's way for a few minutes brought him to the extremes of its borders along which the house of my brother and nephew sat

– and I could hardly press him to accept my offer through a nagging importunacy – which was, it must be noted, his father's sway, remnants of childhood not yet extricated. Thus Helnor always walked home from school and exited as easily as possible so as to avoid the torment he was faced to endure by the 'good souls' of the establishment. This time I arrived slightly before my appointed time, though not deliberately for I was held upon other errands, which was fortunate for this time, instead of seeing Helnor walking as-it-were out of reach along the pavement of the schoolyard I had him in my clutches, as he exited the front doors. He would have passed me by without looking up, for he always carried himself with eyes averted from all worldly things, all beings which could harm and injure – he himself bore this look quite distinctly - that of a wounded animal – but I spoke out to him in greeting. The close proximity's discomfiting affect made him to speak to me and with a nervous stutter, asking 'What?' – a simple question of pragmatic dimensions which sliced to the core of the issue and I bade him sit down beside me on the steps, on the premise that my son was going to be in class for some time still and that no interruption need concern us. He did as I asked, for he had always trusted me though never confided his thoughts in me until this moment. I began somewhat hesitantly, as indeed I am doing while writing this, for it is a difficult subject which struck me to the heart with his despair and sadness and complete loneliness and lack of a comforter, a child no longer; a child as Hesse said of the adolescent whose very growth is a contradiction.

I asked him if something was bothering him, in the most general and polite way possible, though this was obviously not the method of efficacy as I perceived in his outright and apathetic denial. I attempted again to play the pedagogue and this time was more stern and forceful yet also more inviting, sharing with him the fact that I too, as a boy, had had great troubles and that it was only when a constable of police, who was my father's friend, discussed then with me and

showed me concern that I finally had the strength to being overcoming them, for recognition of a problem is the first step one must take. I told him that I intended to make myself available to him if there was anything that he had to confide; if he was looking for a confidant I could, and would gladly, act the part. He said: 'police are all charlatans – they don't want to help. They only want power – they're all the same.' And with a look of the accuser his eyes met mine, telling me he needed a confidant, but trust, even for me, was waning and required more than pretty speeches for its salvation. With redoubled effort I gave another speech, more emotional and filled with the memory content of my years as a youth, the torment of both consciousness and its lack, of people and authorities, and of my own thoughts of suicide for I felt this to be the most effective, as truthful, admission of my own lost life which itself needed a voice and a listener, just as the listener needed to overhear such a voice. The expression on his face attempted to remain apathetic yet underlying it was the helplessness and needy innocence of youth as it endures life's pains. He began to denounce his teachers as not caring enough, as fostering the enmity between him and his school peers and of grading him poorly so that his future would corrupt with the black marks of demerit that were so undeserved. I sympathized for in university I had felt the same way. Indeed those blessed or cursed (depending on one's perspective) with a poetic imagination have really no place within a university environment, for the pedantry and authority – panegyricizing that goes on in the hallowed halls of state-funded propaganda can hardly support the flights of creativity that would go on in the minds of youths like Helnor; the wings of creativity are clipped by the harsh and cumbersome shears of formal education and the bird, once so lofty in its ascension, falls to earth a carcass and hollow echo of its once noble self. Helnor's lament reduced his face to a sorrowing mask of despair as tears were forced back, and, open-mouthed he departed without saying goodbye. That was the last I even saw of that strong and emotional youth, whose inner strength choked back the tears which threatened to overflow his eyes as his world collapsed in uncontrollable apocalypse. These emotions of his are forever preserved in their translation as-it-were in his works of art, and, though they had not yet achieved the status of master at this point in his young life, and would never achieve it, for the authorities had had their way, I, his uncle, will preserve the memory of a soul who had not yet mastered its emotions, though an artistic hand which to me did exactly that.

The turmoil of youth as it goes about its development, and through its own inner failure to comprehend this development, sometimes achieves a level of greatness to which all of those who live inside of the boundaries of the norm aspire to but can never bring down to earth: genius. For it is the very intensity which manifests itself with such duration in this relatively brief time of life that constitutes the further bidding of the creative soul and its inchoate, hopeful flowering – but it is the norm, the common weed to all flowers of genius, which strangles the growth of this latter so that it often meets a death before it may reveal its beauty to the world. That this beauty of the works of Helnor, mediations of his beautiful soul, are still unacknowledged through the pity of the mourners bears testament to the incomprehensibility of this genius by the trough animals of the spirit who labour away in the minds of artistry trying to discover real jewels, while such flowers as Helnor wilt in the sun. This is the tragedy of genius whose fatalities in the hands of the crowd and their clumsy and brutish ways. – How could they handle such a flower – without crushing it?

Relentless

The condition of man is this: to be insatiable, and yet yearn for satiety.

Douglas Jones walked off the plane at O' Hara International Airport, his sports bag and new track suit nearly floating through the air with the man's gracefulness. A troubled look stood out on his brow, a drawn and tired look of overexertion and sleepless anxiety which creased his dark-skinned brown. – He was home. Back to the place where growing up and becoming a man had, though all of its rigours had been undergone; images of childhood flashed through his mind; of swing-sets, alleyways at dusk in which alcohol-soaked wastrels lounged cradling their dependent and evincing their own dependency; where sirens could occasionally be heard as night preyed upon the light world of tenements, of overcrowded obliterations of privacy – here, in Chicago, his home for 27 years, Douglas he been born, raised, played, educated, and come to and from O' Hara. He was home.

The taxi's exhaust – must have been diesel, thought Doug; they always use the cheap stuff, the stuff that pollutes, that kills the earth – billowed up behind them in bluish greasy cloud as the cab sped off into the skyline with its prematurely lit towers, warning signs that people were home and that no one had better disturb them – the police were there; I've got a gun! – Douglas smiled. Chicago. - Home.

He recollected as the past the old tenement block in which he used to live, requesting that the driver slow down, that here it was he had been raised with his two sisters, Aunt Jessie playing the role of a mother who was the victim of a rough world and its instrument, a man who knew no relenting when his woman cheated on him with his best friend – they buried her when Douglas was only a baby, and so he hardly knew her as more than a grey figure painted on the back ground of his life by his aunt's tears as she weepingly told the children – us children – who their mother was – wide-eyed surprise; how time flies when life dies. They drove on, himself, Douglas Jones and an unknown, off past the tenements, through the downtown lights and their magical enticement which glimmeringly masked the dark shadows behind the walls; the pin- ups, pushers, and victims and villains of all sorts – we are all victims in our own way.

Past and beyond the yuppie bars, – a yuppie Douglas had become through struggle, always through struggle – past all the shiny cars and swanky suits drinking cocktails and telling a few; past the warehouses along the outskirts and upwards into the hills. Here he paid the cab its exaggerated fee, glad to be free of the seedy masterpiece that drove it – now truly home – was that so? Did Douglas belong to this place of peace, of gated community automatic locks and happy faces? They weren't the faces of his past, smiling faces which knew no trouble and didn't have to adapt to the crack of drive-bys – they heard the cracking and popping as popcorn on a quiet day at dusk; they didn't hear the screams of the innocent crying out. He jabbed at the punching bag in the living room: was this home? Jab, jab – roundhouse – smack! The bag, like a dead carcass heavy with unreal sentient qualities swung to and fro with his swift movements, sweat running down his brow – Douglas! Douglas! Can't stop, won't stop 'till I clock a mill I need a superbitch and a house on the hill – well Douglas had these alright. He had a girlfriend who came from this world, from the barrier of protective light, wrapped in an aura of impregnability. Was he to be a father? How could he impregnate the womb of an alien being, one who came from the light world? Would he not simply disseminate the past horrors which still afflicted him, the shadow life of one who didn't belong to either the world of light or darkness? No – it was unsuitable, unsuitable. That was why she – her name was Karen, say it! – why Karen had gone off to a friend's for the weekend, a habit she was cultivating as of late. His depression might have had something to do with that. And the fear in her eyes as his emotions got the better of him, escaped her body and found instead the heavy dummy hanging from the ceiling, which he beat with fists and feet as concretized emotional promontories. It felt no pain,

it could not be punished; it was he who punished himself, again and again against the resistive body of leather factory upholstery. He lay down, collapsed, upon the rug of the living room and watched in helplessness as the bag swung back and forth ready for more, taunting his own futility, mocking his ineptitude. He closed his eyes – tired, very tired; must sleep...no! – opened them. They fluttered, trying to break down his resistance but he forced them open with that wilful force which had got him through all those years of self-hatred and impending weaknesses. When, at the age of 17, his father had come after a five-year hiatus drugged up with the dishevelled hair and shaky limbs that were the sign of heroin abuse he had fought back the tears for his mother's life, the possible role she might have had and actual love he might have felt for another soul, and had sprung at his father with the martial arts ability he had cultivated for over a decade – he didn't care about the weakness of the other, adolescent rage and pounding heart were blind to pity – and so he had fought, viciously beating him and lay his body to rest in the alley, dead or alive it didn't matter anymore, if ever it had. This was perhaps the actual contest up to that time, the culminating point of all of the playground matches he had had against those with whom he didn't 'fit', against the laughter and hostile scorn for the 'black sheep'. This was the name he had taken to fighting under: 'black sheep' and it had served him well, for when announced it implied all of the past memorabilia of playgrounds, alleyways, death and murder, needles and screams in darkest night. He had never lost under that name. O' he had lost matches before, in his youth, when the game he sought outran and outmanoeuvred him and which converted hunter into hunted; yeah, he had lost – but always won the second time.

The title he bore was a testament of meaning to those times, of their own absence of smiles and poverty of soul and possession – he had been, at one point, reduced to stealing bread and cans of sardines from the Chinese grocer, who didn't – like all the rest – understand what great poverty was. But he did – eventually, the persistent little wife of his – she always had a smile for Douglas and he had worked off the debt like a good little boy, had worked – like a 'good little boy' – for his supper. This was how he learned to fight. His frail form yearned for potency, the rocket of his being longed, as a mere model of plastic and glue, to launch upwards into the stratosphere of glory, - old Wang had helped him win his first tournament and there Aunt Jessie could be proud of him for once – 'my son' she had called him, 'my son is a winner!' and tears had rolled down Douglas' face as they did now. 'A winner', he brought out through hitching breath. He fell asleep under the skylight and the heavy bag overhead reflected the serenity of the stars as they shone down upon its black leather, streaking it with ghostly blue. Now it was still; now rest could come.

'Douglas!' awoke the next day to the cries of his girlfriend, Karen, whose questioning yells reverberated throughout the spacious hall. She had come in through the kitchen entrance by the sound of it, which Douglas localized and pinned down in a bestial readiness, for they hadn't yet registered through his groggy state. 'Wh-what?' he groaned and sat up, hitting his head on the bottom of the heavy bag – 'of course'. He lowered his head on fluid muscles to the thick carpeting, a smirk of irony crossing his face. 'Douglas!' – again the cry, this time appended with 'Are you here?' And then she saw him and told him how she was sorry she got angry but that she was also sorry he had acted in such a scary way and that she wished they would make up and be together again and happy like the old times – remember like the old times? 'Yeah, I remember'. They had met while he was at university on a scholarship for marital arts at North Western. She was raising raffle money for ghetto youth programs and he had volunteered to 'give back' and try to help out others through his exemplary struggle – that's what Coach Marcus had said anyway, but Douglas knew that's what he should do, and the moral imperative moved his hand as it signed his name to the volunteer list: 'Douglas Jones, Captain, ju-jitsu, karate, kickboxing,

etc.’ They had met and the sympathies Karen had shown to the youth had immediately effected Douglas, had endeared him to her and made him her proselyte. They talked about the youth and sympathies were extended to Doug, like a lost mother to a son and yet this maternity focused upon a distant end and goal that being the secret of Eden’s garden and of the primordial roles of man and woman. That was – how many? – two, three, five – no four years ago, and they had been together ever since, always with the looming end of children before them, be it in the form of the social work of Karen or the community involvement of Douglas, this had presented itself as the inevitable throughout their relations. Sure she was black, he was black – they were the same age. But these were merely appearances which skimmed the surface of Being and the true essence of each posited them as contraries: man, woman (but that could be reconciled easily), rich, poor (not so easily), ghetto boy, valley girl (impossible?), socialite, recluse (definitely, definitely ‘impossible’ as Karen always said). And yet the impossible had happened, had become possible through the seemingly innate maternal sympathies of Karen and the need for these on the part of Doug: where she had need of the strength of man, Douglas had need of that soporific weakness, that anaesthetic quality of woman – their deficiencies bubbled up with content in each other’s company and their ragged edges interlocked with perfect – almost perfect? – coincidence.

Yeah, Douglas remembered the old times. It was the present that he had to grapple with as it struggled against his movements towards the future, holding him back and attempting to choke out his life’s breath.

What did it – could it – hold in store for him? He had won international renown through his tournaments. No one in the world had yet defeated him and this was the horizon upon which he looked, a man standing atop a mountain, alone facing the dead carcasses of possibilities: he could fight no one else, he had defeated them all and to fight again was useless, proved nothing. Retire? Then what? Teach children and help the community with Karen, Ms. Goodie Two-shoes of this year and running – and then have children and raise them, and coach them and – inculcate them with his own rage and hatred at life? – No! Better to go away, to fight outside of competition perhaps, on the streets or...yes, an idea to keep in store, to dwell on and obsess over like a sickly baby whose death is imminent. – Perhaps Douglas’ death is imminent? Perhaps – what of it? Better than this insipid occasion! – He smiled. She smiled back. ‘You o.k. Dougie?’ – it was Douglas! He was no child: he gave a wry face and she winced, presumably knowing that he disliked the name – ‘Yeah I’m okay.’ ‘Come sit down Doug...I’ve got things to discuss with you.’ – Uuuh! – here it comes again, another rhetorical diatribe – she talked about their relationship – ‘our’ relationship – and wondered if it was worth preserving. O’ she wanted to of course – of course – but she was unsure whether he did – it all depended upon Dougie – Douglas sorry! – and she would act accordingly. She sounds like a damn bureaucrat: ‘accordingly’. She would act ‘accordingly’. – He hesitated and the indecision writ large in his features made her open her mouth and her eyes bleary despite her bureaucratic tone – disguising the emotions; I don’t know what I want. Don’t want to hurt – to injure her. ‘I don’t really know what I want – in general. Karen you can’t’ – oops – ‘shouldn’t force things like this. Have you been listening to Sue? You know she doesn’t’ – ‘Yes I know she ‘doesn’t like you’ - a sing-songy voice. – Very disrespectful. – ‘But I am a grown woman you know’. She told him that she cared for him deeply – really – but was uncertain whether he – I know, I know – whether I reciprocated it – is that right? ‘Umm...yes’ – again that look of astonishment at being interrupted. Well, if you’re born with a silver spoon in your mouth and daddy paid the bills throughout university I guess this is the means to that end – always getting what you want through its demand. They continued to slide down the conversational slippery slope and she

began to question his future motives 'despite the fact that they're uncertain'. 'What about the community', where he was raised, where he had beat his father, where his mother was killed, where guns went off like roman candles in the dead of night to the sound of police sirens blaring and whining, flashing blue and red alternating waves of light against curtained windows; where rats and pigeons, who lived off the refuse of the refuse – a paradox, ha! - But without humour – lying about in gutters. Mortar, metal, and the again unfunny atavisms to nature planted in the partitioned earth, surrounded by the perfect square of sidewalk and the metal wire hoop of city parks in bloom – 'let's keep our city beautiful'. Wrappers, bottles, needles, cigarettes, used condoms looking like the cast-off skins of snakes grown flaccid and content through night- revelling. – This was Douglas' community alright. But not anymore. No, the coach might have convinced him of it but he didn't want to remember – he wanted to forget. The ghosts haunting his mind had to remain in their graves – out there! Buried under concrete and wafting out of manhole covers, incapable of surpassing the sealed lids of forgetfulness – that is how Douglas wanted the memories, buried forever and allowed to rest in peace. Kids were always victims, if you looked at it in any 'objective' light, with the omniscience of a god purged the depths of humanity's values and beliefs. And yet they were always villains as well – it all depended on the viewpoint. Dreams corroded like rusting metal awnings over mom and pop shops as kids became born unto them, repositories of hard-earned money, new fruit on the vine of life which the old was thereby forced to vacate. Yeah. Kids were great – but they were also base. Had he not stolen from old Wang: there was an alibi as always, as always an excuse for the madness 'homo homini lupus' – man is a wolf to man. Sure. Everyone had excuses. But there were no victims in a vicious world that spun in a vicious cycle and could only be viewed as a basketball spinning on a kid's finger: you either sunk it or you were sunk – absolute, no second chances, and it was the basketball that was his way out, the recognition of the earthly rotation, inexorable and brutal, unsympathetic; that's why he stole, that's why he survived. And old Wang had helped him, he had recognized the struggle between victim and villain within his bird chest and had helped the eagle spread his wings – because this was his community, because he lived and died there and sought to make the place as liveable as he could. Wang was the only father figure next to Coach

Marcus, Douglas had never known and he, still a youth of 17, had buried the master on a rainy day, the smell of stale asphalt pervading the graveyard, conjoining the field of tombstones with the world around, a living, breathing tombstone figure of sprawling ~~concrete~~.

No. The community had, for him at least, died as anything but ghostly memories which crept up in the night and he only saw it when he travelled to and from the airport, had only returned to it as a 'reformed exemplar' of a community which had not fostered the victims it converted into villains, the innocent children of the streets and which, then, he perceived as his mission in life.

– But he had bigger problems – the fight! – The relentless lust after the fight. Insatiable, truly an insatiable quest and the few moments he had achieved satiety he almost cried through the relinquishment, through the dependency and becoming innocent again. At night after Karen had enticed him to bed on previous occasions and they had lain down exhausted, soaked in the heat of libidinal strivings, he had hugged the pillow, memories of maternal comforting and faint allusions of his will to the breast of babyhood perhaps. He felt he had giving of himself and had been left hollow, raped by the lust of a woman. And then he converted this emotion into hatred – and the lust for a fight.

Though often, all too often, considered to be a matter of strict causality, of necessary implication between genetic cause and effect, the abuse his mother and he too had sustained at the hands of his father – just a man who had spread his seed inside a naïve womb – had not been passed onto the child Douglas. He had never as much as harmed Karen. And yet the intense desire to exercise his faculties, to will which the desire was itself exploding from its shell, a bird launched

from an inner spring into flight, was always foremost in his mind. When they talked – ‘when we talk’ – Karen said she was frightened by the ‘intense look’ in his eye, the way he was at times held rapt by the silence of the room – ‘so that I had to stop talking and...and wake you up or something!’ – and he would often dart his eyes about it, and his muscles twitched in response to unknown, unperceivable stimuli. The readiness old Wang had instilled in him and which had stopped his nimble flight from childhood theft and the path of vice, had possessed him as an ineradicable force – this to him was life. It was, however, controllable, and he passed much time merely focusing his concentration upon an object – Karen’s nose for example – and unblinkingly fixing it in his haze, willing it to ‘be still’ and to preserve its inertial force. At times he allowed it – ‘to make me’ – him – ‘crazy with the ‘staring’ and he allowed it to go ‘too far’ reaching out with the quick deftness of the hunter braced over a pool of fish and plunging his hand towards his prey: a nose, an ear, a strand of hair which was out of place. ‘It scares me Douglas! I don’t feel – protected? – yes that’s it, protected.’ And she always had an urge for protection, a motivation for protection, security, help! – assistance. It reminded him too much of the victims, of the innocent and helpless and this brought him back to satiety. – It must not continue, perhaps it is better to simply – let go. – He told her as much though, throughout his distance, she had become the closest thing to love he had ever known. Now he felt none. He was stone and his pectoralis muscles confirmed it, tightening, flexing, again and again. ‘Douglas!

Hellooo! Why do you always do that thing? It’s weird!’ And then he told her, this time not the imagined reproduction of her image and character but the real form which stood facing him: ‘We are from different worlds’ and the light drew itself away from the darkness, though its sadness could be perceived and his own over his struggle between the worlds and the one he might someday have loved displayed itself in the shadows of his being, letting Karen know that his decision had been made, for its effect obliterated all deliberation and sunk into the darkness of resolution, the resolve to live a life alone and to cut himself loose from all ties. This could be intimated, but it no longer mattered – he was now alone.

The ring shone brightly with halogen light bulbs high upon the roof beams, lights of divine spectacle illuminating demi-god figures who were captured, but the performance they were about to put on. Jump in springing fluidity, up, up, up – raising the chest and smacking the gloves together, breathing, expanding ribcage, chest dry of sweat for nervousness had been dispelled; preparedness waited in agitation. The opponent – last of the Mohicans – was a same-sized Vietnamese – slant-eyed – whose head was shaved and Douglas’ nappy – the trait of the African. They stared at one another: ‘the last man in international competition who was at all worthwhile’, a suitable match for the champion from Chi-town, the big town, no circus clown; my town - ? The match was over before it began. Together they came like bulls charging, sweat upon bodies fast discharging as gloves smacked flesh and skull and the opponent was on the ground and Douglas raised his glove for a K.O. – and then the bell rang and he went home.

There was no longer any challenge left in recognized competition, he thought as he wandered through the streets of Hanoi after dusk. No longer any challenges and he stood by the river on the bridge as cars passed by, small and shrunken like the Asian with small motors that went fast

– like the Asian. But this Asian had been no difficulty – had been dispatched within a few movements; couldn’t read my body’s writing. – As I stood there, Douglas, champion, I had met a man, a harbinger of future hope though I didn’t know it then. He pushed me out of the way and I reacted, pushed back with spring-loaded arms. He came at me with a knife and then I recognized my own death – here in the shine of this blade, in the neon-reflected steel arch as it swept towards me – blade was parried, knocked out of hand and plopped into water, followed by the man – I hear they have sharks in Hanoi? I now know that the only source of competition ‘out there’ in the playground of my will is the streets – atavism, atavism. And then I arrived at

the airport, was transported through the air, and brought myself here, through the agency of others: Wang, Aunt Jessie, the pilot – here to my house on the suburban outskirts, within the auspices of the gated community staring at the skylight and then descending into blackness. - Waking to find the last confrontation with this life and then having it end – all at once through a death sentence that came from my lips. Now I faced – atavism, atavism.

The next day, as they say, was brightly lit by Mr. Sun and I had already left – to the Orient, back to the streets I carried within and to the proper field of my martial artistry: to Thailand, to China, Japan – wherever. - Wherever I could get competition. I caught a convenient flight to the former on the list and it was here that I was to meet destiny – or so Douglas said – or so I said.

Night had descended to the beating of ancient drums in the dirty little warehouse removed from all eyes through blackened windows by blankets, by boards and paint. The cool air of autumn, the age-old season precursor of the death-like season of winter, had long since passed and now cold stilled the air and made visible the sweat from the straining muscles and panting breath.

The cage attracted all eyes like a centrifugal force positioned as it was in the center of the interior, one large room the size of a football field. The encroaching stands diminished the ring to two-thirds the size and populated the arena with the jabbering cries of bloodlust yearning to slake its thirst in the spectacle of flesh against flesh. ‘Douglas Jones!’ The announcer rang out and the knell-toll voice reverberated the seriousness of the event in Asiatic harshness. Gone were the days – if they had ever existed, or if they had not merely been fabricated by western imagination – of Oriental decadence; here West confronted East in all of its vicious will to power but did not balk at the sight; for it too was only a misconstrual, was not of the West, but of the South and possessed within itself the warrior mentality of tribal days which had reappeared – or perhaps merely been transplanted as a tropical tree in foreign soil – in the earth of concrete expanses. Douglas walked into the arena to the jeering of the crowd – they wouldn’t for long – and breathed out and in and out, ribcage rising and falling in meditative cadence. He had done this a thousand times, ever since Wang had first taught him to know his body through itself, as the reflective man of knowledge is acquainted with his deepest thoughts through a focusing on them, a purging of their depths through cogitation. Bodily respiration replaced cogitation and the chest rose and fell. – This time there were no rules to hold back his striving and he let forth with a vengeance and with an inner force exercised for its own sake; vengeance upon an unknown victim and vengeance upon him as the bearer of the torment, the hatred, antagonism, and indifference of a world which he, Douglas Jones, had forsaken. Like the previous match this one was over with a flurry of fists preceding a takedown trip; mercilessly he pummelled the opponent until the referees stepped in and held him back. He had achieved

victory once more and it had merely enflamed his desire to continue the fight; he must, he must

– he must have been drugged for upon opening his eyes he was lying outside in the alleyway amidst trashcans, upon hard cement which smelled of drugs and soy sauce and the Orient. He lifted himself up and found a man looking down at him with bright headlights attached to a car streaming into contracting pupils so that the eyes had to squint to find out the scenario – investigative eyes. The man extended his arm – for assistance? – and held out a gun. Douglas’ heart raced and as the man squeezed the trigger he felt his body traveling upwards, back arching backwards propelling his leg forward to lodge in the man’s crotch – but it was not opportune and the bullet found its target, blackening the white rage of a suffering soul who before the world had struggled to bear its burden and had always carried the ethic of the street – survival, power – within his breast. Insatiable to the end, the only way to peace for a man like Douglas was death as peace is foreign to such men; but it was at least a suitable place to die, a foreign land... a foreign state of – existence, its converse. Any place, for such a man, could have been the

same; all were foreign and all blanketed by the nightmare of living, of the insatiable will to live, relentless unto death.

Beacon of Hope

The familiar tread of home. I had opened the door, turning the handle – the pressing inwards with the stealthy technique of the burglar and shut it upon the air cushion which magically sealed off this, my room, from the remainder of the bourgeois microcosm – I was in another world. This room I had rented for several months and it was still as bare as it had first been, begging for renovations as the bare bulb hung down, glowing softly and ghostly in the dark like a white skull of an alien being which had been hung for some secret vice long ago and had decayed there, swinging in space. I left it off. I enjoyed hearing the stillness of the night and it reminded me of Bach and the stars, of the soul-rending polytonality of the harpsichord, that noble and archaic instrument of yesterday which had been so rudely forsaken for the primal thump of heated drum beats and tepid electronic rhythmic. I left such thoughts alone – for they had a consumptive effect and I would rather be at peace tonight – the newspaper and all of its entailments: men, women, popularity, and au couture culture. Tonight was the inky blackness of Non-Being painted across an antipodal expanse as a mourning veil, celebrant of earth's regular death. I confronted the stillness and it made my heart stop, for the pulse of nature beat within my chest transgressively and I wanted to worship the altar of utter privation, of death and transfiguration without the intercession of hammer-blows from workmen, without the squabble of the crowd stored up in my heated skull.

I lay down on the floor upon which I slept – for posturepedic purposes, for stoical, for principled, I would not sleep in the beds of the innocent, wrapped in comfort and blind happiness, to be astral feeling soporific of the mind. – No. Here upon the floor gazing through the darkness was my kind of employment, my own communion with the world, my masquerade ball which hid myself from – myself. I had long shut out the penetration of the other world into my own, had become indwelling for too long and thus had lost sense of human reality as it is commonly lived, of the social presence with its codex and all-entailed regulations and rules.

These I had violated time and again and it had estranged me from the mysterious Other, the other which was mysterious to me only insofar as it possessed the quality of being – desired. How could I, the rule-breaker, the creator of his own systems of duty and happiness and cruelty and sadness, be one with this alien world which had forsaken me as I had forsaken it; wayward I sped off into the distance, across distant galaxies and worlds all contained within the shell which sat atop my body. Therein I escaped and felt as one with all of my disparate aspects – I lost myself and found myself again ever and ever, always through the growth of new soul-flesh. Forsaken, the world lay at a distance and I watched it.

Once I got around to writing my journal that night it was quite late, at a time when I was accustomed to sleep and thus it were understandable that I could not fully appreciate at that time the object of my destiny. I had that day bought a newspaper just to see what the world interested itself in at the moment and looked through it in a café with a mildly amused expression on my face: 'what issues people bother themselves with!' Moral causes and the righteous clamour of scribblers won for each other great benefits, the people proselytized through their own ignorance, through fleshy appeals – if the expression will be pardoned – and the oratorical declamation of the enemy with gleeful, lustful shouts of cruelty upon perceiving its plight or degradation: 'enemy down!' I threw the paper in the wire basket again acquainted

sufficiently with popular opinion to get along without it for another few months. Disgust arched my lips and I took a sip of the cool water in front of me – how they hated me here, at this yuppie café, he who never ordered anything but a newspaper and a cool water – 25 cents and free service, no tipping – and who stayed sometimes for a minute, sometimes an hour. What did it matter to me though? Such people were beneath contempt and one could perceive it in their hungry eyes, the ‘lean and hungry look’ of a Cassius who gnawed on the bones of straw men for lack of anything substantial. I was out of their reach and flesh was not consumed though the bandwagon parading of worn out ideas of newspaper vultures certain was – hence the disgusted look upon my face. – But I am not here to discuss that. What I want to discuss held something within itself of great import that nothing this popular, pop-cultural word could fathom. Why then, it may be asked by the local cynic who peers from out of a dark corner and though the smirk of the whose faith lies within themselves, blind and unwarranted like all religious souls – even atheists. No. I write this not for them but for the exception, for he who wakes in the middle of the night with mind raging uncontrollably and who cannot fall back again into dreams equally uncontrollable and tenebrous. He it is who walks about at night, entrenched in the mire of his deepest thoughts – inextricable – and finds a destination now and then where he may lay his head – but never call it home. This is for such a man, and a man it must be, it is needless for as why when one is sufficiently familiar with the restless search of maleness.

That night I had come to an end in front of the door of my lodgings and had gone in through the agency of my key, which I had had duplicated from the landlady’s copy, the ‘one and only’. Entering I walked with silent movements up the stairs, carpeted with the soft comfort of simpler dreams, of cushiony security masking the hard edges of the unknown without concern. A rap at my window awoke me from the reverie into which I had fallen and I sat up, startled and yet afraid, for I had departed human company. Could this be the reaper coming to take me into his nether realm – if so I should go gladly? I was born of Satan’s spawn clearly and I felt that no other place existed in which I could find an escape from present reality. With resolution I sat up and went to where the sound softly emanated; a gesture of answer, a will towards compliance with the demands of fate; if it were necessary I would go – I was apathetic here, had allowed the world to slip from my grasp which I had so firmly held in childhood. Where had it begun to loosen – at what point had it so easily dissolved in my fingers – when I had begun to question, to hear the inner voice of my thoughts which broke through the sound panel barriers of my imaginative world? And the world had become flattened, its former dimensionality had lost itself to the grey dullness of the ‘Real’ of the social, of all its language games and attempts and motives and question marks – there it had all gone awry.

I hurried to the window, in answer to the solicitation of the unknown. Yet my eyes were glazed over with unexpectedness, I desired nothing and felt nothing for all my apathy. A light brimmed up in the panes of glass, overflowing them and yet unable to penetrate the barrier of my nonchalant attitude. It spoke to me of futures, ringing out as destiny’s call and, for entertainment purposes, I harkened unto it. ‘I have come to awaken you from your daze, your desultory life of dreams throughout which nothing has gone on and through the total lack of content of your life. You must exit this shadow world and come into the light, must come at beck and call of hopeful offerings, of possibilities that are offered you. Here is one such possibility you may recognize and wish you had taken before it had died so suddenly, away from sight and yet dwelling, preserved, as a luring creature in mind!’ The voice and the light engulfed the darkness as they stood poised on duty’s results, on their divine mission, and I was carried away from this place away to a past reality that I had yearned for once I had recognized its passage –

yes it had been retained throughout all these years and I often thought back to it as a representative moment of my own hollow life and sham existence.

The greens of the university, which I had left years ago – perhaps a decade, perhaps a millennium, I didn't recall – were fresh and vibrant in the springtime and I sat by a rock wall watching passers-by come and go thinking about how lonesome my life was and how necessarily lonesome; that there could never, with all probability, exist along my horizon the happy voices of a lost life atavized in new circumstances – and my sadness moved me so much that I was no longer there, torn out of my present unreality, of the sadness and melancholia of my life and placed in the cold room wherein I now dwelled though then it was a darkling sky only, only the threat of storms to come. Visualizing – I hardly say thinking – thusly I heard a noise and found that a young woman had sat down beside me, looking wistfully out of her eye and clearly too inhibited to speak out. I reciprocated the gesture as far as courage allowed, which didn't extend itself beyond the subtleties which could never be acted upon, which never bore the alibi of action for one such as myself, immersed in the hollow sounds of consciousness. She coughed in yet another attempt to solicit my attention, but I froze where I was the sexuality of youth transforming the most minute action into something of great Freudian import – we are all amateurpsychologistsinouryouth,forthatishowwediscoverlife'sofferings,howwepeelback the veil of sphinx-like maturity and discover her form underneath, always cast in our own exaggerated images – we see what we have created, whether horror or beauty, devil or angel.

And then she was gone – a representative moment in my life when I was once attractive to the opposite sex. Now, an overripe fruit that stayed clinging to its author the tree I found that I was resented for it and that people wished me away – gone, dead perhaps I knew not what.

Now I had returned back to the blackness, to the bleak surroundings of a life which courted nothingness and reaped the fruits of starvation, of social poverty, of the outcast. The light was still there, though afterwards I forgot it and would remember it only in my dying state as I struggled to get out all of the words and worlds repressed by my inner self on paper. It spoke: 'You had ruined what may have been; you had quelled your desires through cowardice. Now you must see what lie offers those who welcome courage and call it home.'

Again the same green, day and population of objects: people, cars, signs, trees, stone wall against which I sat. Yet I seemed transformed – a new being and a new grace ran through my veins. I could feel a power and confidence I had possessed only as a child playing robbers in the woods, racing down my spine and uplifting me through magic propulsion. The girl again came and sat down next to me. Instead of staring straight ahead in misery I focused my smile upon her and wistfulness which played about her features augmented, became a happy smile which proclaimed: 'finally someone notices me'; the happy flower spread its petals and the bee landed thereon, saying greetings and extolling the virtues of the day and its possibilities. She agreed and we eventually sat closer through the talk, as the barrier fell down and in its place was erected a bridge to thou from I and to our mutual surprise we found we had a lot in common and, and, and...then the dream faded and I fell asleep amidst the darkness of my dreams. When I awoke after having dreamed of her I found that she was gone – where? I searched about and found no one, found only lost memories and despair in the face of failed goals, of arrows which fell short of the mark. I recalled my dream throughout the despairing moment trying to retain possession as I felt my mind relinquish it to the sad reality around me.

We had been dating for a long while – relative to my poor experience – and I had bought a ring and proposed and we were happy and I too for once, slaking my parched thirst at the fount of

another's happiness; and then married and newlyweds on their honeymoon; and then the darkness came and dreams approached the distant 'real' and bowed before it. It is only the now which I confront – I shall hang myself for it!

Siegfried

Siegfried sat alone in the mountains where he kept his home and gazed out upon the misty forests which enveloped him. His hand-made wooden chair upon which he sat did not touch his back – for he was poised upon solutions to his problems concerning the totality of existence.

Alone in the mountains, in the solitude of reflection he kept his eyes fixed upon their object: a glass of water whose surface delicately wavered back and forth and in a thousand ineffable directions at the breeze of the wind. This he thought represented the world and its flux: how wind played upon the surface of the water and through the trees swayed as the branches; how these winds picked up and into the atmosphere carried the raindrops, imperceptible to the human eye, to be lifted to the heavens and cast down upon the earth in cyclical servitude to an unknown god of the Real, reality itself, the only god possessed of no attributes and qualities but those which could be touched and felt, seen and heard and sensed in a thousand as-yet undiscovered ways. The hawk soared overhead with merciless grimace and downturned beak, frowning in solemnity of its mission for prey, for which it scoured the landscape. He, Siegfried, was like the hawk: aware of the world and its movements, its predators and prey, friends and foes; he was a mover amongst clouds, a searcher amongst the skies of Being. But unlike the hawk who had a definite object for his search, Siegfried's object was only tangible as a question mark, it was (perhaps for all he knew) the search itself which became the object of his existence and transformed his existence itself into a search for the answer to the unanswerable questions.

It went on like this for some time, had been following this track since late childhood, adolescence, the time in which childhood reaches its apogee and is vanquished forever by a surrogate adulthood, itself replaceable by authentic adulthood. It had gone on like this for some time until Siegfried's 26th birthday; the day he knew manhood was unsurpassable and an inevitable confrontation.

Out of the house he came on the event of his birth which had lost its meaning, which became 'just another day' like all the others which fall away into forgetfulness. He was to gather trout from the stream to go with his acorns, his chief sustenance along with berries. He went down the well-worn mountain path that had been worn into the mossy, root-gnarled earth to which the pines and tamaracks cling, holding on for their lives' sake as if with a teleological knowledge of themselves, or an instinctiveness implying a teleology of the vast realm of nature. He had gone down, towards the streams of trout and placid waters embedded in the mountain basin, a basin of fresh vitality sparkling with the pure luminescence of a paradisiac haven; a haven in which he lived. He had not been long by this stream with its multi-coloured fractured light from the sun above when he noticed a reflection in the pool: that of a young girl with golden-braided hair looking inquisitively into his eyes as they were reflected in the pool. He smiled and she, hesitatingly, smiled back in her timidity, as if unsure of what to do and how to do it, as if the slightest mistake would cost herself that very smile and leave the void of indifferent or privation of a frown. Looking behind him Siegfried expected the girl to be there, as her presence was a moment before, but upon turning he found her absent and the rock-face staring at him in mute meaninglessness.

That she was there and yet not there was at first only a surprise, then the memory of what his uncle, recently dead from old age, said about these images which haunt the mind: that they are there because that was how all lives went, all lives followed the same path, had visions and pursued them or forsook them depending upon the strength of the individual. Now his uncle's words became focused upon an instance, a reference, a concrete context. This was the ghost which plagued him, the demon which haunted his mind in spite of himself. Siegfried carried this creature about with him as his pregnancy – would he ever conceive this ever-swelling image, would his labours conceive of this image at last and then, in such an event, what would he make of it, what good would it do him, or bad, or something else?

He pondered long upon the image, wondrous as to whether it had any value outside of an aesthetic infatuation and the feeling which reverberated in his breast. Whether or not he knew he was fated to pursue it and would eventually find out what meaning and value the object had. The golden braids which sparkingly reflected the sun as it beamed down upon him chopping wood or repairing his cabin, had ingratiated themselves into his mind, had wrapped their fine angelic tendrils around the complex weavings of his mind so that looking about him everything shone of gold and bore this sparkling raiment. His vision blurred and for a time it was all he could do: stare forth into the strangely full content of this goldenness and through it the smile and eyes and peach-coloured skin, shining healthy – all healthy – with the bright rays.

It had gone on for months like this. Throughout the night his body spoke to him in plaintive tones of yearning, forward glances cast outwards into the darkness in hopes of finding one to answer him – but ineffable the void of being remarked. It impeded his work, this treacherous call, this siren song: 'how could he escape it?' – The desperate question was posed. To immerse himself in work, thus Siegfried believed the answer was and went to work with unyielding willfulness. But at times, when chopping wood, when cleaning the fish from the lake, he would simply stop and stare into space, into the billowy clouds which surrounded his mountain home, stare at the image which entered his mind. Now the twine of hair connected to the face was brown and red by turns, now the smile was melancholy, yearning open-mouthed plaintiveness; now it was angry, as if at him for not – what? Siegfried didn't know. He tried to communicate with these faces and their amorphous play, with their always changing details, the universal descending into the instance again and again, like a raindrop cool and pure descending upon the brow, awakening it to the offering and availability of the individual. He spoke to them all and this was the imaginary which confronted him, a communication which stopped in its efficacy after a message was sent with no return address.

The sun rose and set to the constant dialogue between himself and the forms which presented themselves to his mind; he questioned and responded in the capacity of the other; he gave them words, endowed them with attributes and prettified them as little dolls. But they all remained mute and he knew this but couldn't help being like the parent whose child is already distancing himself from his sun, like a satellite who has left the gravitational pull of its governor. He struggled to retain their vestiges of reality, but invariable was the case that nothing stood against him or with him – he had cast off all opposition and sacrificed it for a fantastical illusion. This had only allayed Siegfried's fears for a short time; soon enough it became despicable to him and he himself, as the generator of images, soon came to refer his hatred to himself, because he could not bring them into being. And because he could not bring them into being, they were only miscarried creatures, abberative forms lacking correct proportions could not, therefore, stand on their own and must inevitably fall. It was during a dreamy fall afternoon

by the lake when Siegfried's angels fell, all of them, into the stream of perpetual becoming. He was sitting by himself as usual by the lake near his mountain abode upon a rock which overlooked it when his epiphany struck him: the false value of all this image-play. The angels, for so he had learned to call them, one after another plunged into the water and were gone. His own reflection remained and on its visage the radiance of the old being, of total self-presence and happiness within himself. – He dove in after the traces of those angelic memories which had preceded him, only he didn't think at all of their precession only of himself, as diver feeling the cool water around his limbs and bathing his brow. The icy cold mountain water awoke him with a shock to the dangers of its temperature – but it had been necessary in the cleansing of his soul of the demons which beset and plagued him endlessly. He swam with shock back to the shore with an ecstatic glow on his face, delighting in his liberation.

Siegfried laboured as he went about his daily life, under the belief that his problems had ended and in their place normalcy had taken up its position once again. But there was a strange tint, a magical aura around the trout stream and around his cabin and hammock - it all had the tinge of familiarity which had become the burden of ennui, the bearer of discontentment and it manifested itself in an occasional sigh before he slept a sleep which, surreptitiously almost, was dreamless, as if suppressing the images he had vacated from his mind.

It was rumoured in the village beneath the mountain, the village in the valley, with its old wooden houses with sharp, triangular roofs, that a young woman had run away from her wedding with a coarse young dandy whose parents owned a great deal of land and which he would one day inherit. It was heard also that this young woman publically, and with great vehemence had rejected the youth who was intended for her affections and had, later that night, in collusion with her maid, left her home of eighteen years and went travelling into the mountains, to flee from the potential scourge of her maidenhead. Thus Siegfried had heard it from a trader who passed by one day – or maybe he had read it in a book, legends speak with many tongues.

In any case the story affected Siegfried to the extent that once more his work was disrupted and he was again disconsolate as ever. The image returned, only this time represented only a particular, singular instance of women, Gretel, the young woman of eighteen about whom the trader told Siegfried as he collected fish in exchange for matches and new linen. Thus from upon high in his mountain abode the young man sought out this wayward nymph he knew not why.

In the middle of his work he would vacate it again and stare about the mountain paths for signs of a mysterious life. At night too he built great fires to offer succour to the young maiden from the wolves that prowled about, the mountain lions and bobcats and bears. One day the girls' father came to Siegfried's mountain promontory bearing gifts should the youth catch his lost daughter. When speaking of her, the old man demonstrated his great contrition at having spoken angrily to her when last they parted, in a fit of rage each one to their respective rooms. Disconsolate as Siegfried who had the intense yearning of youth and its passionate ecstasy to rage in his mind day and night the old man left the mountains without having gained anything but a little hope.

Siegfried continued lighting his fires for the next few days until one day he heard a knock at his door as he sat against the hearth built by the hands of his deceased uncle to the still-rising sun in the eastern sky. He had been looking outwards for some time, envisioning the golden-haired maiden in his arms and now the dream departed into a hazy reality once again in bloom as the

sun. Up he leapt as he made his way across the hardwood worn soft by much treading to the door. Opening it he saw the maid first of all in brown-haired braids which fell upon her shoulders and about her cap of linen-white. She smiled hesitatingly and begged a favour of the youth which went thusly: 'Might I and my mistress sleep here nights – we'd be gone by morning, so as to escape the wolves and bears which have beset our campsite more and more so that recently we have been taking to a nearby cave in which the bats haunt us so mercilessly with their cries. – Whoever you are, please avail us of our succour and quell our troubles which terrorize us throughout the night.' Thus went the lament and to Siegfried it was the appeal of the weak and helpless, his antipode and strangely, to be appealed to thus, he felt a supplement to his being making him more complete than he had ever known; it was something he had never had and now that he had it he desired it again and again. Perhaps this motivated his question: 'Who is your mistress?' a desire for the completion of life empty and forgotten by all but the fish and the lonely mountain. The maid, who introduced herself as Ingrid, called forth a hidden place around the door that was obscured to Siegfried to an unknown presence known only in intimation and Siegfried's magical conception of the golden-haired youth whose rumoured qualities preceded her.

Shyly stepped forth the youth, golden hair shining in the light and when she saw Siegfried, with corresponding golden locks cropped ear-length, smiling with ruddy face and glimmering goat-milk fed teeth, she smiled in turn and her shyness broke upon the visage of the youth. They had achieved something here, some long-forgotten moment which had presented itself to their present over the generations; nature called them, brought them together in that moment with themselves, two like beings reconciled.

And then the maid spoke abruptly, dispelling the magic, to Gretel, compelling her to curtsy, to introduce herself to the young gentleman. Shyly she did so and stammering, Siegfried too returned her shy greeting. The maid then said abruptly enough, that they would return at nightfall and they both left to the sounds of Siegfried's heart beating in his ears the magic of their meeting.

The work Siegfried had planned for the day, to fill the day until its eventual end, when he would light the fires of attraction, to bring the maiden unto him, was left forgotten. In a daze he moved about unthinkingly speaking to himself, and singingly, joyous all about this new presence, the maiden and her devout servant. The servant represented a stone, to which the goddess had been tied and which bound her down, weighted her so that she could not escape – and Siegfried? – was the agent of freedom, agency of liberation – or merely another stone, between the two, they were to grind poor Gretel into a confused dependency in their own wiles and purposes. His thoughts continued unabated so that they surpassed all previous thinking, became so intense as to overcome all previous exertions through which he had come and which now faced him as he glanced backward to the point when his life had begun – and it all led up to this moment, this point when Gretel was to become his – so his designs would have it and like a file he must reduce her bonds to nothing, gradually working upon the rock fetters of her maid servant and leaving her limbs intact. Such was a tricky business, he thought: how was it to be effected? It must nevertheless be done somehow and this would, he anticipated, call upon all the strength he had poured into his being as a receptacle of strength. And he hoped this appearance carried itself over to her and gave to her its meaning, his sole intention; to be the other of her days and nights, to be her source of strength. And finally evening descended and Siegfried's anticipation reached fever pitch; he shuffled the pots and pans he had gleaned from the trader in exchange for fish; he whittled a small wooden figurine, a crude likeness of Gretel which he, embarrassed,

placed away, under the mattress so as to hide his devotions, what would be interpreted as his obsession, likely, by the maidservant – and obsession would, in turn, be construed as danger, something to flee from, and Gretel then would (might? – a risk uncertain) be taken from him.

But they did not come, and Siegfried's joy turned to anxiety, and the moments rolled by inexorably. Soon the anxiety turned to melancholy, melancholy rage and hatred, rage against the fates and his position in life, stuck high upon the mountain without hope for escape, tied to a life he had inherited, a curse which pervaded him, asleep and awake. But again there came an interruption, again there was hope, a sound upon the mountain path – a goat? Pray that it be she and not a nanny who had wandered up where it scented food. Then there came a knocking at the stout wooden door and Siegfried's anxiety vanished in the joy of her expected return. The two he let into the cabin, wearing cloaks of grey, the better to accent the young girls' hair, to cover the stoutness of the maid and to protect them from the rains and winds.

Siegfried greeted them and they sat themselves down weary, for, so the maid related, they had travelled for some time, and now that they have finally come – though she said this incredulously – to civilized regions, though away from the town which they had been forced to leave in the name of a good cause, they were much relieved, for Siegfried's hospitality was, no doubt, a better alternative than the harsh rocks and rough grass upon which they had had to sleep. Gretel now spoke up and thanked Siegfried herself in shyness for his welcome of her and her maidservant. Stammering in return was Siegfried's welcome, for his infatuation with Gretel was his compulsion to hang on her every word, harken unto her understandingly and to respond appealingly to facilitate his friendship, to erode the hard-hearted stone sheath of the maidservant's, and to warm her coldness to the idea of he and Gretel's eventual coalescence.

The tea was brewed on hot iron over the fireplace and its warmth, blazing and crackling, subdued, its vital refreshment of gathered herbs, both fire and tea brought their conversation together, meaningfully bringing them closer. The maidservant prattled on about village life and her past life, when her husband had – how this came about it is not known, this conversational flow – courted her for the first time, winning for himself the wild heart of Ingrid, belle of the town, soon to be burgher's wife. Then the tragedy of their descent from their former level of status to the serving class and thralldom and dependence to Gretel's family, so good and noble to help a falling star like her, Ingrid and her husband. Siegfried couldn't pay attention for the young Gretel's eyes and his danced together in occasion, celebration of their meeting, desirousness of each other's bodies, though they, throughout their own innocence, knew not the language of the flesh.

This was the first time that they achieved a distant touch of souls, a valence of innermost striving and vital lusting in a romantic mode. Soon as the days came and went, and as the sun began to set in the western sky, Siegfried's preparation of the tea and dinner of fish and goat's milk became the rule of the period between waking and sleeping – the day. Then, Ingrid followed by Gretel, would wind their way uphill along the mountain path from their yet hidden place of day-to-day activity, obscured from the eyes of Siegfried and entering into his cottage as if through magical presentation. Those nights they would enjoy each other's company and sleep, two separate parties, by the partition Siegfried made to separate them, until the dawn came and they would leave. Soon their visits became prolonged as Ingrid and Gretel assisted with the household work, and, gradually with the weeks, they came to occupy the place across the entire revolution around the sky. Thus they all made a home through the division of labour, each party bearing the burden which was suited to him. And Ingrid became more and more lax in her

wardenship over Gretel so that the young girl soon found picking and braiding flowers the sole occupation which the day heralded aside from helping with the washing, for the cooking Siegfried liked to do himself as host to guest boon bequeathed.

One day Siegfried had planned to do some fishing and asked permission from Ingrid if Gretel could accompany him to keep him company on his journey down into the lake which was a sixth-day's walk. Ingrid delegated to Gretel which was Siegfried's anticipation, and soon enough Gretel's consent was procured amidst the flower wreath she was now making. Siegfried requested that she wear it as a crown of nature's raiment in her hair along their trip down to the trout lake at the base of the mountain. Smilingly she complied and the white daisies accented her hair which sparkled angelic in the sun as they wound their way downward to their destination. Conversation was at first an absence as Siegfried only walked with her, but soon enough from her promptings he achieved the courage to discourse upon the flora and fauna which they happened upon: the rabbit, the mountain goat, the thistle and the pine, bluebell and tiger lily – all were invested with secretive meanings and all were the subject of their conversation. Siegfried's love for the valley was expressed in his panegyrics of its creatures and their qualities. He brought out to Gretel the thought which had both, paradoxically, most disturbed and exalted him, liberated him from thoughts of selfish virtues, from the pettiness of self-reflection: that all of these mountain forms, their green and ruddy brown hues, their hard and soft textures, their suppleness and mobility or inertia – all of it was part of a greatness unimaginable to him and to anyone, whether they be preacher or doctor, lawyer or statesman, or common man such as he who had not been educated in the schools. The soft and the hard, the fast and the slow – all of it was and then not was, and then became something it had not been, transformed, altered, into difference. The stone and the tree might, after ages we cannot comprehend, become one or become one with another thing, a fish or a bird – we did not know anything besides this, and this the mountains taught him.

Gretel expressed her sadness at the fact that all must be susceptible to such a fate and that they must die, but Siegfried quelled her concerns through telling her that nothing died nor did it ever really live – it was always there only different now and then, was always present and then lost again, but only as something else did it become lost, and it was unknown whether or not it could be found again.

They had reached the trout lake in his teaching this fable of reality, of its constant flux. There he showed her how to fish; he taught her how to lure the creatures in with subtle movements that broke the stillness of the lake. She expressed concern for the creatures, how the pain of the hook must be a torture to them and he replied that life entailed pain these creatures could never know and that it would soon end for them, for he, if he wished to be what he was, must eat and they must then serve him. That, he said, was how life moved, how it flowed along its course, like a river where neither beginning nor end could be seen: we were all in each other's power, all served and died; all of us were yet eternal and all gave of themselves freely, and all devoted themselves to the whole of reality. Thus through pain came the novelty of life; birth pangs preceded its conception and, placing his arm around her, comforting her, she turned towards him and kissed him, receptive to his falling lips.

Back they soon went with plentiful catch, as if reality had established them with plenty for the journey ahead. The maidservant saw the closeness of their proximity from afar as they ascended the hill of the mountains and recalled her courtship with her husband long ago who had died in the war. A tear befell her, coursing down her cheeks reminded her, again and again with the

tears reminded her of her loss. And so saw it regained all at once and for this reason it was a tear of both joy and sadness and she ran down to greet the two, earnestly hoping what she expected to find would be conducted.

It was plain, so she conveyed to them, that they had developed an affection, and it was not her place, as her former maidservant had done to her, to intervene in their amour. Thus she placed Gretel's hand in the hand of Siegfried and the latter accepted it cheerfully. She quickly told them of her plans to leave Gretel in the hands of Siegfried, of course with Gretel's consent; not that she, Ingrid, was abandoning her charge but that she felt it time for Gretel to become a woman and accept the duties that such a role entailed. Ingrid said that she would likely only be an obstacle to the realization of their love, and, despite their protests, again symbolically joined the hands of the two young lovers. She had to leave that very day, to relatives of hers who had been ailing when the incident that had called her away from the town was new, was the contemporary scene from which she and Gretel had fled into the mountains. Now time was pressing and she felt it necessary that they part, for the good of all parties involved. Thus with a tearful goodbye she took her leave and Gretel and Siegfried, strangely ecstatic at the turn of events, went into the cottage and celebrated the emancipation of Gretel with a repast of goat's cheese and ripe strawberries.

The days passed, suns set and departed to their death to be replaced by a growing blackness – which was present, which absent, or both, neither Gretel nor Siegfried could tell. Throughout each and through them into the next the two lovers learned the mystique of each other's bodies and souls which became ever closer with the days. Soon they were never out of each other's minds and they adequately fulfilled the hopes of each, so that there was nothing to hope for but the continuation of the same.

Onedaytheydecidedtotakeawalkalongthetownpathintheearlymorning. Themorning dew reflected the brilliance of the rising sun and gave testimonial to life's purity. Siegfried donned his mountain-goat vest and Gretel her white linen smock made in the town of her home and the two set off down the mountain path to spend the day by the lake fishing for trout and idling by the cool sparkling water. As they made their way down the path they stopped and picked the berries which grew in the fine-stemmed green verdure which carpeted their path – they were in no hurry, time in this place had ceased to exist and they could take their ease, basking in the light of eternity. The basket they carried was empty of all but a goat cheese and the strawberries which they picked as they wound their way down the mountain slope. It was the full bloom of day when they reached the lake and spread the blanket out in the midst of the fresh air, cool and crisp. There they spent their day discussing all manners of things: what it would be like to be a butterfly flitting about them; what a fish would think if it espied them; what a gust of wind must feel as it flew across the skies. Most of all their conversation circulated around themselves, their desires, their wishes, their beliefs concerning that which they met with throughout the day. Never was protest made, never dissatisfaction voiced – they wanted only to learn from and of each other, and to blend this knowledge with the world surrounding them.

This was an actuality that could never be forsaken but would be taken up by them as vehicle of their own independence of all things, alone in the mountains amidst the fresh, cool air. The rhythmic movements in the mountains could be seen only by those eyes which had the vision to see beneath the momentary, the surface reality, and to purge all appearance of its superficial meaning, to achieve the substance which underpinned the vast totality of Being.

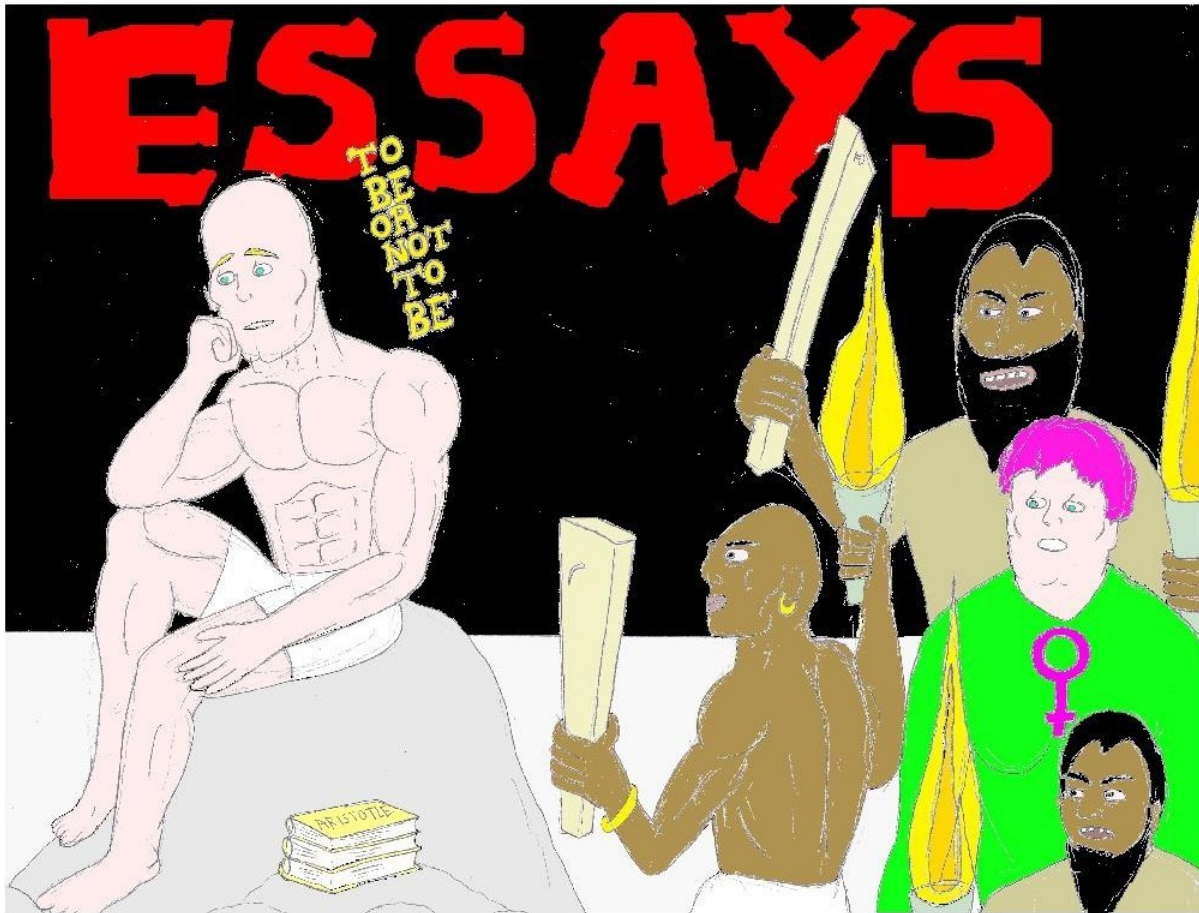
The sun had gradually begun to ascend and Siegfried with Gretel by his side, along the mountain path ascended towards the home which they had made defining them as human kind. They spoke of the history of the cabin, how Siegfried's uncle had raised him as a child therein and how he had known no other home. Gretel expressed her sadness at never having parted from her father on good terms and how she yearned for her mountain village though it had been sometimes in the past she saw it, for though now she was with Siegfried she called across the lines of time towards a past now eclipsed in an independent life. But, she reasoned, she could never go back to her father's place, for though she missed him she must weather the storm of sadness in her breast, for her pride had been wounded and the fragile bond of childishness had been snapped.

They trekked back to the cabin on the hill and there Siegfried embraced her as she said this, comforted her with his strength and concern. That night their bodies embraced and entangled, consummated their budding love, blooming it now expanded and through this became true love. Across all lines, all limitations, these two now went in exaltation and on the morrow Gretel confided to Siegfried her achievement of their coupling: a child grew in her womb and soon would be months sped past, seemingly in this very moment which stretched itself through time and lasted to the limits of this term. Then a midwife from the village Siegfried would believe the tale of Gretel's abiding with Siegfried upon the mountain by the lake. The child was a girl and bore, as Gretel did relate, the mark of her mother, who had died in an accident when she was a child, yet old enough to remember her face. The same golden locks, though finer, grew from out her budding head and one year passed and while the child slept, Gretel and Siegfried went again down the mountain path to the lake where first they had gone and after consummated their love. Upon returning the sun was setting and the mountain path became obscured. Siegfried, expert as a mountain-climber put forth feet strong and sure, but Gretel stumbled behind so that her late had to keep an eye and arm out for her support else she would fall into the valley at the mountain's foot.

Then the tragic accident befell them, sundering their eternal bond, in an instant so it happened that Gretel slipped upon a rock and plummeted to the ravine below, broken in death and soul. Siegfried watched as night descended and the sunset, dusky, vague, caught the despairing Gretel's features, imprinted despair upon her face, and Siegfried's impotence to stop her inexorably doomed descent. Running down the sharply graded mountain-side, Siegfried almost fell himself, almost sacrificed his life, but for the memory of the little child, who stayed at home calmly sleeping. Stooping over his mate Siegfried shed the tears which signified the passing of she to whom he had dedicated life and limb. – But his limbs had proved a failure to support her who meant all but one, and for this he carried her up the mountain path to bury her, under the setting sun. Full moon shone as Siegfried walked up the mountain's side, and by its ghostly-pale light he shed another tear over she who meant his all, who had died and thus negated all hope for future life of happiness. The grave was created but he decided, to cremate she who had reminded him of the great earth, earth mother, and to send her about its great vastness, to blend in with its utter vastness, incomprehensible magnitude. Building a fire he did burn her and marked her passing with a grave; scattered the ashes over being to unknown images the earth pervade.

Now he sits within the cabin caring for the child who has, within herself had instilled the spirit of Gretel's life, her laugh, her unending, undying zest for life which so had reminded Siegfried yearns for her his lost one and though she will never again return to him she had never left him.

Out there, across the valleys, out there in the mountain reaches she is the presence which exists, embraces all of the land in her love and loveliness, and Siegfried shares in all this still, with melancholy happiness.



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Antipathy of Values?:
Paternalism vs. Patient Autonomy

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At some point in one's life he begins to degenerate, to decline in virtue of health be it physical, mental or sexual and this, as experience has born out, is an inevitability. This degeneracy, as the term might suggest, is restrictive in that the same person can no longer perform in various ways that he could at his physical, sexual or intellectual height, each marking a different stage in the life process (18 and 35 years respectively). The metaphor of the downward slope adequately expresses this final range of time from middle age to the golden years and, in medicine, to endeavor to prevent this waning individual from crashing abruptly into the terminal point (death), other empowered individuals act as a break to ease or extenuate the transition towards death, which is often prolonged beyond their expectations. They profess aspirations of beneficence and respect and try to guide as-it-were the course of the patients life to ensure that no pedestrians are harmed as the patient takes a roller-coaster ride in an incapacitated state. They would rather ensure that he takes a smooth ride enjoying the summer breeze of life. However, the problem with the empowered individual's intervening in the life of the other is that he (the patient/other) is often left at a standstill and in a vegetative state with minimal quality remaining in his legally defined life.

These empowered individuals, when acting in such a capacity are deemed paternalists, and in this capacity their activity defines them¹. A physician, in the field of medicine, is essentially a paternalist. This is the conventional view, as seen in the so-called "paternalist model", in which the physician is posited over and above his patients as a herder of sheep or priest who cares for his subordinates. The "parent-infant" prototype of by-gone days (at least in the western world) has been supplanted by that of

¹ Nozick, pg.20

the "Parent-child" in which the patient no longer succumbs blindly to the "absolute" will of the physician but questions and involves himself in the decision-making process, decisions which could result in dire consequences for both himself (death; diminished quality of life) and his physician (lawsuits), both having an interest in the well-being of the former.

The A.M.A.'s code of medical ethics purports to accommodate that necessary condition of one's quality of life, freedom, with its hierarchy of 4 principles (1) nonmaleficence, (2) beneficence, (3) confidentiality, and (4) respect for patient autonomy. Quality of life, "the pleasures of self approbation, together with the right cultivation of all our pleasures, require[s] individual independence"², and paternalistic intervention, the coercive/persuasive means used in preventing harms to self/others (even when there is only the glimmer of a potential harm-a risk-) more often than not subverts this freedom in independence, otherwise and hereafter known as *patient autonomy*.

In this conventional view of paternalism, which is philosophical behaviourist in its praxeology many definitions have been formulated by theorists in the field of medicine to render paternalism more ethical as it, typically, in the mind's of the questioning and educated (or would-be educated) patients carries with it negative connotations derived from real experience. These negative ideas associated with or conjured up by paternalistic intervention (ie: paternalism) are to the patients, an imposing force of alien values, a hard and fast line drawn between a problem (a medical condition) and its solution (cure). Bernard Gert (a philosopher) and Charles M. Culver (a psychiatrist) attempt to justify paternalism through a conceptual analysis of its essence,

² Godwin, summary of principals, III, no.3

it's "whatness", which, as one can glean from the conventional view is far too broad and can be easily misconstrued. They adduce 5 necessary conditions³ that make paternalism what it is. An action must be (1)for another's good, (2)performed by a qualified authority, (3) a violation of a moral rule(namely personal freedom), (4)at any time uninformed if information is restricted, and (5) conformable to the patient's standards of value. The history of these definitional formulas if this represents it adequately is obviously problematic, as no.3 clearly doesn't account for patient autonomy and thus (1) and often, perhaps even usually no.5. The criticism of James Childress is apt; that the authors of this framework focus on the inflexibility of rules rather than on moral principles, and that in being too specific, their theory can't accommodate the reality.⁴ A more recent , and in my opinion adequate definition is that of Ieta Hayry, a more recent theorist⁵ who chides his predecessors and their 4 standard lines of defense (excluding no.3 in the above formulation) in justifying paternalism and himself puts forth a formula, reduced to a more broad and morally sound constitution. 1)Intervention say, when a patient is to be resuscitated by a physician against his wishes but can't convey the message(being incapacitated and not having filled out an advanced directive) and the physician acts in accordance with his own judgment; such an interventive (paternalistic) act is unjustified as it is an "overall violation of the patient's autonomy"⁶. This principle, though nearer the mark, is a great distance from approaching a standard of adequacy that upholds patient autonomy and is thus moral. The utilitarian aspects of medicine(namely time and cost)

³ Robinson, pg.1-4

⁴ Childress, pg.2

⁵ Hayry, pg.39

⁶ ibid

are dealt with in the second and final principle, that regarding the other/patient, to heed him as a person to be respected in his autonomy, rather than as a bead on an abacus.

Paternalism, the “refusal to acquiesce in a person’s wishes, choices or actions for that person’s own benefit”⁷, has a theoretical history taken from the reality of medical practice that is antithetic. Two apparently disparate forms representing a difference of opinion are set against one another to facilitate an understanding of what the morality of paternalism should look like. *Pure* in opposition to *impure*, *soft* to *hard*, *restricted* to *extended* among others all aim to realize a moral way of acting and intervening in the patient’s life for his own good. The first antithesis(*pure/impure*) sets the (1) prevention of harms to the individual against that of (2) others, namely the community, and it is the latter which is moral from the utilitarian standpoint of Berkeley. The second (*soft/hard*) either (1) “appeals to the individual’s values over time if his values are used in the assessment of harms/benefits”⁸ or (2) intrudes into his system of values, and the third (*extended/restricted*) is (1) absolute in its restriction of freedoms and thus tyrannical (ie: Jehovah’s witnesses and blood transfusions) or (2) a restriction of freedom in the domain in which the one being assessed is incapacitated.

If three of these forms, *impure*, *soft*, and *restricted* could be amalgamated in practice then it is my opinion that paternalism and patient autonomy could be reconciled. For the restriction of an other’s (patient’s) freedom in some capacity (*restricted* paternalism) appeals to the patient’s values over time if they “are being used in the assessment of harms/benefits”⁹ (*soft* paternalism) which prevents him from harming

⁷ Childress, pg.13

⁸ *ibid*, pg.18

⁹ *ibid*

society at large (*impure* paternalism). Only if the individual, in the comfort of his autonomy and system of values is upheld through this three-fold paternalistic formula can this be effected. It is my opinion that Molloy et. Al's intellectual instrument "Capacity to Decide" is capable of reconciling the two in this light with it's six step method of measuring capacity and as such achieves adequacy, not however, without deficiency.

The six-step capacity assessment process is coincident with the three-fold paternalistic formula in that it prepares a tender-footed path for the latter's equally gentle touch, thoroughly and non-coercively subjecting the patient to a battery of tests to reveal the problem (medical condition) as fictitious or real. The three ethical bases in "Biomedical Ethics" are an inherent consideration of this theoretical tool of capacity measurement, which thus adopts an ideologically thorough and completely moral foundation. It is rule-based (deontological), consequentialist (teleological), and individualist (existential) which theories are central to the A.M.A's code and thus theoretically conjoined, although both the A.M.A and the tool are independent of these bases, "Capacity to Decide" and the medical code mirroring one another. In the assessment process the establishment of a valid trigger, a sign (symptom) that points to something (ailment), the initial step in the process, entails 5 requirements¹⁰ (which are or suggest a display of incapacity on the patient's part) is a thorough part of the whole. (2) Assent which involves the person being assessed in the assessment, is an egocentric step, focusing on that of the individual although it also includes the other two ethical bases. The methods used in (3) info. Gathering, (4) education, and finally (5) assessment itself, are all cohesive elements of the unity, each of which having this range of perspectives

¹⁰ Mooly, et.al, pg.23

and participating in the ideological thoroughness of the whole which is the totality of process as the tool and prepares the way for paternalistic intervention and the idealized conception of the three-fold formula(*impure/soft/restricted*), which directly corresponds to individual autonomy in the restriction of freedom.

What makes this instrument an ethical one is its acknowledgement of difference. Different areas or "domains"¹¹ of an individual's capacity-to-be and its division into cognitive and functional lend specificity to the assessment process which becomes more individualized and can thus more adequately perform its function and be utilized in practice. My criticism of this step is that it is still too broad(with only six domains), even absolute, in-so-far as the domains such as healthcare(which should be considered the foundation) interpenetrate one another and the sub-categories of each domain(cognitive/functional performance within them) are so absolute that they result in a sort of dualism of mind and body within a physicalist way of thinking. This mode of thought, if unchecked through increased specification might consign patients to the nuthouse, an extreme consequence of a rough assessment which would lead to *hard* paternalism and subvert patient autonomy. "Some individuals may be declared competent to make some decisions but incompetent to make more complex decisions"¹² and it is the *hierarchy of decisions* which is a hierarchically gaged determining system of a patient's decision-making capacity that relates, once administered in the process, if a patient is capable of making simple(undergoing a blood test), moderate(a cholecystectomy) or complex(a corotid endortrectomy for example)decisions.

¹¹ Molloy,et.al, pg.11

¹² *ibid*, pg.203

One domain of the six, the advanced directive, is particularly thorough in that it entails a 5 step process that is rule-based, consequentialist, and individualist and conforms to the A.M.A's code, training the would-be paternalist (a physician or nurse) and testing their aptitude to assess the patient in their capacity/incapacity to complete an advanced directive. The pre-condition of a S.I.A.C.A.D, a scoring sheet to test this competence is a well-thought out rule based element of the tool as is the option-replete algorithm¹³ that directs the administrators decision-making and is, perhaps, a little too logically confining, as when "an action flows from the independent conviction of our private judgment" it is "the purest kind of obedience"¹⁴ (ie: to the medical code). Otherwise this domain, as deontological, respects the individual and his family.

The precision of the tool could be amplified yet at the cost of time and money which are typically on a par with life itself in the utilitarian concerns of politicians and hospital administrators, not to mention doctors and patients, by including other domains. A capacity assessment can only run so long and consume so much time and money. Of the doctor patient and all taxpayers- each utilitarian factor with an ever new contemporary limit depending on circumstance, ie: the economy and availability of resources; a seemingly infinite causal chain of practicality-. Despite the necessary restriction of freedoms through the action resulting from a failed capacity assessment, the patient would ideally have been treated with beneficence and respected in his autonomy if the above three modes of paternalistic intervention (*impure/soft/restricted*) were adhered to by qualified authorities after the qualified assessors had obeyed the collective judgment of the medical community and their own as moral beings liable to err, hopefully on the

¹³ *ibid*, pg.135

¹⁴ Godwin, pg.161

side of the patient. If the improvement of medical practice and treatment is desired it can only be effected in "just proportion to the illumination of public understanding"¹⁵, and "Capacity to Decide" effects such an improvement where it counts, with those directly involved in the process, the shepherd and his sheep.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, pg.122

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Apotheosis and Empire: Propaganda and the Ruler

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“Propaganda often works better on the educated than on the uneducated [because] educated people read more, so they receive more propaganda.”¹

While the conspiracy theorist Noam Chomsky, in his interview with KGNU radio’s David Barsamian in Boulder, CO., illustrates the influence of written language propaganda on those capacitated to receive it, he reserves the treatment of the most powerful form of propaganda for his *manufacturing consent*, a volume exposing the media’s five filters as a tool of government and its practice of indoctrinating the masses with its policies. As Chomsky states: “Where the government can’t control the people by force, it had better control what they think”, presupposing that the inner externalizes itself in their daily affairs, those which coincide with the means and ends of government.

Written language propaganda, the form most appealing to the educated, was practiced as early as Julius Caesar in his literary account of his campaigns in Gaul, purposed to build up his political base in Rome. The Twentieth century saw many leader’s as propagandists or builders of government-regulated propaganda systems, with written propaganda as the controlling mechanism of the potentially doubtful or seditious thoughts of the intellectually initiated. Mussolini, an Italian journalist *par excellence*, gained support through his socialist writings in *Il Popolo d’Italia* and later *Avanti!* Culminating in his fascistic doctrine and seizure of power. Mao Zedong’s *Mao Zhuxi* or *Little Red Book* furthered his political motives through ideological indoctrination as did Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*. The philosophical/ideological foundations of these powerful leaders was manifested not only in their political practice, but also in their public images which further conveyed those ideas they prescribed to and which they presented, although they may not have entirely believed in them.

¹ Chomsky

The symbolism and imagery in propagandistic art was and is a direct appeal to all echelons of class, whether in the Roman era or in present day United States. By making an emotional and especially an irrational appeal to the belief values of the masses this form of propaganda best effects the current political agenda of government regardless of the year, and art, "In this mode of employment...is not the art which is free in it's ends as in it's means"², not fine, but essentially utilitarian. Much of Roman art, in all it's technical skill, was of this ilk.

The classical dichotomy of thoughts (rationality) and emotions (irrationality) finds it's corollary in propagandistic tactics. As Chomsky distinguishes in his theory, the former must be appealed to indirectly(through the printed or spoken word and amidst an intellectual façade) whereas the latter must be appealed to directly leaving the receiver no time to respond to the message conveyed, or to question the motives behind the message, and whose motives these in fact are.

This essay intends to bring to light the propagandistic intentions of rulers past and present through a comparative analysis of their images/works and images/works relating to them, to question the motives of these and hopefully to answer them in the light of understanding their political context.

Various ideas of excellence are always associated with and reflected by the powerful, whether an authoritative body or an individual ruler. The reflection of these ideas is not the ruler's desire to glorify himself alone, but to have these same reach an audience who is receptive to them, and will-such is his intention-achieve compliance and obedience thereby. A simple image which conveys this relationship is the ruler as archer aiming his propagandistic arrow at the hearts of the people, traditionally doing this

² Hegel

through irrational methods, a Gestaltist psychology, but in the last two centuries through increasingly rational ones. However, parallels between past and present are very prominent, have been and will always be used to move the spirit of the people and keep it in thrall.

The idea of apotheosis, the humanization of the divine, or an individual's being imputed divine status, is one such parallel and was especially prominent in the Roman age. The omnipresence of the Senate always loomed up in the mind of the ruler (originally two consuls, later an emperor) as a threat to his power and life, and any overt displays to aspirations to god-status might precipitate their wrath in the form of a bloody coup, thus the ruler had to be careful in his self-glorification and indoctrination of the masses. Thus, to present them with a spectacle was a sure way to gain both favour and political grounding. Eventually one of the most prominent forms of architecture in the Roman world, then the Republic, theatre buildings, were commissioned by the elite rulers who funded their construction. Although the Senate also frowned upon this practice it was not only maintained, but was taken to psychologically impressive extremes. The theatre of Pompey, built during the mid-50's B.C, was the first permanent theatre in Rome, the others mainly constructed on campaigns and then torn down when camp was deserted. Following the Hellenistic model, knowledge we derive from the histories of Plutarch, the theatre utilized the Greek columnar forms, Doric, Ionic and Corinthian to illustrate the proper adherence to structural architecture, they're being in progressively weaker forms as they reached the third and final tier, in between which (columns) were concrete arches the remainder of the exterior made of stone. To skirt the Senate's and other political parties disapproval at his introduction to "Graeco-cism", Pompey made a pretence of

commemorating the statue to Venus in the theatre's architectural layout, the interior having steps leading into an adjacent temple of Venus (*Venus Victrix* or "the conqueror"), thus appearing humble, while currying the favour of the populace.

In response to this project of the general and a furtherance of their propaganda war, Ceasar created a forum (48 B.C.)-the impetus to all subsequent imperial forums- which not only alluded to his proximity to the gods but implicated him in their midst. His forum was the ostensible precinct of the temple of *Venus Genetrix*, and a bronze statue of himself positioned directly in front, subtly eclipsing the presence of the god with his own.

The equestrian class to which Ceasar belonged, though by no means one of the lower classes, suggested to the people that he was one of their own. In modern Nazi Germany Josef Goebbels stated in a radio speech³ that Hitler, the fuhrer, "came from the people and remains part of them", and it is tactics like these which appeals to the "plebeian" crowd and its collective psychology. Such a tactic, an appeal to humble origins, has today garnered the name of "Caesarism". Hitler's image was purported to convey this in the way he "avoids medals and decorations [and] wears only a single high medal that he earned as a simple personal soldier."⁴ However well this may have worked a discrepancy nevertheless existed between the ruler's political control and personal ambition, the latter sometimes resulting in their Icarian fall from favour as Ceasar discovered.

The idea of apotheosis and its employment for propagandistic purposes via imagery in art, was flogged to death in the age of Augustus, although the populace, the

³ Goebbels, "Our Hitler: A Radio Speech to the German People in Honor of the Fuhrer's birthday", April 20th, 1935

⁴ *ibid.*

Senate and Roman posterity saw it differently, eventually realizing this idea through the emperor's deification. Prior to this event, the first of its kind, Augustus (the "revered one", previously Octavian who was voted this honor by the Senate) set the machinations of propaganda in motion. His features in nearly all his statue portraits and personifications brought forth ideas of communication with the divine, and such communication effected the desired result, namely, Augustus' "general restoration of peace throughout the Peninsula."⁵ The serene visage of Augustus in a 125 A.D portrait⁶ illustrates this.

Further, Augustus utilized traditional religious mores in his maintenance of power as the proselytes of Christianity were still mainly the downtrodden, slaves and women, and this religion still in its ideological and influential infancy. Draped in the garb of a priest (as we see by the toga) with characteristic serenity of features, yet nevertheless a powerfully muscled figure, the statue from Via Labicana, Rome⁷ posits Augustus in the role of a benevolent father-figure-as *pontifex maximus*-, humble in his religiosity, and, although the scourge of science supplanted religion with atheism Mao Tse Tung in the twentieth century also played the part of benevolence in the attached painting⁸, shown indoctrinating the peasants, especially children with Confucist mores, which served as a social basis for communist politics, appealing to the traditional values of the nation, under the new form of nation-state, a tactic used by G.W. Bush and countless others, with just as great effect.

⁵ Strong, pg.202

⁶ marble, larger-than-life size, museum of fine arts, Boston

⁷ 1st century A.D, marble, 6ft.10inches; Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Rome

⁸ A

The temple of *Mars Ultor* (“avenger”) surrounded by the forum Augustum⁹ which was built irregularly as the emperor let it be known that he didn’t want to expropriate another’s land upon which it was originally encroaching and it also conveniently covered over slum land; this temple was a commemoration 40 years later of the civil wars and the vengeance Augustus brought upon Marc Antony for his betrayal to Ceasar. Ideas of tradition firmly situated Augustus in the hearts of all classes precipitated by a statue of Aeneas and one of Romulus flanking the left and right sides respectively. The left also displayed the kings of Alba Longa from Rome’s early history with members of Augustus’ ancestors the Julii, and on the right, great men of antiquity. The center of the temple saw a statue of Augustus holding sway over his fellow greats.

The traditional belief values of the masses assumed noble form in their adoption by the ruler, amplifying them, and typically acting as their substantial conjunction with political doctrine and it’s effect on the people, always with him at the forefront. The children of Rome seemed to have acted as a link in the chain binding the people in subjection to the will of the ruler as can be seen from a marble relief panel in the *Ara Pacis Augustae* (“alter of peace of Augustus”) in which a rambunctious child desires to be picked up by a togati by tugging at this same adornment of citizenship¹⁰. Originally built on the Campus Martius at the capital in 13 B.C and commemorated four years later, this alter not only preserves religious sanctity, but exalts it as a natural consequence of daily life. The realism it entails conveys the message of the citizen’s onus of maintaining these values. One such good Samaritan is depicted as attempting to silence a talkative couple, as her gesture clearly connotes. It has been said that this alter best reflect the serene

⁹ marble, concrete, 2 B.C, Rome

¹⁰ Ara Pacis Augustae, North side

decorum of the period¹¹, Augustus' "Golden Age", an atavism of the Athenian classical period in Roman form. The hyper-realism employed as Maoist propaganda, the vital rusticity of the peasants depicted in this art¹² is a far cry from Augustan mores but conforms best to the period's demands, that is to say an ethic of hard work as opposed to one of religious humility and peaceful devotion. It was (and is) the ruler's devotion to state culture which ingratiates himself with the people, the South side procession relief panel in the *Ara Pacis* is one such example showing Augustus and a group of priest; a scene in which he figures most prominently as does Mao.

Nothing is more convincing in showing a man's "transcendentality" than by aligning him with the cosmos. To do so visually seems to lend this "truth" apodicticity, as when nature itself (ic: the gods in Augustus' time) demonstrates it. The *Horologium* ("sundial") of Augustus placed near the *Ara Pacis Augustae* produced just such a phenomenon. An Egyptian obelisk from *Heliopolis* served as the *gnomon* ("indicator") of this time telling equipment, expressing visually the conquest of Egypt. At it's peak was a globe that cast a shadow of Apollo, god of the sun, who seemed to anticipate his clients birthday, the entrance to the nearby *Ara Pacis* awaiting the shadow's alignment on the day, an occurrence which Augustus had contrived to suggest his divine ancestry.¹³

Another Greek atavism, a single instance in the broad scheme of Augustus for reverting Roman culture back to the values espoused in it's foundations, was the over-life-size marble statue of the emperor found at the villa of Livia¹⁴ dating form the first century B.C. It literally teems with propagandistic intentions, not only in it's breastplate

¹¹ Wheeler, pg.165

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¹³ Ramage and Ramage, pg.112

¹⁴ Prima Porta; a probable copy of an earlier bronze(20 B.C), marble

narrative but in its gestures, which connote a powerful aura of authority in the extending of the arm (the *adlocutio*-“addressing of a crowd”), one which Mussolini latched onto in his “Roman Salute” as did Hitler in his “Zig Heil”, both of them used to awesome effect. The canonical head of the Prima Porta Augustus was used in a variety of contexts with analogous purposes, leading scholars like the Ramages¹⁵ to “presume a master model” copied as many times as was needed to suit these, to spread the ideological propaganda of Augustus. It is atavistic in its resemblance to a Doryphoros of Polykletos concretely bringing to life the classical past for the eyes of a contemporary populace. The proof that copies of this portrait had become increasingly idealized as did Augustus’ memory can be perceived in the features of a bust using this canon from 125 A.D in the Museum of fine arts, Boston.

This same statue is laden with symbolic meaning, which “remains controversial” to the present day initiating much scholarly debate as to its breastplate narrative. This marble relief narrative scene adequately displays what Augustus’ propagandist agenda is all about: his practical (earthly) victories illustrated in the actions of the figures carved on the abdominal portion-the return in 20 B.C of standards of the Roman legions, each representative of the lost lives of thousands of Roman soldiers-; also the theme of the transplantation of heaven on earth in Celsus, Sol and Aurora gathered together on the person of Augustus to be applied to the contemporary situation with himself as cause. His bare-footedness is suggestive of god-status and his proximity to the architectural support in the shape of a cupid astride a Dolphin allude’s to his official genealogy¹⁶, Cupid being the son of Venus whose brother was Aeneas from whom the Julian line was descended,

¹⁵ Pg. 109

¹⁶ *ibid.*

the claim of Ceasar's being formally validated by the Senate in proclaiming him "Divus Julius". Augustus, when under the name of Octavian was adopted by Ceasar and thus would be perceived by the citizenry as vindicated in his quasi-divine pomp.

Augustus' forum, enclosing the temple of the god Mars, lover of Venus, substantiates his connection with Ceasar and the divine, and, in its high wall, obscures a nearby tenement. Apotheosis thus, however subtle it may have been presented was efficacious in spreading the emperor's or consul's message of absolute power which was to be obeyed absolutely as a corollary of a traditional belief-system.

Employing the association of ideas technique, Augustus endeavoured in his Mausoleum (25 B.C) to recreate the Etruscan tumuli which the Romans believed to have been their ancestor's in its impressive circular structure¹⁷, forgoing his typical use of marble for the more traditional building materials of earth, concrete, brick and stone. His choice of location, the Campus Martius, ensured that it would be perceived by all of the inhabitants. It was his choice of a building's location that played a focal role in his audience's reception of propaganda. Such was the case with his house, one built in 30 B.C upon the Palatine hill¹⁸; itself connected by a walkway to the adjacent temple of Apollo, who was his patron god and whom Augustus seemed to be living with, a divine privilege indeed. As the first king and founder of Rome, Romulus allegedly chose the Palatine on which to begin construction, this mythical fact accepted by the Romans making this the most traditional, and therefore the most important area of the capital. Harkening back to the origins of the city was Augustus' way of suggesting that Rome

¹⁷ diameter c.285ft.

¹⁸ of stone, marble and terracotta

was once again refounded promising better things to come, all through the agency of his leadership.

Over two centuries later, the short reign of Gallienus(253-68 A.D) brought about a recurrence of Augustan values, and a portrait of this emperor¹⁹ shows his intentional resemblance to the former with divided locks on his forehead and serenity of countenance. The philosophical development under NeoPlatonism and it's representative Plotinus had a great effect on the emperor who espoused these ideas which in turn manifested themselves in his reign of 15 years.

Augustus' divine connection, both physical and genealogical strengthened the people and Senate's belief that a future apotheosis was just, one which was later formalized by Senatorial decree. Apotheosis was often a premature phenomenon with respect to the emperors, often a product of megalomania²⁰ and insanity, which pronounced to the powerful Senate and rivals for the throne the Icarianism of the emperor, resulting in his also premature death by the hands of these same. The "violent contrasts"²¹ between light and dark areas were utilized by the technical skill of sculptors during the emperor Commodus' reign (180-92 A.D) to enhance his rather banal presence with it's drooping eyelids, a technique which was incidentally in vogue during this time merging classicism with Baroque shading devices, similar to Greek Hellenic sculpture. His bust in the aspect of Hercules, a costume he was prone to wear as his mania increased provides a ludicrous example of this, the "sustaining curb of rational discipline"²² his father Marcus Aurelius attempted to inculcate in him failing in it's effect and resulting in

¹⁹ from an unknown time during his reign; marble, Antisammlung, Staatliche Museen, Berlin

²⁰ Ramage and Ramage, pg.257

²¹ Bandinelli, pg.288

²² ibid.

his son's murder in 192 A.D. The more modest example of Septimus Severus who had his portrait designed with forelocks mimicking the god Serapis was certainly a less dangerous way of presenting the idea of divinity.

One overt way the emperor's had of leaving their mark was the construction of a triumphal arch, an architectural creation that bespoke empire and was truly a symbol of conquest and dominion. Wheeler has called these more than fifty arches scattered about Rome and the provinces products of "ostentatious inutility", and in doing so confirms the fact that the Hegelian notion of aesthetic beauty had nothing to do with these objects and their "grand but nonsensical irrelevance"²³

During the republican period a select few Roman generals innovated the practice of commemorating one of these after achieving a triumph in battle. Stertinius had to build, one in the *Circus Maximus*, the other in the *forum Boarium* (196 B.C) and the great Scipio one in the *Cirvus Capitolinus*. The materials used in their construction were brick and concrete appropriately used to shape the arches. While both of these consisted of a single arch with a statue of the general on top, the continuation of the practice into the Augustan period saw their grand structure amplify into triple arches, the "*arcus Augusti*" and "*tiberi*" being two such examples, the former commemorating the restoration of the Parthian standards and the latter (17 A.D) Germanicus' recovery of the standard's Valerius had lost. Later development in the Antonine age (under Marcus Aurelius Antoninus)²⁴ added a "crossroads" style presentation called quadrifrontal which was especially popular under the principate of Constantine the Great (306-337 A.D).

²³ pg.s 153 and 158 respectively

²⁴ Arch of Marcus Aurelius, Tripoli

During the Flavian dynasty, Titus' (79-81 A.D) marble arch in the Roman forum was finished by his brother Domitian. The frieze-sculptural style at the time has been called "Flavian Illusionism" and the frieze panels provide examples of this. "The triumph of Titus" panel depicts the emperor in a four-horse chariot led by a personification of the goddess Roma or virtue with victory behind him crowning his head with a laurel wreath. Symbolic representation was a prominent feature of this period, works of art always entailing both a young figure and an old, the first symbolizing the people, the second the Senate who thus stood in a relationship of paternalism to one another, one with wisdom the other naive, and thus, the message conveyed to the people, it is only appropriate that the Senate commands and you obey. In the triumph frieze, the emperor's team of horses is given a three-dimensional sculptural effect, the highest relief being given to the central figures, "the bigger the better" notion coming into play.

Making a step towards apotheosis or self-glorification, this was the first piece of public art uniting the human and divine, augmenting the presence of the emperor. One frieze, "the Apotheosis of Titus" presents a picture of this idea in case any doubts remained with the perceiver. Titus is here carried up by eagles at the moment of his cremation, signifying his deification.

The arch of Constantine consisting of three arches dedicated in 315 A.D, commemorates his victory at the battle of Milvian bridge three years previous. The emperor is shown on one of the panels dwarfing the innocuous mass of people who supplicate to him with lifted arms. The social hierarchy is immediately conveyed in the varying sizes of figures, the notion being the bigger the greater with Constantine above all in terms of both position and proportion. Plotinus' aesthetic philosophy, in vogue at

the time and perhaps an ideological impetus of the spread of Christianity-which was adopted at this time as the state religion conformed with the latter's nebulous doctrines in equating art with the representation of concepts rather than perceptions. Art was her in the service of the state and, as in the above arch, was used to demarcate class boundaries, the little man seeing himself as such in concrete form.

It is interesting to note that the class structure of different societies over human history has received a correspondent depiction in art following the above principle, that the bigger you are (visually) the greater you are (in status); see the third attached painting from Maoist China.²⁵

The Flavian dynasty exemplified hierarchical representation in art, a representation readily accessible to the subconscious having a corresponding effect of pride or humility in the viewer's self-consciousness. Vespasian, who cultivated an image of rusticity-as he had once been a general-utilizing this in his appeal to the citizens, returned the deceased Nero's private gardens over to the public sphere in constructing the Colosseum in 70-9 A.D which was dedicated although unfinished at the end of these years. In the following year construction had progressed far enough to render it usable and it was rededicated but not finished until under the reign of his son Domitian in 94 A.D. Its materials, concrete and stones, also conformed to the utilitarian, unostentatious nature of the lower classes who, along with their social superiors would fill it to the capacity of 45-55 thousand spectators.

The segregated seating arrangements tangibly demonstrated the disparity between classes. At the lowest tier, and nearest to the event, were the knights and Senators above which were placed the mercantile classes, over them the lower classes and freedmen, and

²⁵ C

finally the women and slaves looking upon everything from a distance. No contact needed to be had between classes as the numerical seating and cleverly engineered staircases directing the various groups to their separate sections contrived to keep them apart and also to allow for easy entrance and exit. The aesthetic appeal of this structure was thus minimal although mock scenery could be placed on the stage for beast hunts or other spectacles.

One other form of monument which was used by the emperor in his commemoration of events, and in which he typically played a focal role was the column, a single obelisk-like construction originally conceived by Trajan in 13 A.D to commemorate his two Dacian Campaigns, one which relies upon a spiralling frieze of visual narratives running the 100ft. of the column in a tedious 215 yard band. It is a source of Roman military tactics as the 2,500 human figures (mainly soldiers) perform military operations under strict Roman policy throughout its expanse. Napoleon emulated Trajan with his "Vendome column" in Paris although he couldn't match its height let alone its deeply symbolic narrative, factoring in the gods and ideas of glory.

Nero's column of Mayance (Moguntiacum) from 47 A.D with its Italic features orchestrated by the artists Severus and Samus, entails five friezes and a double plinth representing the divinities of the Roman state topped with a bronze statue of *Jupiter Optimus Maximus*. In the second highest frieze Nero figures prominently pouring libation over an altar. Nero's principate, so Strong's claim goes²⁶, greatly influenced the history of art with his building policy and artistic patronage (if mostly for himself) which picked up where his predecessors Caesar and Augustus left off. The fire of 64 A.D was opportune in terms of Nero's plans, and, with him, devouring much utilizable building

²⁶ pg.180

area for which only a small portion was allocated towards the public sphere. The private sphere, in this case Nero's, circumscribed the ground upon which Nero's roughly 400x200m "Golden House" (*Domus Aurea*) was constructed in 64-8 B.C, a veritable compound of excess. In the vestibule of the house, the first dwelling of an emperor which could justifiably be called a palace²⁷, the colossal statue of Nero as the sun-god, a creation of Zenodoros perhaps of which the basalt head of the emperor in the Uffizi remains in excellent condition, a testament to the megalomania of the powerful. Despite the acquisition of much of the burnt out land for himself, Cicero impartially relates that Nero rebuilt these parts of the city:

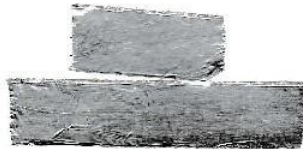
"[I]n blocks of regular dimensions, with broad streets between. A limit was placed to the height of houses; open spaces were left; and colonnades were added to project the fronts of the tenements, Nero undertaking to build these at his own cost."²⁸

Nero's patronage of the arts can be verified in his support of Zenodorus the sculptor and Severus and Celer the builders of his house, as can his occasioning of schools of art criticism as Petronius' discourse shows. Nero thus, managed to make successful appeal to the upper classes and artisans who in turn disseminated his aura of power and authority to the people who bowed to the threat and force of the imperial whip, a strategy employed by the Nazis and Fascists in wartime Germany and Italy. In fact during this time the importation of ancient Roman symbols was a common practice in the regimes of Hitler and Mussolini, the former borrowing the near-Eastern cult symbol the Swastika as the representation of a new era and the latter the fasces and eagle, those of power and authority, appropriate to Mussolinian strong-arm techniques.

²⁷ *ibid.*, pg.175

²⁸ The agrarian league, ii.35,96, in Strong, pg.175

Argumentation Case Study



The following case study is an identification, analysis and evaluation of two arguments from expert opinion, one reasonable, one committing the ad verecundiam fallacy. I show this in the two cases respectively in shedding light on this argumentation scheme

“Epidemiological Studies not Necessary for Experts to Testify about Causation”.

Case one entails appeal to expert opinion in three forms of dialogue, which is a sort of mixed dialogue format: the deliberation, information-seeking and persuasion.

The deliberation is the main dialogue type as it is implicit in the speech event wherein it takes place. It involves a dilemma, a choice that must be made by “the superior court” between alternative courses of action in the form of a legal decision. These courses of action are represented in the respective parties of the plaintiff and the defense who each assume the role of proponent/respondent where applicable in the dialogue, ie: when required by the rules of the speech event which is a legal trial in front of “the superior court” (presumably of Delaware).

The information-seeking type of dialogue is also present as the court is the party (represented by the judge) who is seeking information from the two previously mentioned parties in it’s deliberations on the issue of whether or not “epidemiological studies [are] required in expert testimony concerning [an] allegedly toxic substance.”(paragraph 6, pg.1 of 2).

The court ruled that these “studies are not necessary as a threshold for admitting an expert’s opinion on causation.”(Judge). This decision was supported by the following

premise which, with the decision, served as the argument leading to and culminating in a decision, and which renders it a reasonable one:

“[C]ourts should not be hampered in the search for truth by the rigid proposition that *no expert, however qualified, can reliably opine on the causal link between a toxic substance and injury without epidemiological studies conducted according to strict guidelines.*”

(Ibid.)

The proposition was a non-explicit, darkside commitment for the defendants (first paragraph) as it wasn't explicitly contained within the text of discourse. The court appears to have looked upon their (the defendant's) arguments culminating in this proposition as a precedent type of slippery slope, and that by accepting this proposition (through a ruling in their favor) a precedent would be established that would undercut the court's hearing the cases of "victim's of new toxic torts" (Ibid.), which was the second premise caused, or that issued from, the first. The court, consequently, ruled in favor of the plaintiff.

The persuasion dialogue (resemblant of a critical discussion as the other party is not going to be persuaded unless a settlement is reached, which it was in this case.) ensues containing an information-seeking dialogue as corroboration of the thesis being argued for. This dialogue is a complex or symmetrical one, a dispute, each party having a "point of view" (Walton, course text, pg.101) concerning whether or not these types of studies are required in these types of situations (above).

An argument from expert opinion is used by both parties within this dialogue format each arguing for their thesis. In paragraph 10, pg.2 of 2, the plaintiff's act as proponent's of their approbative point of view on the issue of causation through

presenting expert testimony. As regards this testimony no specific experts are named in the text of discourse but only mentioned (allusively) in the passage that "expert testimony" was afforded by "numerous well-established and credible sources." The credibility of these sources is thus diminished in begging the question of who they are though "the plaintiffs were qualified in their scientific specialties" (paragraph 9), which itself begs the question (critical question #2).

As to the second critical question that could be asked the expert's legitimacy is implied as "scientific studies... case studies" were adduced and as the field itself is adduced; so #1 (above) is answered affirmatively, although #2 is now doubtful as to whether these same are experts in the relevant field at the local level, as it is indicated albeit obliquely and without specification.

The third critical question is unknown, but the fourth can be answered affirmatively as the "experts' opinions on specific causation were based upon *accepted scientific methodology*", which begs the further question by whom was this accepted? (Presumably the scientific community) - But this is not a part of the text and must be inferred as a part of the event itself.

This quote answers #5 affirmatively and #6 can also be answered affirmatively through a reflex glance to #2 (above).

The argument is weak insofar as the plaintiff's argued in favor of the "issue of general causation" in the causal link between this toxic substance and injury whereas the medical experts' opinions were on "specific causation" (case specific?, the text doesn't explain the terms). This argument thus, is presumptively weak owing to the weakness or

uncertainty of the possible correlation and distinction between specific and general causation as cited in the text.

The defendant's put forth an "argument from precedent" as a motion to "exclude the opinions of causation"(paragraph 7, pg.1 of 2) the plaintiff's experts had adduced, which was denied by the Judge. Their argument invoked the case of "Daubert v. Merrill Dow Pharmaceuticals and Delaware case law adopting" this standard. The reasonableness of this argument can't be ascertained or even tacitly conceded as the first two critical questions matching the argumentation scheme (Walton, course text, pg.148) lack sufficient information.

The third is also unanswerable as the case cited by the defendant's and mentioned in the article is closed to the reader. However, the creation of a new category by the case at issue and corroborated by it thus establishing a precedent seems to be what is transpiring within the case and the court's decision as the plaintiff's attorney, Patrick Malone expresses: "the ruling is the third in the country to address the need for epidemiological studies in an ephedra case"(paragraph 8, pg.1 of 2)-but this is not the goal of the defendants.

Secondly(or what appears to be the next and analogous sequence of speech acts) another "argument form expert opinion" is again(?)¹presented by the plaintiffs. The medical examiner', by virtue of his character/capacity, answers the first, second and fourth critical questions affirmatively. The fifth critical question involves a "split of authority"(Judge) which implies opposition within the expert opinions and thus preserves the weight of presumption, the reader not being able to cross-examine these ambivalent

¹ The sequence of dialogue is re-presented in the form of this text and perhaps doesn't do so as the actual trial transpired

opinions. The presumption of ephedra as the (contributive) cause of death is probably expressed in his opinion that death was caused by "cardiac hypertrophy complicated by adverse reaction to ephedrine"; which is the conclusion of the plaintiff's argument. It is a question of necessary and sufficient conditions, perhaps even a false cause as ephedra differs from ephedrine and the product is claimed to contain only ephedra. This might have been what was meant by specific causation which would be impossible to evaluate on the given evidence and is thus perhaps a hasty generalization (of insufficient statistics) and certainly a *secundam quid* as expressed in the following premises that were used (presumably) by the plaintiff's and which contained facts that were verified by medical professionals: (premise 1-paragraph 11-which I have also counted as paragraph 1 above-, pg.1 of 2 to 2 of 2 continuous), (premise 2-Ibid.), (premise 3-paragraph 2, pg.2 of 2), (premise 4-Ibid.), (premise 5-paragraph 4)

The facts contained in these premises (1-3) could themselves have been the cause (and thus the charge of *secundam quid* would have been reasonable) as a medical disease/condition (congenital aortic stenosis) was present. However, what renders this argument plausible is the fourth premise ("In 1998...driving") that would implicate the toxic substance contained in the product as the cause but it is conjectural and thus weak. One of the expert's statements (perhaps the medical examiner's-it doesn't specify) expressed as/in the fifth premise dubifies this argument as two other possible causes are discovered in marijuana and a prescription anti-depressant thus creating a sub-argument of "correlation to cause" (Walton, course text, pg.142). Again insufficient information is presented in the text but may have been present in the trial as evidence propounded by medical experts, those who are qualified to discuss such matters (ie: the correlation

between cardiac hypertrophy leading to death and marijuana, anti-depressants, ephedra, congenital aortic stenosis or ephedrine as the cause-or a combination of some or all). The “argument from expert opinion” presented in this dialogue then, can not be evaluated as presumptively weak on the information contained within the text, but the reader may infer that it might have been presumptively strong within the actual circumstances of the case.

A conjoined argumentation scheme(one supporting the plaintiff’s previously cited argument and put forth by them) is that of the causal species, the sub-species of retrodictive arguments (or “argument form effect to cause”). In the fifth paragraph(pg.2 of 2) the premise that the party they are representing(the deceased) “had been consuming two bottles of Ripped Force four to six times per week...during the last six months” supports the conclusion reached by the experts that “the ephedra and caffeine in the supplement contributed to the cause of [the man’s] death.” But does it? Ephedrine was cited as the cause(paragraph 9, pg.1 of 2) by the medical examiner and not ephedra, but perhaps other experts for the plaintiff’s argued that ephedra was also the cause; this is not known from the text. How strong the causal generalization is (critical question #1 in the set matching the appropriate argumentation scheme) can be inferred from the fifth premise in the above argument which covers the same ground and is presumptively weak, perhaps running awry of the false cause and *secundam quid* fallacies but, from the given information, nothing can be ascertained *pro et contra*.

“Social Security Benefits”

Another case deals with the issue of admissibility of expert opinion within a court system and so directly considers arguments from expert opinion and when they go awry. It is also a battle of the experts from different fields of study. This is a case of an ad verecundiam fallacy, of erroneous or inappropriate (for this setting/speech event) appeal to expert opinion to argue a thesis.

The sixth critical question (in the notes) was answered negatively by the proponent in the dialogue who is embodied in both the plaintiff and the appeals court; the expert's testimony was, consequently, in violation of the requirements of evidence to substantiate claims made by experts and the decision was remanded as the Judge had made a hasty ruling.

The plaintiff injured a knee and sought social security benefits claiming he couldn't work on account of this. His testimony involved the diagnoses of two doctors who established the severity of the fact that might have (the text doesn't say) disqualified him from working (paragraphs 3 and 4). The third paragraph relates another relevant expert's (a doctor for the social security administration) diagnosis of a percentage of sustained damage which, if used in the argument, might have been an argument from (1) vagueness or (2) arbitrariness of a verbal criterion in the establishment of the "victim's" eligibility for such benefits. However, the text doesn't contain this information.

The first two critical questions check out as regards these medical experts and the third must also be answered affirmatively as "questionable effusion" and "severe tenderness" support the plaintiff's claim of disability (the requirement for the social security benefits he was pursuing). The experts also stand up to the fourth critical

question and, en masse, affirm the truth of the fifth and the sixth being based upon diagnoses that are presumably based upon acceptable medical procedure.

An expert for the defense and in another field (“vocational expert”, paragraph 6) testified against the plaintiff’s claim of disability to the extent that work was impossible stating (in the major premise which is also a conditional one) that if an individual could occasionally stand, walk and bend, he could work. He could (she claimed on the evidence presumably known to her at the time-minor premise) therefore he had the “residual functional capacity” for such work (paragraph 7). This argument led to that of the administrative Law Judge who argued the (first premise) in having this capacity and (second premise) there being many jobs available in the region which the plaintiff could have availed himself of, according to the vocational expert, he was (conclusion) not entitled to any social security benefits.

The ad verecundiam fallacy is implicitly alleged in the plaintiff’s disputation of the ruling on the grounds that (first premise) the experts’ evidence was not substantiated by data/research and that (second premise) a doctor he had consulted (who was completely qualified and who met-so far as can be inferred from the available evidence-the burden on proof entailed in the six critical questions) told him to avoid the work recommended by the vocational expert and to which he was held by the ruling (paragraph 2, pg.2 of 2). Two sub-points/premises are contained in the first premise that (1) the expert did not “substantiate her findings” (paragraph 5) and that (2) her vague responses (the qualification “occasionally” in paragraph 6, pg. 1 of 2 which begs the question), which elicited the dissociative scheme of argument from “vagueness of a verbal criterion”, and which was (conclusion) insufficient to verify her testimony or lend it any

premissary/persuasive weight. However the fact that the vocational expert cited reputable organizations-experts in their own right-in her defense(paragraph 4) was itself insufficient as she had not complied with the mandate of presenting a written report. This is sort of an "argument from established rule" (to which she is no exception) with the premise that as the administrative law judge did not inquire into the reliability of the experts' testimony (as required) his decision must be remanded.

This fallacy is committed as the sixth question that addresses evidence made this determination through the agency of the appeals court and plaintiff. The first two critical question are answered affirmatively . The third also if it can be verified /substantiated through evidence at a later juncture (the sixth question); but at this point renders her argument presumptively weak. The fifth question also cannot be verified until evidence has been adduced.

Collingwood's Idealization of Humanity



“All history is the history of thought”¹-This is Collingwood’s thesis. Thought is thus posited as the necessary condition of history, without which history would not exist. “The history of thought” he takes to mean the subjectivizing of “past” thought (ie: previous thoughts) in the mind of the professional or amateur historian and in the historical self-consciousness of Man (or humans to be politically correct). Previous thoughts have occurred *realiter* but in the form of human individuals who no longer exist corporeally (dead people who once lived).

He formulates his argument as follows: Truth is desirable for humans and for it’s possession and to predicate existence to it it is imperative that it be known and that it is thought in this subjective mode. Thus, in thinking subjectively (there is no other way) we know that we know and this is self-consciousness. He also asserts in his thesis that self-knowledge-the self-conscious subjectivizing of past thought that is historical thought; man thus knowing himself historically in memory or personal identity is out the window-; that self-knowledge (ie: knowledge of our knowing faculties) is the necessary condition of all other knowledge, such as that of past events and truths themselves.

The problem he would solve if how self-knowledge arises, to “understand what understanding is”². Historical criticism is embarked upon ,treating of the enlightenment’s “science of human nature”, and empirically/inductively based positive science that would construct the categories of “human activities”³for the above purpose. Collingwood investigates why it failed to become an accepted “science” adducing three reasons that have been used by way of explanation historically: (1)the mind can’t know itself, (2) psychology was (and is) not a mature “science”(this is the response of the psychologists)

¹ Pg.215

² Pg.208

³ Pg.226

leaving the *petition principii* as to when it will mature open) and (3), which is Collingwood's view, that this pseudo-science was constructed from out of a non-
efficacious analogy to the natural sciences, that it was modeled on them and it's rigid, ahistorical categories.

This, he says, changed over time and history came to be lauded as an essential element in modern thought, it's contemporary state (circa Collingwood's historical epoch) being analogous to that of Locke's era's physics, the consensus among the intellectuals being that it was a fruitful source of knowledge, and that it was to be exploited. This was the birth of historicism and historical thought, finding favour with philosophers like Croce.

The author takes issue with this historicist view and it's methods of investigation: they are too closely aligned with science; and transform historical thought as a subjective activity into naturalism and a more elaborate physiology through their use of causal explanations, humans being teleological in their thoughts, motives being directed towards ends not stimulated by instinct or natural forces.

He expounds this view through historical criticism of Hegel whose emphasis on historical development in his idealist philosophy seems to have greatly influenced him. Hegel's opposition of nature and humanity, the former eternal (though contingent in it's forms, which are eternally developmental), the latter contingent in it's forms (eg: the state and race), each superceding it's predecessor teleologically. The development for Hegel is to be looked upon as logical not temporal, and this logical aspect of development reverts back to human activity, ie: life qua thought. Such a perspective is idealist but historicist simultaneously and it's great value is the acknowledgement of this rift between nature

and humanity, that rift which the sciences and philosophy of science (eg. In evolutionary theory and naturalism) choose to neglect much to the detriment of truth—so speaks Collingwood.

He progresses on towards modernity's conception of evolution which is formative development in nature, and thus historical development absented from all purpose, citing Whitehead and Bergson as philosophical exponents of this naturalistic historicism though inclusive of teleology as in the latter of the two. Positing the question as to how the gulf between nature and history been obliterated in the modern view, he answers it through the above historical exposition, disagreeing and defining history (for historians) as the history of human affairs, history being the history of thought alone and exclusively, nature standing separately as an ahistorical development ala Hegel.

What is his reason for so defining it? Because history entails knowledge of the nature of the problems to be solved by it, these problems being events (or ignorance concerning the truth of events) and our knowledge of them being the only form suitable—or even possible—for their solution. To understand this knowledge of what a historical event is for Collingwood is necessary. He dichotomizes an event, a historical reality, as “outside” and “inside”, the given of perception (externality) the substantially real and “that in it [the event] which can be described in terms of thought”⁴, the idealization of reality. Historians, he claims (as an authority), investigate actions which are events as defined above, leaving the “outside” of the event as a possible truth that is not to be investigated outside of its relations to its “inside”, its human responses and causes in the form of thought. Such a conception of reality divided up into events is (1) more “complex” than the scientists (eg. Philosophical behaviorism and psychology, actions

⁴ Pg. 213

analyzed as illuminating the “inner”, and thus reflecting it) and (2) more “simple” as there are no causes of events in the scientific, non-teleological notion of causality, there being no “science” of human nature in this sense, only an historical progress and atavistic rethinking of previous thoughts externalizing themselves in actions. This latter is human nature ala Collingwood.

A teleological understanding and thus a historical one (as both exist only in thought according to the author) reveal, adequately, the “inside of the event”⁵, and that knowing and thinking these events in this manner we must know and think them subjectively, for-self, in other words contextually in the historical sense. This process, which is necessarily a critical one, entails (1) (with Kant) placing the self in the other imaginatively and (2) thinking (reasoning?) like the historical figures or “others” themselves. The historian, so Collingwood believes, encounters the problem or “bracketing-off” his contemporary historical reality as the historian’s “subjectivizing” presupposes a historically situated “subjectivizing”. It is solved, I assume, through inference and conjecture within the above process (1 and 2).

To know Man’s motives we must know what is historical in him, and this is the element of social norms, Humanity’s developments (ala Hegel) out of primordially which is nevertheless present within us, and this is the non-historicity of human nature. In so far as I can understand Collingwood I think he neglects to treat of the naturalism in “human nature” in any real depth and positivistically dirempts the natural “side” of Humanity from itself, thought then seeming to inhere in humans without any ground (which must necessarily be a substantial, concrete one) which acts as a force or entelechy, a *causa sui* of “concrete” and “abstract” forms. The conclusion then would be

⁵ Pg.215

that everything (nature and mind) or nothing is historical. For if “thoughts generate actions” at what point does a separation become a unit (do thought and action unite), unified perhaps at a primordial level of consciousness (even self-consciousness, for we are historical and teleological beings). Thoughts, after all, are not the bases of actions alone, they are precipitated through substantial free agency.

The next section deals with history as an action that most closely approximates a “science” of human nature and as the underpinning of all the sciences. His quasi-historicism postulates that all events⁶ or facts are eternal if worked upon by thought. The making of an historical event is its re-thinking or “subjectivizing” as it refers back to a definite historical epoch in which thought and its analogous actions inhere. Events are “objective...because subjective”⁷, because they are known to the individual as his own activity, his re-thinking and fashioning of them in the light of truth. Not only re-thinking but thinking itself is historical as a development upon that which came before.

Human representatives of these two fields of knowledge and that of human nature, science and history, are found⁸ in the psychologist and the historian. Collingwood believes that the former is out of place as the mind cannot be studied ahistorically but must be studied pragmatically (or contextually) and this entails history. Collingwood is effecting an essentialist reduction in a historicist mode when he claims knowledge of human nature is to be discovered in that of mind and mind in that of humans acting historically. His purpose in so doing is to have this theoretical reduction give way to a “science generalizing from historical facts”⁹, a science with a history as its basis, a

⁶ Pg.s218-9

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Pg.220

⁹ Pg.222

“mental science”¹⁰ in which historians act as the precursors of scientific investigation. The scientist must then become a historian. The danger of this conversion, he claims, is the “dementation” of mind which would become a “natural” object (as if it isn’t already?)— This is the danger posed by science. To avoid this scientific-causal pitfall into falsity he postulates that all generalizations within this “positive natural science”¹¹ must not transcend the sphere of history—the general categories must be empirically based.

He concludes with additional historical criticism of Locke, Hume and Kant and their failure to recognize that “the science of human nature” was a contextually derivative and constructed one, that it was, in short, historical. He wraps things up with this argument: All of our thinking is historical and a “corporate possession”¹². Rationality has for its condition self-consciousness¹³. Self-conscious thought is historical. Therefore historical thought conditions rationality. Therefore it separates us from the animals and it is therefore a “prime duty”¹⁴ of the new “positive mental science”¹⁵. To emphasize the historical in Man qua thinking being, however, is to overlook his “other” nature (both of which are in reality one) and this is a classical flight from self—the human.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Pg.224

¹² Pg.226

¹³ Pg.227

¹⁴ Pg.228

¹⁵ Ibid.

Criticism of Locke and Berkeley



The commonality between the empiricists is that we have (1) capacities, sources of knowledge, and (2) things known through these capacities. However, these give way to limitations of understanding (lacunae in knowledge). For example, the positing of the in-itself (an external object perceivable through the capacities and yet standing apart as only perceived in part). We nevertheless have sufficient reason for beliefs which is their elevation to truth/knowledge. We can therefore, apropos this means, construct judgments about objects through various means depending upon the epistemology in question (although this won't be gone into).

I will critically detail the individual epistemology of Locke, and Berkeley, the capacities they claim we possess, and the lingering residue of the in-itself as the principle limitation of their empiricistic tendencies.

John Locke, in "of Ideas"¹, claimed that they are the content of thought operation. The source of ideas is experience and our knowledge is derived from and founded there. The most significant problem arises when experience is accorded an adjudicative role is that of determinism; our actions are no longer "ours" in any real sense of self-control or production, specifically the imaginative. Is this the case? The criticism that follows may give some insight and a definite answer for the problem. The sources of ideas Locke dichotomizes into (1) sensation and (2) reflection, the former comprehending external sensible objects and the latter the internal operations of mind (the perceptions of these same). The senses give us distinct perceptions of things and are thus the catalysts of external objects. (2), by implication, is dependant upon (1). The latter (2) is employed about previously existing ideas and this is thinking, or self-relection (self-reverting

¹ Pg.57-63

activity), our capacity for knowledge dependant upon sensory cognition which admits of degrees of cogency.

The question as to why only these two are posited (and exclusively) is asked by Locke to which he answers that no other evidence concerning any other source is available, which, in its strange inconclusivity, might lead us to think that every moment is exploded when not thought. The natural evolution of ideas² is our possession of ideas by degrees which are "imprinted on the mind..."³ in tabula rasa fashion. Reflection effects/constitutes our memory, and upon it the latter is dependant(?). Locke states that we can know we sometimes think, for this is experientially verifiable, yet to think always (ala Descartes) is doubtful as experience is the adjudicator and we are thus transfixed in the present and past. This is clearly an argument from ignorance and evinces a limitation of Locke's theory. He answers this objection in saying that we are ignorant of the above (constancy of the cogito) but it can only be diminished through experience. That there is no constant thought is a poorly argued thesis by Locke's weak analogies, for the question of the role of memory is not addressed (at least in this section and it is this which seems to preserve thought when not explicitly present so-to-speak). For Locke knowledge is the spoils of victory in battle against ignorance via limited experience. The negative consequence of this is that it leads to segregation of classes based upon intellectual criteria and elitism. To synopsise, consciousness engenders thinking, and our thinking is dependant upon the immediacy of sensation/reflection as this dyad is the source of all knowledge, and only of external objects.

² Pg.59

³ Pg.60

Experience is the condition of knowledge and ideas and perception are therefore identical, at one level. The possession of ideas is not the mind's essence but it's operation. Like Berkeley ideas are derived from or identical to perception. In Locke the mind has an innate capacity which structures them and this is thinking. This capacity is perhaps the way out of determinism, but Locke explodes this view through the following. "Simple Ideas"⁴ are dichotomized into (1) simple and (2) complex. The former are blended yet distinct self-evident and un-compounded. The understanding can repeat, compare, and unite ideas all received from external objects, it cannot create them; this is a great limitation of knowledge apropos Locke's doctrine as we are compelled to start from an axiomatic ground. For only the qualities affecting the senses are imaginable. In Berkeley we see a parallel that the existence of an idea consists in being perceived, and the existence of this same is conditioned by the mind's physical structure. The *esse* *percepti* of Berkeley posits the object and the sensation as identical if not it would be contradictory. Everything is so many sensations, notions, ideas and impression of sense. In the theory of the imagination of Berkeley it's power does not exceed the possibilities of real existences. We are thus dependant upon the reality of sense.

In ch. VIII⁵ Locke discusses privative ideas, which he claims are impossible to determine as true or false. This he adduces as a non-strict, individualized judgement of reflection and thus not primitive-it is a limitation of our knowledge. Ideas are independent of the knowledge of their causes which Locke posits as the results of a reflective capacity. Hume similarly, takes this view as regards a primitive level of

⁴ Pg.64-66

⁵ Pg.66-77

consciousness, for we may not have (reflective) knowledge of causality but we are nevertheless bound to its deterministic force.

A further dichotomization of ideas is conducted⁶ into (1) perceptions in our minds(memory?, Reflection?) and (2) modifications(real, substantial or physical) of matter as the cause of such perceptions. Self-perception(reflexion) is the power to produce ideas which are identified with qualities. Ideas are then sensations or perceptions of the understanding, and a question that might be raised is if this devolves into an idealist epistemology? Locke answers in the negative in the section on primary qualities in bodies⁷. These are necessary(non-contingent) quasi-metaphysical categories and Berkeley disagrees⁸ in asking how it is possible for such substances to exist non-dependently of mind(in his doctrine our having knowledge is dependant upon (1)sense or (2) reason).? (1)We can have knowledge (exclusively) of sense, ideas or things perceived by same; (2) enables us to infer existence perceived by sense. His objection(to Locke's doctrine) is found in the conclusion that it is therefore not necessary to suppose external bodies as producers of ideas. There is no necessary correlation between the two. Why? What of original cognitions? If there is no innate receptivity, is it a constructive one? Locke's doctrine affords an answer(however unconvincing) concerning the necessary correlation between the esse and percepi. Also Berkeley⁹ stipulates the objects of human knowledge trichotomously as follows(which I shall discuss briefly in relation to Locke's theory before treating of it). (1) ideas imprinted on the senses, (2) ideas perceived by attending to the passions/operations of the mind and (3) ideas created by memory and

⁶ Pg.68

⁷ Pg.69

⁸ Pg.116-7

⁹ Pg.126

imagination. Is their creation independent of cause? This leads to the crux of the issue of freedom and determinism, an affirmative answer affirming freedom and conversely.

However, we cannot decide as ideas created(3) are insufficiently explicated by Berkeley.

The secondary qualities of bodies are powers (in primary qualities qua objects) to produce sensations in us. How? By "impulse".¹⁰ How these secondary qualities produce their ideas are through the operations of insensible particles on our senses(a lacunose atomistic theory). These same depend upon primary qualities (as inherent powers), and these latter have a resemblance to the objects in which they inhere, and not the secondary. Berkeley's rejoinder to Locke is that the causes of ideas are(premise) not substantial, therefore they are unsubstantial(spirit), which logic is perhaps irrefutable but nevertheless only a formalism that is non-binding realiter, for neuro-science was of course quite underdeveloped (if at all) at this time, leading him to this conclusion in conjunction with his religious sentiments. Berkeley defines the self as a simple, undivided being, who, when perceiving ideas is in the capacity of understanding (passive) and when produces them is in that of willing (active). The self cannot be perceived qua cause, only qua effect(that produced by it that enables it to infer it's existence; we are thus bound to the causality of the moment in passive suffering. In Locke the primary qualities are really existent only, and the existence of secondary is conferred on them in their relation to sense. This is the sensory relativity of the latter.

The qualities in bodies¹¹ are (1) primary, whether perceived or no(and thus unconditionally), (2) are "powers" of bodies to "operate" on the senses, or (3) powers of alteration (relativity). Regarding their resemblance to objects (1) is definitely (so Locke

¹⁰ Pg.69

¹¹ Pg.74

says), (2) is merely thought to be and (3) is not. Hume would take this for the basis of associationism. External objects in Locke are the cause (through their simple components) and in the latter they are simple impressions.

As regards the section entitled "Secondary Qualities confused with Real Qualities not "bare" powers", Locke states that we imagine that these ideas are the actually existent resemblances of something (existing) in the object.¹² The senses can't discover the difference between an idea produced in us and the quality of the object producing it. Berkeley would say this is a fictitious theoretical separation of the object. Ideas and things perceived are inactive; there is no power inherent within and nothing in them which is not perceived¹³. Their very being implies passivity, and, paradoxically our relation to them (which should naturally be construed as active) is rendered passive. Locke's secondary qualities are twofold: (1) immediately perceivable and (2) mediately perceivable, which Berkeley forgoes in regarding the object as all of a piece.

In Berkeley the mind, spirit, soul, self is that which perceives objects of knowledge for which they are knowledge. He criticizes the primary qualities of Locke in saying that an idea resembles an idea only and cannot exist in an unperceiving substance. Things-in-themselves involve a contradiction on the principle that esse is percipi although perhaps our ability to comprehend objects is deficient, and if so things-in-themselves remain untarnished and out of reach. His argument against Locke's non-dependant ideas is that in secondary qualities necessarily implying the primary, all ideas are abstractions. For if (premise) necessarily united with primary then (conclusion) they exist only in the mind; we cannot conceive extension/motion without other qualities

¹² Pg. 76-77

¹³ Pg. 117, sec. 25

[likewise matter (in Aristotle and others) and their doctrine of material substance/material prima].

The making and unmaking of ideas is the mind's activity and sensory ideas are non-dependant upon the will. Therefore some other will produces them (ie:God). The sense is posited in opposition to imagination and a recourse to God to effect the terminus of the infinite regress in the producing of ideas is had, and without which we would follow a line of causes without cessation.

Ideas are further dichotomized by Berkeley into (1) the real of sense (through the agency of God) and (2) images of things (which imply a realiter basis and are the products of imagination). Unlike Locke, no arbitrary metaphysical categories are adduced that ambiguate our knowledge of the real although we are bound to the senses as the things which we imagine. The difference between the real and ideal is that all things redound to sense which implies a perceptor.¹⁴ To counter a possible objection of immanency to his theory of the idea of matter, Berkeley maintains that we cannot conclude that objects have no existence when unperceived just because (premise) they do when perceived. He preserves this notion along with personal identity, and thus refutes the argument from ignorance through stating that no objects exist realiter without an idealiter basis and in doing so propounds a quasi-idealism.

God is the absolute regulator of this idealist epistemology and without, everything reduces to the cogito as it's god, it's prima causa. But in such a view idealism, with the remaining residue of the in-itself still clinging to it transforms eo ipso into a materialism. In either case freedom is a fiction as the untruth of the former belies it's real

¹⁴ Pg.117(?), sec.2

(materialistic) intentions and the harsh (empirical) reality of such a system as Locke relinquishes freedom also. In each epistemology deterministic forces reign.

Darwin's Legacy:

A book review



John Dupre's book "Darwin's Legacy" would address what he claims to be the central question concerning evolution, namely: "What does evolution tell us about ourselves and our world?"¹

In "belief and skepticism"² he sets out his philosophical position as a philosopher of biology apropos the rejection of the Christian religion's notion of creationism as a disparity exists between the former and evolution. He maintains that that "science can sometimes accumulate enough evidence to make ['facts'] impossible to reject" and that this applies to "broad evolutionary these"³. Empiricism is the means to the rendering plausible of these same and is the limit to skepticism, an attitude he lays claim to in conjunction with the above (empiricism) which "provides the standard to which beliefs should answer"⁴.

In chapter two (pp.12-26) he explicates the theory of evolution as referring to the following propositions/assertions: (1)"life on earth evolved"⁵ and (2) there is descent with modification"(ie: "complex forms derived from simpler forms")⁶.He claims these are "unquestionably true"⁷. Though the theory suggests a unified whole, he argues, it cannot "usefully"(whatever that means) be thought of as an axiomatic system⁸.

As his standpoint emphasizes evidence he corroborates (2)(above) with three forms of this same: (1)"physiological evidence of related structures"⁹, (2) fossils, in

¹ Pg.1

² Pg.3

³ Ibid.

⁴ Pg.11

⁵ Pg.12

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Pg.13

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Pg.14

which #2(above) is revealed and (3) biogeography, the latter arguing for global parity between species(especially humans which he discusses in his chapter on race).

In the section on “natural selection”(pp.17-26, entailing controversies which arise apropos this element of evolutionary theory) he applauds Darwin’s theory of the same name, which is “best understood through the idea of heritable variation in fitness”¹⁰, “fitness” being a “disposition to produce surviving offspring”¹¹. What of thriving? He answers that better(ic:survivalistic) features will become “more common”¹² which again begs the question, and perhaps ad infinitum. He asserts, empirically, that there is a fact of natural selection¹³ which in turn begot much “scientific controversy”¹⁴. This element of the theory discussed, despite its controversy, explains an organism’s adaptation to an environment¹⁵.

The controversies arising out of natural selection are ,in part, its constraints; only gradual change is admitted as a plausible account. Another(propounded by Dawkins among others) is what the process selects: the organism or the gene? Dawkins believes the latter in arguing that what survives are the fittest genes¹⁶ but Dupre takes a contrary view claiming that: “the selection of genes is insufficient to represent fully the complexity of the evolutionary process.

Concerning the evidence for evolution #2(above-fossils), gaps in the record of these same is a basis for controversy which has been argued by some¹⁷ that it merely

¹⁰ Pg.17

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Pg.19

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Pg.21 btm. paragraph

¹⁷ Pg.25

reflects the “history of life”. Despite the controversies, Dupre looks upon evolution as untarnished as these do not threaten its “central claims”¹⁸.

In chapter three(pp.27-40) he outlines “limitations” of a theory presupposedly true in saying “its ability to provide detailed explanations of specific phenomena is often” overemphasized¹⁹; it having “almost entirely intellectual benefits”²⁰ which confutes what he said earlier²¹ about usefulness. The reason is because of its duration, one that exceeds the span of human life.

He also wants to combat the functional basis of explanations of “the presence of particular features of particular kinds of organism” in his treatment of explanation and understanding in evolutionary theory. Scientific explanation, with its covering law models that forgo a “deeper insight into” phenomena²². Why? No constancy is admissible in evolutionary history (which he defines as a natural development process)-thus no covering law models. Evolutionary explanations offer understanding and do not allow for inference, because we can thus not know what a certain feature is for. He argues by saying: “the amount of information...need[ed] to...infer [a fact] would be so great as to limit the application of the explanation to the particular case in point...rul[ing] out any relevance...for [a] subsuming generalization.”²³

Difficulties in accounting for ‘evolutionary’ facts²⁴ are twofold: (1) the correct understanding of the distinction between (i) adaptation and (ii) exaptation, the latter being defined as an organism’s putting a “trait to use that is different from that which explained

¹⁸ Pp.12-26

¹⁹ Pg.27

²⁰ Pg.28

²¹ Pg.13

²² Pg.29

²³ Pg.31

²⁴ Pg.33

its selection”²⁵ and the former as “traits of organisms evolve[ing] because they serve...some function”²⁶ The latter(ii) is not anomalous, but is a purposeful occurrence. Another difficulty is (2) the multiplicity of “fitness effects” of an organism’s feature which is undercut through excessive reliance upon adaptation.

In the section on “the limits of evolutionary explanation” a general conception of “evolutionary explanation” is set up only to be knocked about with two skeptical comments. This conception comprehends that (1) “the basis for the fitness advantage of a feature to have no doubt that those advantages played an important role in the origin of the feature” and (2) “the identification of those advantages provides us some kind of evolutionary explanation of the feature’s presence”²⁷. His comments are that (1) “the possibility of even such broad explanation sketches is limited to those cases where the function of the trait in question is beyond any serious doubt”²⁸ and(?) that “there is no naturally given way of dividing an organism into features or traits”²⁹.

Explanations of “comparative morphology,...geographical distribution of similar forms and...the positions of objects in the fossil record” is what most contributes to rendering evolution plausible.

Chapter four details the so-called “metaphysical implications” of the theory of evolution through delineating criticism of some historical arguments for the existence of the Christian God and reasons for the rejection of these same based primarily on Darwin’s contribution to science in naturalism, a view the author applauds³⁰. Dupre

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Pg.37

²⁸ Pg.38

²⁹ Pg.39

³⁰ Pg.122 and pg.41

defines naturalism negatively as “anti-supernaturalism”³¹ claiming that “things exist in space and time[and as such are] concrete entities”³². His view of existence, being naturalistic and empirical, lends (alleged) weight to his authority as a learned proponent, and critic of, evolutionary theory.

Though Darwinian naturalism and modern theory derived from same, Dupre takes issue with faith based arguments³³ which are (empirically) groundless; “I need...not take faith very seriously”³⁴ as lacking this ground. The theism he deals with is indentured in the Christian tradition and excludes the plausibility of other forms of belief, which latter he waves aside dogmatically and anti-skeptically. The argument from design³⁵ is one such argument for the existence of God.

How then, can one account for the current state-of-affairs? Our author claims evolution is the answer as it is “the best possible explanation”³⁶, which is a rather presumptuous and anti-skeptical position to take contrary to his previous assertions³⁷.

Chapter five (pp.63-76) examines the distinction between humans and animals, their (1) continuity(pp.67-71) and (2) discontinuity (pp.71-76). “Language, thought, and culture”³⁸ are the most prominent distinguishing attributes and are coincident with evolution. The first in the above series (language) is “the most significant” as the “only plausible ground for supposing that thought is unique to humans is the belief that language is”³⁹. But is language? There exists, Dupre asserts, a sufficiently large distance

³¹ Pg.42

³² Pg.43

³³ Pg.45

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Pp.47-8

³⁶ Pg.53

³⁷ Pg.4, etc.

³⁸ Pg.67

³⁹ Pg.68

between animal and human forms of communication and this in turn is sufficient reason for our accepting the conclusion.

Human language engenders possibilities for the creation of sophisticated societies⁴⁰ and the possession of a highly developed linguistic capacity determines (proportionately) how one is to be of use to the state, whether they can rule or be ruled in turn. There exists a correlation between human language and complexity of culture. The “division of labor” and of “role or status”⁴¹ is a product of language (rather a conclusory leap of faith) and this is likely purported to indoctrinate the reader with the creed of democratic homogeneity: that Knowledge=power. This section, though plausible independently of these stings, is tangled in them and as such is a democratic sell for the rule of the intellectuals, which, though appealing, is a fiction. Dupre even goes so far as to say that evolution qua language engenders freedom: “the interplay between individual goals and social structures embedded in language provides a space in which can be found something that genuinely [or ingenuously] deserves to be called human freedom.” This begs the question as to what we are free from and for what purpose are we free(from nature to functionality?).

This excursus into language fosters the belief in evolution (at least in a doctrinaire manner) through countering sociobiology, which he discusses in chapter six. He asks the question why the arguments of evolutionary psychology shouldn't be taken seriously. These are synopsisized⁴² into one which claims “the disposition[that] an agent has to behave in certain situations [in a deterministic manner] can be understood as deriving from structural features of the agent, perhaps of the agent's brain.” These dispositions are

⁴⁰ Pg.72

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Pg.79

the causes of behavior in their view. Evolutionary psychologists argue that (premise) during the late Stone Age human brains were “adapted structure[s]”⁴³ and consequently (conclusion) the knowledge of the contemporary conditions then enables us to understand ourselves now. These biologists (such as Dawkins) argue for the immutability or greater constancy of the human genetic code through positing cultural evolution in his defense as antagonistic to this theory(cf.67-76, on language). This argues that “the role of genes in evolution has been grossly misrepresented”⁴⁴, and genes do not answer the most important part of the question he posited at the beginning⁴⁵(ie: what can evolution tell us about ourselves. The environment also⁴⁶ must be factored in explanatorily. Though genetics does not constitute us as a whole it does in part.

The method of animal comparison⁴⁷, used by evolutionary biologists to draw parallels with humans and explain our behavior he would explode as irrelevant as “pointing to analogies can tell us nothing about the evolutionary trajectory of a trait”⁴⁸. He concludes his discussion of evolutionary psychology by labeling it a “pseudo-scientific project”⁴⁹ for the above reasons. Contrary to evolutionary psychology and it’s statistical research⁵⁰ Dupre proclaims that empiricism is the key to understanding human nature (and culture for that matter).

Of the chapter on race and gender(pp.99-118) he asserts the alleged mythology of the former and, concerning the general drive of males and females, homogenizes it and downplays any gender proclivities despite the overwhelming evidence. As regards race,

⁴³ Pg.81

⁴⁴ Pg.83

⁴⁵ Pg.1

⁴⁶ Pg.93

⁴⁷ Pg.90

⁴⁸ Pg.91

⁴⁹ Pg.95

⁵⁰ Pg.97

particular sub-species (or races) are mistakenly interpreted as “large and amorphous racial categories” when in reality they can be explained away through their infinite specification.⁵¹ As regards sex he believes the basis for division is genuine unlike the former but the arguments he advances are mainly social-engineering/propagandistically oriented and have little to do with evolution as a raw datum that he claims to be true. To sum up⁵² biology has in it’s corner sex (with nuances, eg.transsexuals, etc.) and culture has gender, which latter is merely its product through the catalyst of sex. Culture is the means for infinite specification.

Concluding the book, Dupre lays out the claim that evolution can’t give us detailed explanations of the parts (features) of the wholes (organisms) as (premise) they are “truly countless”⁵³. We should accept evolution, he declares, because his “brand of empiricism[in evolutionary theory]...insists only that we have some reason for the things we believe and that we decline to believe those things for which we have no reasons.”⁵⁴ Reason rules the world and it is benevolent.

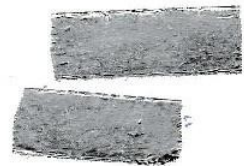
⁵¹ Pg.104

⁵² Pp.110-111

⁵³ Pg.119

⁵⁴ Pg.123

Epoché and the Judgment in Descartes and Husserl



In this essay I will be focusing on the discourse on method and meditation 1 but will be invoking other meditations when germane to my purpose which is a critical investigation into the methods of Husserl and Descartes and the problems, failings or biases of the latter in relation to contemporary knowledge and especially Husserl's epoché.

The first philosophy of Descartes was identified with an all-embracing, nomological science; a rigorous science as *mathesis universalis*, which itself was implicitly based on deductive logic. This same was to serve as the apodictic basis for all judgments and truth in scientific investigation and knowledge in general. It entailed a method that was modeled on mathematics and geometry, a normative ideal that purported to ground deductions absolutely with its axiomatic foundation.

This deductive method selected the axiom of the (ego) cogito and hoped to ground all judgments therein as the necessary terminis of a thought regress to which all deduced knowledge could be traced and which was, consequently, the font of all knowledge. The problem of this, Descartes foresaw. Was not so much the dubitability of the cogito (of which he had a clear and distinct idea) as objective substrate (beneath only God which I won't go into) but that of the judgment as an innate faculty of the cogito exponentiated in a mass of individuals, and thus preserving its universality and apodicticity.

Edmund Husserl, greatly influenced by Descartes, perceived in his method the potentiality for certainty in the sciences and constructed (perhaps) from out of this notion phenomenology, a science purporting to serve as a first philosophy in the manner of Descartes. Being historically posterior to Descartes he has the advantage of the historical

corporate body of all knowledge since that juncture in history. This advantage carries over to that of criticism of his predecessor in the light of this knowledge, and his philosophy is wholly believable (sound) although vague. Philosophy for Husserl was “a systematic structure made up of apodictic cognitions, starting with the intrinsically first field of experience and judgment”¹. Judgment is therefore the foundation of knowledge and is necessarily experiential. All apodictic judgments seek experiential ground. The judgment in Husserl is an experientially relative thing, that which unites the subject and object in an objective logical nexus. Judgments, ala Descartes, issue from a judging subject. They are those things (acts) belonging to the cogito which confer meaning; they are “something meant as being”² in Husserl and “intuition[s] of the mind”³ in Descartes. These acts of the cogito (ego cogito or merely “ego” in Husserl) are intentional acts directed towards an intended object and this is the objective world or *lebenswelt* in Husserl. How does such a complex theory as intentionality (in the phenomenology of Husserl) manage to worm it’s way into Descartes? Whispers of it are implicit in the passage “attention is more or less directed”⁴, in which he would convey that intellection (intuitions of the mind) is either an active or a passive act/suffering that either is judgment itself or is potentially a paving the way for it in the naiveté of apodicticity which Husserl transforms in epoché. This is where the two philosopher’s diverge in methodology, and what is at stake in such a divergence is apodicticity of judgments (as to the method of doubt and Husserl’s criticism of it I will investigate that separately).

¹ Husserl, “Experience and Judgment”, pg.225

² Ibid. “Cartesian Meditations”, pg.10

³ Descartes, pg.41

⁴ Ibid.

Descartes' 1st law in his discourse on method (pg.25, 2nd paragraph) could very easily argue for immediate judgments of the pre-reflective sort in the natural attitude (see above quote, "intuition[s]..."). Husserl carefully avoids the natural attitude towards being (non-differentiated thoughts/cognitions) with his dichotomization of judgment into "immediate" and "mediate", the one encompassing pre-predicative, the other predicative experience. This latter is wherein intentional acting lies and is also the most dangerous ground if not bracketed off from the subject through epoché (later discussed). Judgments have an immediate ground as beliefs in the former presuppose (logically and intuitively) beliefs in the latter, immediate judgments⁵. The violation of certainty through the empty and pre-reflective state of the natural attitude precludes Descartes' claim that no presumptions exist in this form of judgment (and implicit ontological commitment that can nevertheless be gleaned from the text). The paradox of Descartes method lies in his desire for an absolute ground in what is "clear" and "distinct" and yet the means to this ground (cogito) is confusion and hesitancy taken up in the determinate position of doubt (later).

Judgments, so Husserl states⁶, are either correct or incorrect, and one is led to conclude that those made under the auspices of pre-predicative experience (auspicious as engendering epoché and thus certainty) are excluded from this dichotomy, which then falls to the mediate type. How is this known? The judgments must agree with that-judged-about, the subject and object must converge in agreement. Perhaps the conclusion that immediate judgments are inadmissible in this schema (correct/incorrect) was presumptuous and these same as well as ontic-validity is conferred in phenomenological

⁵ Husserl, "Cartesian Mediations", pg.s 10-11

⁶ Ibid.

experience? This is the problem of the vagueness of intentionality and phenomenology in general; that of the judgment. The intentional act in the judgment is the conferrance of meaning upon beings (thought differentiation), and the accessibility of meaning is therefore rendered vague, but at least not false ala Descartes.

How judgments are/should be conducted is the central place in which Husserl and Descartes diverge. Where their individual methods converge is in the notion of a progressive deduction from the (ego) cogito for ontic validity in the judgment. This, in Husserl, is “transcendental subjectivity”⁷. Descartes, in his 3rd law⁸, following the Galilean scientific tradition (itself historically conditioned by Aristotelian categories and syllogistic logic), would have reason begin with the simplest ideas or thoughts (cogitations) and progressively lead to the most complex. This arbitrarism is nothing but the mediate judgment under the method of doubt, coerced to structurally conduct itself towards intentional objects (phenomena) as “composite[s] produced by a certain configuration of members”.⁹ The result of this is that simple objects (predicates) are presupposed as given categorically. Judgments therefore are not apodictic (apropos the geometrical/mathematical method) and complex (“real”) objects (ie:the subject in a judgment; the object to which it refers) are mutilated in confusion of the proper, Husserlian dichotomization mediate and immediate, as the experiential-objective ground of judgments is lent metaphysical content.

Agreement in the philosophy of logic of Husserl (and in phenomenology especially) arises from the intentional/predicative act of the ego (cogito) to it’s cognized (intuited/perceived) object. This theory might incur the charge of positivism in it’s

⁷ Husserl, “Experience and Judgment”, pg.49

⁸ Descartes, pg.25

⁹ Descartes’ synopsis of the Meditations, Bobbs-merril, pg.72

likeness to the correspondence theory of truth (the agreement between objects and subjects to speak in a homogenized way) which would then confute the apodicticity he aspires to if he did not have recourse to the solution of the problem of cognition in his "logical operations of sense"¹⁰, which posits the ego in the capacity of an operative subject (necessarily but not naturally in pre-reflective experience). This is the nascence and culmination of Husserl's method of epoché or bracketing-off. These logical acts are the primordial capacity of the ego (cogito) in its judging capacity (on a phenomenological level) as a "transcendental subjectivity" which has flown from determinate position-takings in relation to being or non-being (Descartes' doubt- a negative and destructive act with detrimental implications as seen below); that has divested itself of all relativity in its apodictic universality as an Ego. What leads to such a state of being is a two-stage process in consciousness beginning with (1) the commonsensical (and even) scientific normative understanding of beings (objectivity as generality) to the "original lifeworld"¹¹ (primordial world of cognition or pre-reflective experience). Secondly this original lifeworld, perhaps through the dawning of self-consciousness (Fichtean self-reverting activity), leads to, via epoché, to the naive operation of the cognizing ego which has suspended any position-taking with regard to these necessary operations of sense-for how could it (judge) when it remains naive(non-judgmental). Such a state of existence is clearly akin to Kantian transcendental apperception, the simple "representation of the I"¹², simple as allowing no thought-differentiation (Husserl, as is known, was greatly influenced by Kant). Epoché as the instrument that empowers "transcendental

¹⁰ Husserl, "Cartesian Meditations", pg.11

¹¹ Ibid., "Experience and Judgment", pg.50

¹² Kant, "Critique of Pure Reason", pg.248

subjectivity”¹³ reduces the natural ego to transcendental phenomenological self-experience (phenomenological experience) wherein occurs the superceding of worldly experiences to what is essentially prior, the mode of receptivity to beings as their posteriorly constituting act.

The epoché qualifies or empowers consciousness as transcendental in it’s bracketing-off existents and their singularity while simultaneously according itself universality/objectivity. Such a universality attained through the act of “bracketing-off” leaves the ego (cogito) bereft of determinacy of position rendering it an autonomous state of existence, a guarded citadel from which judgments can be made without arbitrarism, itself leading to falsehood. Husserl¹⁴ criticizes Descartes’ method of doubt in light of his own for it’s entailed presupposition that the *lebenswelt* is predicated existence and this same is destroyed although he himself appears inconsistent when he states that “everything meant [in this process] is still retained completely-but with the acceptance-modification “mere phenomena””.¹⁵ The solution to this aporia is that “the philosophizing ego practices abstention with respect to what he intuits”¹⁶, namely, being and/or non-being. However; is this really the solution, for it seems to preserve the world as Being (as an attitude taken up with regard to being/non-being and thus entailing judgments)? To understand it the method of Descartes as a negative and destructive approach to certainty/apodicticity must first be investigated. Descartes, Husserl claims¹⁷, levels the doxastic world through his method of rigorous doubt and that lower level (local) skepticism undercuts and negates receptivity to being/non-being which is purchased

¹³ Husserl, “Experience and Judgment”, Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., “Cartesian Meditations”, pg.20

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ A.D.Smith, pg.24

¹⁷ Husserl, “Crisis”, pg.240

through epoché; a suspension of judgment and determinate position-taking in consciousness which is simultaneously this receptivity and awareness which preserves the statue quo of experience (the doxastic world). It is a disconnection from and bracketing-off of experience which achieves this purpose. Husserl sums up the reason for overshadowing Descartes through epoché in the following quote:

“[O]ne cannot arbitrarily and without further ado modalize something
That holds good for us...but one can without further ado abstain from
Any holding good”¹⁸

The “empty generality of the epoché does not of itself clarify anything” but only gives onto “pure subjectivity”¹⁹ for the grounding of science. Descartes’ method is erroneous as presumptuous in its deductive inferences made from the cogito (ego); the principle of pure intuition is negated and epoché as the method for attaining certainty is also. Why did Descartes fail in his attempt? Husserl’s theory explains the reason was that as Descartes failed to raise his cogito to the height of transcendental, no absolute ground (as no objective one) was procured but only one entailing hidden presuppositions (above) that invoked determinacy rather than non-determinacy. Through doubt, Descartes tried “to lean towards undervaluation[rather than presumption]” in “self-judgment”, but this was itself a methodological presumption²⁰. Through doubt the presupposition (an ontological one) of empirical content in the judgement, which is deductively traced back to the subject, was made and the law requisite for the creation of a nomological science, a first philosophy, was violated, namely transcendental in the sense of epoché. How this is attained, however, (in consciousness and in-itself) remains a mystery to me, for does

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Descartes’ discourse, 1st part, paragraph 3

cogitation possess purity in it's lived essence (it's existence) or does it lack this? How to argue for or against Husserl's general claim is beyond someone who possesses little to no scientific knowledge when this claim relates to and thus presupposes this same.

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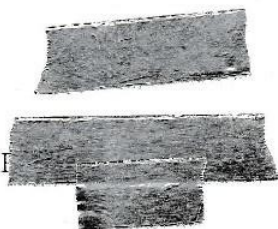
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Flashes of meaning and the salvation of truth



In this essay I will investigate Quine's formulation of observation sentences as the vehicle of objectively immanent meaning(the paradox if not the contradiction which we shall discover later), their consequences for theory and practice and Putnam's criticism as to why they are (i) self-refuting on this theory of naturalized epistemology as well as other inconsistencies and aporias he charges Quine with. I will endeavor to evaluate all of the above in the foregoing and intersperse my own criticism throughout.

Quine asserts that "epistemology is concerned with the foundations of science"¹ and as such should accord with them in being naturalized as a "chapter of psychology and hence of natural science"².

He takes, *ex hypothesi*, as his foundational model the mathematical with its self-evident truths that provide grounds of certainty in judgment(taking his *que* from the logical positivists of the Vienna circle and their theories of rational reconstruction) but later insists that epistemologists under the new quasi-psychological banner need to "relax the demand for definition, and settle for a kind of reduction that does not eliminate [empirical content by definition].[This] is to renounce the last remaining advantage we supposed rational reconstruction to have over straight psychology"³. Such rational reconstruction, an axiomatic attempt to explain phenomena in logical terms through there reduction to component parts of an observation sentence logically structured he discards as the empirical meaning content of these sentences was neglected for logical precisionism, thus it was a failed project. What is the alternative according to Quine? Apropos of the bifurcation of theory⁴ into concepts(meaning) and doctrine(truth), both,

¹ Pg.245 "Epistemology Naturalized"

² Pg.254 Ibid.

³ Pg.251 Ibid.

⁴ Pg.245-6 Ibid.

he claims in his historico-criticism of Hume's empiricism's consequences for science, have an empirical foundation, and this is born out by empirical psychology which epistemology is to serve as it's handmaid. This is the alternative to logical reconstructionism. Similar to Hume's is Quine's quasi-psychological theory which forgoes logical reconstructionism in empiricism of the physicalist type which makes ideas(concepts) cognitive products of the moment caused by the environment in which the interrelation between the two does not become clear⁵.

This transition from philosophy (which may with justice, I think, be deemed a necessarily critical and normative discipline-both of which Quine's move eschews) to science or pseudo-science, is a recipe for passivity as awareness is no longer an essential property of human activity at the level of the formation of observation sentences. Awareness, he claims, could only survive with rational reconstruction and, with the (alleged) demise of the latter at the hands of his theory it must also die as such a reconstruction demanded a justification of the individual 'ego' or self, by which he means a 'Q.E.D' demonstration of the logical variety. But is this the only way? It is certainly not very critical but (as Putnam charged him with) is *positivistic*, which runs contrary to critical thought (philosophizing in one of its aspects). Continuing in this scientific mode he claims that "observation now[apropos of his theory] can be settled in terms of the stimulation of sensory receptors"⁶ and observation sentences, those syntactical vehicles of meaning, are understood as determined by the sensory data one experiences, like surroundings producing like effects, and, depending on the point of view, Quine would argue identical effects(our understanding of and communication about the world through

⁵ Pg.173 "Critical Theory"

⁶ Pg.255 "Epistemology Naturalized"

syntactically entrenched meaning, ie:language). “[L]et consciousness fall where it may”, he says in propounding the stimulus meaning of observation sentences, and it is this “claim that man has a consciousness is not false, but meaningless”⁷ that leads to a nihilism which “is...present in its assertion that not only are you nothing, but I am nothing. This philosophy corresponds fairly accurately to the feeling characteristic of the followers of an authoritarian leader.”⁸ Again, this theoretical move on the part of Quine is a recipe for passivity, for subservience in the face of immediacy(sense data), its unthinking acceptance. Such a view is rightly claimed to be scientifically-oriented as the net of science has tightened around all members of the body politic-it is needless to say on whose behalf.

Concerning observation sentences Quine sums them up nicely in giving them a descriptive definition⁹: “an observation sentence is one on which all the speakers of the language give the same verdict when given the same concurrent stimulation. “All of these speakers (when (necessarily) placed under “uniform stimulation”(as communication demands it) disqualify “subjectivity in the phrasing of observation sentences.”¹⁰ Objectivity here means not universality but immanence in the manner of “inter-subjective agreement under agreeing stimulation”¹¹ Putnam criticizes Quine¹² as propounding a self-refuting doctrine in claiming that the norms of a culture qualify the stimulus-meaning of a sentence as true when such norms are historically contingent and truth purports to be an

⁷ Pg.182 “Critical Theory”

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Pg.257 “Epistemology Naturalized”

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Pg.302 “Why Epistemology can’t be Naturalized”

a-historical notion. The soundness of Quine's theory rests on this very point and it is this physicalism or scientivism that leads to nihilism as Horkheimer said.

Putnam charges Quine with a positivistic speciousness when the latter defined an observation sentence on the condition that "all verdicts on it depend on present sensory stimulation and no stored information beyond what goes into understanding the sentence"¹³. This is surely a subjective(specious) and immanent account of linguistic truth(following Tarski and propositional truth) as "I [,Quine,] will accept a method as reliable whenever it *yields verdicts I would accept*"¹⁴. Reliabilism (perhaps ala Goldman) depends upon statistical probability and the verdicts of this method *if* adopted by Quine (Putnam himself was unsure) render truth a probabilized notion, and contradictorily historical.

Quine's theory, so Putnam declares, reduces to "epistemological eliminationism"¹⁵ and as such is inconsistent as it eliminates normative structures such as truth(above). The adherence to scientivism (quasi-science) gives way to an immanent account of meaning in which truth becomes a verdict of a linguistic-causal process initiated by empirical data and which renders observation statements context-bound, and contradictorily 'objective'. As Putnam states "[I]f one abandons the [normative], then 'true' goes as well [in the sense of a linguistic utterance's ideal correspondence with reality as an objective datum]"¹⁶.

We can't eliminate the normative as to fail to maintain the proper conjunction between metaphysical realism(correspondence theory of truth), which Quine rejects, and

¹³ Pg.256 "Epistemology Naturalized"

¹⁴ Pg.308 "Why Epistemology can't be Naturalized"

¹⁵ Pg.307 Ibid.

¹⁶ Pg.309 Ibid.

the notion of truth would be inconsistent. For example “the notion of causality [- Cartesian explanation-] and the appropriate type of causal chain [-the necessary-] depend on notions which presuppose the notion of reasonableness”¹⁷ and this latter is, so Putnam may be alluding, normative, although reason has been considered genetically (ie:historically and/or evolutionarily). The consequence of this anti-metaphysical realism on the part of Quine is “attempted mental suicide”¹⁸ as meanings are, *eo ipso*, eliminated, as they must be linguistic meanings in light of standards. With Putnam’s implicit strawman alternative, epistemological norms would then have an apriori ground, would be a-cultural and a-historical which is thoroughly consonant with some of philosophy’s claims, though-what then would be it’s use? In situating meanings in language one needn’t situate them in a particular language-or need one? If yes, cultural relativism, dubbed by Putnam “cultural Imperialism”¹⁹ would arise (unless all languages have a like structure logical or otherwise), and all methodology becomes solipsistic(monadological) which in turn transforms (for it to be consistent) into actual solipsism. Such a view Quine would explode with his immanent theory of naturalism through rendering the subject’s meaning-formative propositions (observation sentences) empirically (and causally) derived. Such a theory, however, leads to immanence and passivity in the face of immanence. Normativity, after all, cannot be relativized without enter into contradictions and this is what Putnam charges Quine with (insofar as he understands the later). Such a theory, also, is inherently solipsistic, all lines of communication being terminated in truth’s being the matter of instantaneity; “no notion of a *limit* verdict”²⁰ obfuscating any

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Pg.302 Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

transcendentality of meaning in language. Such observation sentences are merely sparks lost in the dark of immanence. Putnam adequately refutes Quine (*if* he has understood him) in the latter's anti-metaphysical realist position in saying that "we always speak the language of a time and place; but the rightness [truth] and wrongness[falsity] of what we say is not just for a time and place"²¹; philosophy as a normative discipline deals with both *veritas de fait* and *veritas de raison*. Thus the normative must stand in notional, not naturalized form, as the product of a transcendental verdict, not that of immanence.

²¹ Pg.310 Ibid.

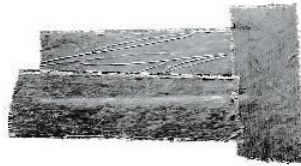
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“Goldman’s House of Cards Architecture”



In his article, Goldman attempts to “sketch a theory of justified belief...an explanatory theory[which] explicates the ordinary standards”¹. This theory he eventually dubs “historical reliabilism” as to hold certain beliefs is argued to be reliable (ie: statistically, based upon causally predictable mental processes). These ordinary standards which utilize the pronoun “our” are to be inclusive-but for whom? Likely Goldman would respond universally(“for all”) and yet contingently as different people exist having different institutions, norms etc. This pluralism he would explode on this theory arguing for a naturalistic foundation of human nature(his theories inevitable conclusion). My thesis is that such standards of justification circumvent and do not circumscribe belief as this latter is not at all clearly explicated but merely presupposed as known, though the foundation of the whole theory which then collapses. “[J]ustified belief [nevertheless, he says,]is necessary for knowing, and closely related to it.” How then, if the conjunction of the two qualifies knowledge, can knowledge be attained through this means without a definition(stipulative or otherwise) of belief itself? The consequences of this thesis of the author are also(implicitly) political which I attempt to unveil in my own.

Neglecting this head Goldman begins his article through specifying a “set of *substantive* conditions[,those independent of epistemology] that specify when a belief is justified”². The constraints of his theory are (1) the use of non-epistemic language and (2) conditions for justified belief that are at a “suitably deep, general or abstract level.”³ In pages 130-6 he formulates four candidates for base-clause principles recursively, these being conditional statements the schema for which he seeks satisfaction (truth-conditions)

¹ Pg.128

² Pg.128

³ Pg.129

for in all possible cases in the actual world and whose purport is to prescribe belief justifiedness *ex ante*⁴, namely:

“S’s belief in *p* at *t* is justified”

His question “under what conditions is this statement true?”⁵ states that, in approaching an answer, these depend on “crucial term[s]”⁶ that he has positivistically constructed to fulfill his purpose.

Concerning the first base-clause principle and its second interpretation⁷ of the example of religious fanatics justified in their faith(belief?) under psychological conditions, he answers that such conditions are unjustifiable as the ground of belief which, if not identified with faith here is still question-begging. What norms is he working with here? Clearly the conditions under which beliefs are to be justified are not applicable contextually if the counter-examples don’t satisfy them. ‘Psychological’ he likely uses as a term admitting of no particularity (no pragmatic ‘non-standards’). The conditions under which these characters (in the examples on pg.130-1) believed *p* were sufficient to enable them to act in accordance with their beliefs. Goldman, I assume, would have everyone in thrall to an objective standard that goes by the name ‘justification’.

The second crucial term in the like base-clause principle is “self-evident”⁸. This he discards apropos the interpretations of “impossible” in the stipulative condition that “it is impossible to understand *p* without believing it”; understanding becomes the necessary

⁴ Pg. 149

⁵ Pg. 131?

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Pg. 130

⁸ Pg. 131

condition of belief without which the object cannot be believed. This is only provisional, as the interpretations render it non-efficacious.

The third base-clause principle employs the crucial term 'self-presenting' in the same old format. This is done apropos the claim that there are logical operations enabling us to conceive of "simple logical truths" and their juxtaposition" in complex ones. This base-clause principle holds for beliefs in necessary truths, proposition expressing these same presumably. This admits of difficulties within the differences between "simple" and "complex" logical truths clouded through their "juxtaposition". Goldman invokes the law of the excluded middle in answering the questions: can there be self-presenting propositions that are not true? Yes, but that they do not have truth value is false, every fact of consciousness being assigned such a value. Hence the provision "and p is *true* for S at t "⁹, and yet this interpretation (on mine) seems wrong as Chrisholm, who Goldman agrees with, makes truth equivalent by definition to "self-presenting". The provision "and S believes p at t " begs the *definiendum* which has not been considered only presupposed without any description or recursive treatment like the rest have received and throughout his essay he leaves it unclarified. This seems to make his whole endeavor futile.

Regarding the term "self-presenting"'s definitional identification with truth in Chrisholm's theory the latter disqualifies the former and thus the whole of (3)¹⁰ as it is a transitive connective with "evident" a term violating the first constraint (non-epistemic language) he had imposed upon his theory. Chrisholm's theory's failure to coalesce with Goldman's leads to a re-formulation of (3) which adheres to constraint (1) of the latter.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ The third recursive principle

Goldman would clarify the added provision of necessity through a re-formulation of (3).¹¹ p is self-presenting iff: $\forall x \forall y (SxTy \supset Cpxy(p \text{ is True for } x \text{ at } y) \supset qxy(x \text{ believes } p \text{ at } y))$ ¹² therefore $JB = \text{def. } \top p$, where p (a proposition is a “first-person-current-mental-state-proposition”¹³ and these are, paradoxically(?) “often...contingent propositions”¹⁴.

Necessarily contingent? Sometimes true or false depending on the contemporary mental state? Is logical truths (simple or complex) are the contents of a self-presenting proposition, how then can beliefs be justified in them? Goldman must mean justified under “ordinary standards”¹⁵ which would then undercut any logical standards of truth or necessity(unless these same are historically/socially conditioned which would be absurd given his theory of human nature and epistemology). His method of recursiveness clears things up in recognizing the objection that a proposition’s truth is not =def.JB as a $\top p$ merely implies its being held¹⁶. He calls for belief as the necessary condition of truth not vice versa as truth is a higher level attainment(apodictic?). This is a source of confusion, for what of the previous¹⁷ “psychological operations” that contain logical truths as their contents? Is belief in these same their validation or guarantee? It remains undefined or described yet he affirms it does.

That belief strictly implies truth means that the former is “incorrigible”¹⁸(necessary), as entering into a necessity conditioning relationship with the latter. Goldman subdivides this term into two conventional senses. The first is necessity

¹¹ In the following I *attempt* to use formal logic notation(polish) to clarify his re-formulation whose difficulty drove me to it

¹² T= time, S=person, p=proposition/belief, JB=justified belief, $\top p$ =True proposition

¹³ Pg.132

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Pg.128

¹⁶ Pg.134

¹⁷ Pg.129

¹⁸ Pg.135-6

in the nomological sense which, apropos the above defeasible schema, he discards as there can be instances in which beliefs are not true and therefore not justified. The second is the logical which states that it is not necessary for beliefs to strictly imply truth. This leads to the incorporation of epistemic terms for justifiedness, eg. "recognize"(that it is true). Is this the single (exclusive) term? The author likely believes it is merely representative of the genus of epistemic terms and that a non-epistemic term could not give his theory closure through base-clause principle (4).

What has gone wrong in the foregoing section, he claims¹⁹, is that no "restriction[s] on why the belief is held, ie., on what *causally initiates* the belief or *causally sustains* it"²⁰ are established. He "suggest[s] that the absence of causal requirements accounts for the failure of the foregoing principles"²¹.

The categorical concept of justification, vague as it is, as Goldman admits in stating that it adheres to "our ordinary conception"²², may still produce false beliefs(objectively). Truth does not depend upon justification. "Granted[apropos ordinary standards] that principles of justified belief must make reference to causes of belief, what kinds of causes confer justifiedness?" he queries. He answers that "species of belief-forming (Or belief-sustaining) processes[and that these] are intuitively justification-conferring[and reliable]"²³. Reliability here, is the processes' (of consciousness) inclination towards true beliefs; the question as to what these are comes to mind. This process is the source or ground of belief and the latter (as well as reliability) refers to it. Are there degrees of justifiedness? The answer Goldman affords is based upon

¹⁹ Pg.136

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Pg.138

²³ Pg.137

probability within the reliable processes; probability factors inclined towards truth or falsity. On example he offers is the “[h]azy and indistinct memory impressions[those of a lesser degree, which] are generally less reliable indicators of what actually happened; so beliefs formed from such impressions are less likely to be true than beliefs formed from distinct impressions.”²⁴

Goldman further elaborates his base clause principle in answering the thesis’ question, apropos the terms “process” and “tendency”

(5) “If S’s believing p at t results from a reliable cognitive belief-forming process (or set of processes), then S’s belief in p at t is justified”²⁵

In other words beliefs are confined to events within the “organism’s nervous system”²⁶, or simply put, the human brain. # (5) he also rejects as problematic in it’s requirement of statistical probability of truth. Continuing on in recursive fashion he says that “[a] reasoning procedure cannot be expected to produce true belief if it is applied to false premises. And a memory cannot be expected to yield a true belief if the original belief it attempts to retain is false.”²⁷ This is “*conditional reliability*”²⁸ in which the latter’s truth conditions the former’s in absence of which the belief is not justified.

He recaps his theory of justified belief, saying, that for belief to be justified it must be well-formed, which he takes in a sense divergent from that of formal logic as “it has an ancestry of reliable and/or conditionally reliable cognitive operations”²⁹, in

²⁴ Pg. 138

²⁵ Pg. 140

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Pg. 141

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

other words it is based on statistical probability. This theory is “Historical” or “Genetic”³⁰, which presumably implies that we are all alike. Does each person have the same ancestry? And consequently share the same beliefs? This argument for ‘ordinariness’ of standards is on for what could be called social control/engineering.

Concerning his opponents, the proponents of “current time-slice theories,... they trace all justificational status...to current mental states”³¹. They “assume that the justificational status of a belief is something which the cognizer is able to know or determine at the time of belief.”³² Goldman, nevertheless, affirms this view in saying that the “cognizer lacks ‘privileged access’...to the justificational status of beliefs”. In saying this he would instruct us as to when we are justified in believing anything; he would bar our access to all private beliefs in propounding his ideology. If “he[the cognizer] necessarily [does not have], or can[not] get, knowledge or true belief about this status[of his beliefs] then whatever any authority would prescribe he(the cognizer) must swallow as unfit to make a choice, unless he be an authority himself, which qualifies his fitness. The example cited by Goldman concerns a recipe for forgetfulness, in that the justification of our beliefs depends in part on memory and this in turn is fallible, so by association so are ‘our’ beliefs. We must rely upon theory for practice, those essentially foreign to it for our ideological justification though this argument operates on a micro, it nevertheless applies to a macro level, namely society as a whole, wherein all ‘individuals’ are lumped together in being justified to hold *p* or no.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Pg.142

³² Ibid.

“[S]ome justified beliefs”, he says in reiteration of possible critics, “do not derive their justificational status from their causal ancestry” otherwise where would they begin, in primordial times? Everything being socially conditioned (and equal) we must believe only what we are told by theory. Goldman counters this objection through situating logical/conceptual relationships within time; they are, consequently, historical, and this refers back to social conditioning as well as being an aporia in his thesis. What is the alternative if no spontaneity in cognitive processes exists and if causality reigns unchecked by any antagonistic forces? There is none, and fate must be accepted. Goldman dispenses with imaginative creation in saying that “a belief in possible world *W* is justified if and only if it results from a cognitive process that is reliable *in our world*”³³. If he means to imply the status quo economically, politically and socially, the provision if and only if (iff) excludes all criticism of this same(status quo).

He counters the objection that “beliefs resulting from wishful thinking (in *our* world) are justified by saying that “this surely contravenes our intuitive judgment on the matter”³⁴. He again invokes the inclusive pronoun ‘our’, and without justice as intuition varies, being the source of imagination and creative thought, with each person and is based upon their historical circumstances not society’s. Imagination or running awry of convention, if taken to be wishful thinking (for it may be so construed as Goldman doesn’t define the term recursively or otherwise) is deified by the objectified intuition of the ‘Human Organism’, qua theory.

³³ Pg.144

³⁴ Pg.145

The crux of his thesis (at least in the light of its aporias) is his statement that “[o]ur beliefs about which belief-forming processes are reliable may be erroneous, but the does not affect the adequacy of the explanation.”³⁵ Which processes are reliable is hence uncertain (unless we have the privileged knowledge of an authority) and this clearly suggests that Goldman is tampering with *S*, the ‘Human Organism’ and is asocial engineer. Our beliefs are suddenly contingent (as their formative processes are in their fallibility) whereas before they were necessary³⁶; Truth is excluded as beliefs condition their justifiedness, which still leaves it unclear what a belief is. The house of cards falls. If the cognizer “fails to use a certain (conditionally) reliable process that he could and should have used...he would have ‘worsened’ his doxastic states: he would have replaced some true beliefs with suspension of judgment”³⁷. One must, according to Goldman’s theory and its dire political consequences, submit to thought-determination and necessity, rather than to engage in critical acts that pave the way for the imagination and creation of a better status quo.

³⁵ Pg.145

³⁶ Cf. the conditional proposition

³⁷ Pg.147

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Law: Substantive or Substantial Morality?

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The fundamental duties we fulfill and are obliged by our community to fulfill act as the basis of its corresponding laws putting into effect, by threat of punishment, these same for the greater good of humanity, represented by individual communities governed by and beholden to a legal system which prohibits or permits various forms of human intercourse. Thus speaks Fuller.

Morality, the primordial controlling force of all our actions and reactions he dichotomizes into that of aspiration and duty. The former providing the ideal summit or standard which humans strive to attain in the hypothetical fullest realization of their powers¹, the latter brutish rules of obedience without which there is anarchy in its popular sense, an absence of order as opposed to an absence of rule.

The Harvard professor's Icarian desire in his creation of a legal/moral schema is to "create the conditions essential for a rational human existence"², his beneficence entailing the myth of rationality: that all humans, agents of action and efficacy are moral ones whose actions redound to the moral well-being of the human collective. His invention of a pyramidal moral scale, the base the antithesis of duty, the peak aspiration, would embrace³ human conduct in all its future manifestations if the question as to where the "pointer" demarcating the boundary of duty is to be located can be answered. Too near human aspiration and freedom is restricted proportionately, the strings of the puppeteer become tangled in their plurality and the citizen body breaks free in revolt. Too distant and the bounds restricting licence fail to meet the needs of the community again resulting in anarchism. Thus determining the pointer's placement is how government decides, ostensibly or allegedly, on behalf of the collective, where the starting point for

¹ Fuller, "The Two Moralities"

² *ibid.*, pg.9

³ *ibid.*, pg.43

self-assertion and humanitarianism is to begin; the achievement of this delicate balance between prohibitions and permissions will precipitate the Good or an ability within society to approximate it. Professor Fuller believes the morality of aspiration is the primordial impetus for laws themselves, humans acting according to it and their actions taking on ever new forms as societies develop, perhaps even evolve as our values condition reality a reciprocal influence is exerted either evolving morality or sublating it as new material conditions arise altering past beliefs. Fuller attempts to create a social anthropology of law which neglects the all-important practical component and often the realization of morality itself.

However, Fuller's humanistic intentions are clear, and "it is possible to understand several things at the same time in so far as, in some way, they are one"⁴ even though their expression creates a separation. Fuller wants substantial morality in the sense of applied natural law; law as the application of morals when their (potential) transgression creates a (potential) spread of harm to the particular society in concrete situations. These two things, theory and practice, are reconciled in the latter as it's antithesis arose from it in order to shape it more explicitly although the latter has a primordial engine and that is an essentially "theoretical", *a priori* one.

The theory of natural law in it's opaque universality issues an appeal to an irreducible, the notion of morality as intrinsic to man, and it is this opacity which repels practical men in their demand for facts and probabilities based upon these. Indeed. So the *sense communis* would have it, if it is not something that one can throw around the backyard it is a dispensable item with no estimable value. Fuller believes the failure to appreciate the perhaps demonstrable validity of legal morality (viz: morality) depends

⁴ Aquinas, 3rd.article, 12, "On Intention", pg.621 in Kaufmann

upon a choice of words and their associated connotations. The reason that duty is closely aligned with law is that it imposes itself upon us obligating us, as bound by a rule or standard of behavior to the will of the “necessary” presence of authority, one welcome to the collective⁵. A law thus becomes a direct projection of authority, “unidirectional”⁶ rather than “interactional”⁷ mirroring human intercourse. Therefore cooperation is essential for efficacious laws, cooperation the opposite of Fuller’s negative example “the eight ways to fail to make a law”, and as a civic pact between citizen and government. Without this necessary element the legislator’s way of thinking degenerates into a positivistic conception of law, one equivalent to the will of the state. This is the “standpoint of the old materialism...civil society”, the law *qua* natural law under Fuller, and paradoxically, would realize the new materialism “human society, or social humanity.”⁸ He would go from a Hegelian conception of monarchical to a socialized and horizontally stratified society, one in which the legislator can intend “two things” at the same time, subsumed under the head of morality.

Legal philosophy, which would provide the ideological, perhaps even axiological framework for practical legislation and the functioning of the legal system has become fragmented into schools, scholarly factions who snub one another, and who’s lack of cohesion is perhaps beneficial, perhaps detrimental to the development of realizable ideas and even ideologies. Beneficial in so far as criticisms directed at one another by various theorists belie the errors their targets have become entangled in or have neglected to account for, and detrimental in so far as these same have a tendency to blindly adhere to

⁵ R.M.Dworkin, “The Model of Rules”

⁶ Fuller, pg.39

⁷ *ibid.*, pg.219

⁸ Marx, thesis #10, pr.571

their doctrines in the face of such criticisms. A case in point of this fragmentation is the theory of positivism and its metaphorical skeleton which Dworkin relates falls prey to anatomical reconstruction by its adherents. He does, however, adduce the semi-plastic framework upon which is stretched the multi-colored utilitarian tapestry of the positivists.

This framework is constructed of the three main tenets which are synopsised in his "The Model of Rules"⁹, each of these following Fuller's "unidirectional" model as an emanation of authority. The first is law defined: "a set of rules...determining" who will be "punished or coerced by the public power"¹⁰ whether or not it is a tyrannical one. If bounds are to be set to this ambiguous authority it must itself be given a definition which Dworkin does in identifying the main bone in the skeleton, one accepted by the community as a "standard", also a tenebrous concept, as the second tenet illustrates in how the positivists would have law applied. A judge or official is to "exercise[c] his discretion" by reaching, presumably with rational insight, "beyond the law" for "some sort of" standard to direct him in "manufacturing a fresh legal rule" or system of rules¹¹. Here objective impartiality becomes entangled in subjective decision-making, the authority-by definition- requiring individuals to "do or forbear form doing" some form of intolerable behaviour, the third tenet of positivism-"legal obligation" defined-. However, what is accepted and tolerable to the dictator is still often accepted and tolerable to the uneducated and uninformed even if unjust, which is why Fuller stipulates the necessity of a law's publication for it to be valid. Yet this overlooks the informal fact of inaccessibility. While a promulgated law may be accessible in a purely technical sense, the common man who may violate it typically has no understanding of its whereabouts

⁹ University of Chicago Legal Review, 14, 1967

¹⁰ Dworkin, pg. 40

¹¹ *ibid.*

let alone it's import. Fuller's fourth principle that laws must be understandable is well intended yet difficult to achieve even with the majority. He also seems to enact contradictory principles when he would have the authority impose laws on it's subjects (cuphemized as the subjects upon themselves) with only reasonable expectations, ones that can be followed *verbatim*. Again, however, the problem of understandability and linguistic ambiguity crops up, to be dealt with in a constant beaurcratic refinement of the legal system, through necessary changes correspondent with real life situations, his seventh principle.

Fuller's disagreement with positivism and it's main representative H.L.A Hart takes on a critical form in his "examination of first principles"¹² one which agrees with the natural law theory of Aquinas: "the truth is not known to all as regards the conclusions, but only as regards the principles which are called *common notions*."¹³ It is up to the judicial machinery-the operation of which is in the hands of the beaurocrats/judges/legislators-to arrive at these conclusions: the correct application of these principles. These must first, as the above legal theorists agree, be elevated to the level of common notions.

Fuller believes that the all-important social reality is neglected by Hart and the new analytical legal jurists, that means and end are falsified in the ordinary language philosophy of J.I.L.Austin, the school's forefather. This social reality he would achieve by explicating these common principles. As this social reality is an essentially plastic one and just laws accommodate this, those who enact and interpret them (viz:

¹² Fuller, pg.190

¹³ answer to objection #3, pg.624

judges/bureaucrats) are not automata. Hart¹⁴ counters the utilitarian formalism of J. Bentham and Austin in stating that all decisions are particular, and no deductive calculations need apply. It is in this vein that Merleau-Ponty writes: "There are no just decisions, there is only a just politics."¹⁵ Thus theory and practice, if subordinated to the over-riding social reality are reconciled, if not, they exist apart and justice has no place in law, which becomes simply a rule with a penalty attached. From out of this disparity between theory and practice arises Hart's theory of the penumbra, that, although particular legal cases differ in terms of particularity, likenesses are present which lends them generality and hence a particular law comes to be.

"Like" cases, Fuller contends, may have a perverted standard of generality (viz: law), something inhuman, immoral. The distinction which originated in the theories of Bentham and Austin, that law as it is is not law as it ought to be is essentially that of practice and theory, the former striving to achieve the latter as it's "standard of criticism"¹⁶. Hart's plea for positivism is more or less this: stop being occupied by the penumbra! In so doing he adheres more closely to the moral ought of natural law theory, indeed going so far as to question if the standard of law is "as it morally ought to be?"¹⁷, the "ought" not a command of authority but of reason. The crux of his antagonism with the natural law is that it believes all human aspirations are equivalent when they are not, legal rules and moral standards being inapplicable in global scope. Yet, the ought has been transformed into a moral one and with justice, as Hart's predecessor Austin- paraphrased by his disciple- believed that "every developed legal system contains"

¹⁴ in "Positivism and the Separation of Law and Morals", in Feinberg, pg.63

¹⁵ Adventures of the Dialectic, pg.32

¹⁶ Hart, pg.67

¹⁷ ibid.,pg.68

notions of morality generally espoused. “[A]ll legal systems coincide with morality at [certain] vital points”, such as theft, murder, and perjury during trial, which evinces the validity of *common notions* of justice, ie: legal morality.

While Fuller’s morality of aspiration is perhaps an idealized addendum as Hart likely believes it to be, it’s intentions are socially progressive. However effecting this progress concretely is the difficult task as the abstract nature of human aspiration(s) outdistances law in it’s will to superceeding actual problems rather than taking the object and running with it into the proverbial endzone. Generalities, in short, must be “proven” via a social anthropology of law, convincing legislators to abide by and enact the dictates of natural law in day to day decision-making. A few central questions must serve as the basis of this endeavour such as: What qualifies morality: extrinsic or intrinsic conditions or both, and/or what is the primary qualifier: law or morality?, one conditioning the other or both reciprocally? Only in recognizing these common rules and answering these fundamental questions can the transformation of law as substantive morality into that of substantial morality occur.

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No Saint:
The Physician as Moral advisor and Agent

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Eupraxia:
Aristotle's Ethical Doctrine
supplement

Virtue is not an innate feature of Man's constitution but is acquired through the development of his rational capacities and it is "the result of the right training of these capacities"¹ that cultivates, in one of its aspects, the moral virtues.

Moral virtue "is concerned with pleasure and pain"², yet it is Man's response to these same that constitutes morality, and it is feeling pleasure and pain at the proper things that renders a man's actions moral/immoral; all a result of proper education³. This is the so-called *Objective consequentialism* in the ethical doctrines of Aristotle. His *doctrine of the mean* holds that it is the election of the mean between opposites ("excess" and "deficiency") that constitutes moral action and thus morality as we shall soon see. "Every action for which we can praise or blame the agent is...the realization of a potentiality which is the potentiality of opposites."⁴, all a result of our response to pleasures/pains.

That opposite which (or gradation closest to either of the two) is precipitated is a *consequence* of the deliberate decision of the free agent, a rational being having rational capacities in his capacity-to-be as a rational being and a moral agent. How one is to determine what the right decision is that equates to the "Good-for-Man"⁵, is what is difficult. "[If] Moral virtue is concerned with pleasure and pain"⁶ then it is an individual's response to these feelings that fashion morality/immorality in a particular instance; (that makes something what it is in the light of what Aristotle believed to be Man's end: happiness, and which Plato conceived of as the Idea of the Good). The fulfillment of this(these) ideal(s) is justified ethically through this rational capacity(ie: in the judgement *as a mean* between *opposite potentialities*, the *excess* and *deficiency*).

In Leibniz's doctrine of judgement⁷, the judgement, a rational faculty innate in man, is, in its logical aspect-the rules that govern thinking-, in part structured as "predicate inherent in subject"⁸ and it is the identity of these which in logical terms is true. Thus in Aristotle the terms, *excess* and *deficiency* predicates relative to and which inhere in a subject(ie: the doctor must not overdose the patient or the patient would be overdosed which would not, seemingly, conduce to his general happiness.) are contingent things which are determined by a rational (moral) principle(ie: happiness)-our capacity-which is, so Aristotle claims, universally present in men and women. It is this principle which enables us to judge quantitatively "how much or how little of *A* in relation to *B* is required in a given case, and it is often the determination of quantity which qualifies the proposed action as moral or otherwise.

This rational principle then, functions as an ethical law(similar to Kant's categorical imperative, only taking into account particulars within a less rigid framework) regulating the moral agent's actions beforehand through Man's innate capacity to be; to acquire moral virtue which is concerned with the feelings. Of course, there is no theoretical formula for judging ethical action (despite some claims being made) and Aristotle recognized this in his refusal to discuss the ultimate ground of worth any

¹ Joachim, H.H, pg.25

² Aristotle, book 2

³ Plato, book 3, ch.12, 401e-402a

⁴ Joachim, H.h, pg.25

⁵ Aristotle, book 2

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ Heidegger, "The metaphysical foundations of logic"

⁸ *ibid*

further, contrary to Plato and his *Idea of the Good*, which leads men into the sphere of contemplation upon the transcendent (ie:theology, *first philosophy*)and perhaps that of knowledge(the exercise of the intellectual virtues) rather than the immanence of *praxis* which is the sphere in which the physician as a physician has his *raison d'etre*. The End of practical science, *Eupraxia* is the result of Man's deliberate decision to act rather than to remain passive, and with this in view(the term being etymologically inclusive of *praxis*) action *praxis* which is occasioned only in experience through Man's agency as a rational being "is itself an End."⁹ This Greek word, *Eupraxia* connotes acting(and thus faring) well, one inhering in the other, which has been traditionally translated as "happiness". Perhaps both form a reciprocally conditioning relationship, "acting well" and thus "faring well" and *vice versa*.

However it is what constitutes right action (acting "well") that is the central problem of ethics, and, as Aristotle claims, it is Man's innate receptivity to beings(and Being) that furnishes him with a moral ethic, how to deliberate(or judge) between right and wrong, through experiential knowledge and the cultivation of his rational capacity. This differs drastically from a man's *natural* capacity/incapacity and the same might be said of rationality as in the case of the mentally degraded(the senile) or inept(the retarded).

How moral action and ethical decisions are determined is *via* the election of the mean between the extremes, which, in Aristotelian doctrine is legislated through the moral law and evidently is to be left to the individual's judgment and discretion in particular cases(which will be examined shortly). Thus the problem central in ethics is still central in Aristotle's system as well, as his ethical precepts are so broad that a judgment call inevitably arises in the individual's decision making, his *praxis*, owing to the superfine gradations between the two opposite potentialities.

In his "Nicomachean Ethics", Aristotle made it his duty to delineate the moral virtues and vices so as to illustrate the practical application of his doctrine and to serve as a guideline, one which is still practicable today.

⁹ Aristotle, 1140b7-8

The wealth of factual knowledge a physician must amass determines him, in the minds of the often superficially discerning public and his patient(s), as an authority figure in whom implicit trust can be placed. Medicine and its practice, the sphere of discipline in which a physician is situated, deals with issues of health and wellness, sickness and death and as such the authoritative power a physician wields-very often that of life or death- is of great concern to those it affects, namely, he and his patient(s). For this reason he has historically been regarded as a sort of omniscient character, a saintly entity, although this stigma he carries is rather unjustified. Both the patient(s) and Physician seek a state of *Eupraxia*, the patient placing himself in the physician's power for this reason and the latter fulfilling his vocation each with self-interested motives that have undergone, presumably, some degree of deliberation in the light of rationality. The relationship entered into is a sort of social contract which can often degenerate into that of a master and slave, psychologically or otherwise (for example: wrongly institutionalized patients who allegedly, according to the physician, lack a certain capacity), typically with the physician in the position of power.

It is just this practical component of *Eupraxia*, acting-well. The "how-to" that is difficult to bring about concretely as a mean determined by a rational principle owing to the fact that, despite the physician's great store of practical/theoretical knowledge, the realization of the right and thus moral potentiality between the potentiality of opposites is very often obscure. (for example: determining the right amount of cc's of morphine a patient ought to have in a given condition-neither an *excess* nor a *deficiency*-; also the ex.s in case study no.9.11 and 9.10¹).

In some situations, those of the proverbial ethical dilemma, there seems to be no relative value of absolutes, as, for instance, in the case of euthanasia which, *prima facie*, admits of only two possibilities, to render assistance or no. The *ethical decision making* demanded by euthanasia is of a contingent nature then and depends on the values of the physician (morally for or against, his personal definition of euthanasia: murder, relief, or other) and also the patient, each admitting of circumstantial grey areas such as mental or physical competence.

The question of whether or not the patient, or physician for that matter, has the capacity to decide, to render judgement in a particular case is answerable by taking into account their "perception", according to Aristotle the ground of all decisions, and which is ethically/unethically constitutive. This perception is how one, for example, a physician, as a "man of practical wisdom [and of] trained insight"² comports himself in his acquired capacity which is habituated through experience and usually affords him with a certain species of knowledge, which in turn determines his capacity, his "perception" of things. A physician has a discipline specific knowledge base which enables him to perform operations and to treat those in need of his services (and/or "in want", such as, for example, hypochondriacs). He perceives, through consulting his experiential knowledge, that patient *A*, owing to illness *B* requires prescription *C* and acts accordingly; he thus has the knowledge-capacity to make such a decision.

Knowledge, however, differs greatly from opinion, which can be either true or false, whereas the former is always true. Opinion, and its analogue belief, both grounded in the judgment, tend to be biased as the individual's perception (experiential knowledge-

¹ Ross/ Malloy, "Biomedical ethics"

² Joachim, H.H, pg.76

capacity) is influenced by the subtlety of circumstances, financial interests(ie: pharmaceutical co. grants for clinical research studies; also case 9.8³), religion, cultural norms, public morality(ie: eugenics in Nazi Germany)and other minute factors which have come into existence in the individual's life history, as early as infancy, even antenatally. One might say⁴ that "the individual's reality is conditioned by the social environment and that he turns back upon it to condition it in turn." Thus physicians, as fallible individual's are catapulted into the thrones of Gods by their patient's and society's mistaken, opinionated *perceptions*.

Euthenasia, provides a case in point of physician fallibility and the inevitable recourse to a judgment call. If the physician is indeed competent—has fulfilled the medical standards enabling him to practice in his given field(be it as a geriatrician or a horse doctor)-has thus been empowered and given freedom within these constraints, then ,in the practice of medicine, an *onus* is placed on him to bear the person of his patient. In this particular instance, certainly a matter of life/death, does the physician have obligation to treat the patient, if the latter in turn fulfills his competency standards(ie: a rational/moral agent). If he(the patient) has the capacity to be *sui uris*, to be legally considered a person based on these and other more refined criteria, and, which is perhaps of equal if not greater importance, the capacity to give the physician informed consent, if he (the patient), understands the consequences of the treatment, as perhaps the intense pain he is feeling now and which is motivating him to make this decision, will subside in a matter of days or can be treated alternatively. A choice must be made by the authority figure as to whether he is willing to risk his licence or a jail-term or psychological instability owing to such a choice, one which most shy away from for these reasons, it's illegality and harrowing consequences.

As each wills their own Good-*Eupraxia*-and attempts to conduce it through *praxis*, they are, according to Aristotle, not "ignorant of the universal"⁵, but of "particular circumstance(s)"⁶. He goes on to delineate these(six) circumstances formally⁷ and it is ignorance of these in relation to the patient's benefit which renders action involuntary(the necessary condition of being *informed* so as to give informed consent) and thus lifts the burden of responsibility form the shoulders of the agent(unless they, in ignorance, sign a waiver which is often a bitter irony for the patient). Not so with the physician and his alleged beneficence, who's obligation it is to either act voluntarily (and "perceptively") within his capacity(in human cases horse doctors are excluded) or not to act at all; such is ethics for him.

Jack Kavorkian, a euthenasiaist, who is currently serving a jail-term for alleged homicide has thus become martyred for asserting his moral beliefs, that of the individual's freedom to comport themselves as a rational, moral agent, the former presupposing the latter. Of course what constitutes being "of sound mind and body"(being in a healthy state) is and has always been ambiguous, especially in legally defining this *hexis* , as can be gleaned from the doctrines of Aristotle. For, in order to "fare-well", one must be in this state, but, lacking this either wholly or in part and

³ Ross/Malloy, "Biomedical Ethics"

⁴ Sartre, pg.71

⁵ Aristotle, pg.55

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ *ibid*, pg.s.55-6

perhaps being in intense pain, a patient might appeal to the relevant authority figure who possesses the specialized knowledge that would enable them to die relatively painlessly. This would be-if they had the capacity to decide- a voluntary decision, a choice in freedom constrained, but not eliminated, by circumstance. Such a decision on the physician's behalf in the process of deliberation, might in turn create a *hexis*-absence in him as he might, in the individualized perception of experience, perceive such an act as immoral. Such issues would arise, *ex hypothesi*, if the patient fulfilled the above rational criteria in his moral contract with his-ostensible-moral equal.

If this were not the case, whether in an instance of potential euthanasia or no, and the patient presented a harm/threat to society (if a psychopath or mentally deranged) then the invocation of paternalistic legislation might occur through the state's agency to subjugate this same no-longer moral agent by suspending his freedom through various means. Examples of these are institutionalization or denying the rights of parentage to those who are considered non-capacitated in this area (such as the mentally deranged). Either of these could very well be an erroneous act on the state's behalf, through a certified, fallible professionals prompting (such as a doctor serving as a legal consultant) who is himself immoral, incompetent, etc. Such legislation is no-doubt intended to have the effect of the rule-utilitarianism of Berkeley, the greatest good for the greatest number, although perhaps not for the patient, deprived of his rights justifiably or no.

In the social contract entered into by the two parties there is an *onus* placed on the physician to make educated ethical decisions as a disinterested party for the Good as the patient. However, it is easy to see that in deliberation, determining the *mean* between the two opposite potentialities is extremely difficult as the *Eupraxia* of the individual very often conflicts with that of his fellow man. The fact that the physician is one of these *moral agents* himself and not a supersensuous entity illustrates his fallibility as *moral advisor* which qualifies him as the former to a greater or lesser degree. No one is either wholly Good or Bad although each wills his Good within the confines-broad or narrow-of his rational capacity.

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Picty : Justice : Vengeance



The two speeches of Antiphon, an Athenian orator of the fifth century, "Against the step-mother" and "On the Chorister"¹ provide a wealth of knowledge pertaining to the intricate procedures of homicide in contemporary Athens as well as the people's ideology of piety and justice, all contained within the overbearing issue and concept of *Bouleusis*(planning) of homicide.

The concept of *Bouleusis* central to both cases as it is what is at issue, can be further subdivided into the two forms, *Bouleusis* of intentional (*ek pronoias*) homicide and *Bouleusis* of unintentional (*akon*) homicide. The former means "deliberate" or with "premeditation"² and is generally classed by modern scholars with "intention" (*hekon/ hekousias*). This translation of *ek pronoias* corroborates Aristotle's definition³ of intention, namely, that "intent lies in deliberation". Thus all actions that were deliberate were intentional and vice versa; both terms were considered synonymous.

The idea of responsibility plays a crucial role in both of the cases and renders them unintentional and intentional, which also sheds light on the Athenian concept of *Bouleusis* and analogously, justice. D.M.Macdowell states that: "A person was guilty of *bouleusis* if he had planned or was *responsible* for an act of killing performed by someone else."⁴ I interpret this passage as follows: If responsibility can justifiably be imputed to the accused he must have deliberated over, premeditated upon the event, have been it's cause and have intended it. This is not however, consistent reasoning as can be seen from Antiphon's speech ("On the Chorister" which shall subsequently be referred to as **B**, the other as **A**) where no harm was intended by the Khoregos, although he was

¹ Carey(pg.s36-42, pg.s63-74 respectively)

² D.M.Macdowell(pg.115)

³ Aristotle, *Ethica Megala*(1188b 29-38), quoted in Macdowell. See also text of Drakon's Law 1st axon.ln.11

⁴ Macdowell(pg.115, my italics)

responsible for the consequent (the death by poisoning of Diodotus, the boy being in his charge). The cause or antecedent in this case would be criminal negligence, and the equation of responsibility with intent is false as the Khorgos correctly states in his speech and gives an *exomosia* (oath of denial) further exonerating himself. If I interpret Macdowell correctly he may have been thinking of A which seems to be a more blatant case of (intentional) homicide as the step-mother would have been responsible for the “act of killing”⁵ as she deliberately prompted it despite the paucity of evidence, the arguments being based on conjecture and probability (which will be discussed later under “informal procedure”).

The penalty for *Bouleusis* of unintentional homicide differed from that of intentional homicide although both were viewed from an Athenian perspective as severe and ultimate, especially from that of the guilty party. The punitive rationale was vengeance in the form of *lex talionis*. This being the case the council of the *Areopagos* and the presiding magistrate (*Basileus*) both referred to in B were concerned with rendering a just verdict, as the distinguished public figure the Khoregos (who himself served on the council [45]⁶) adduced the reason that it was “most of all because of the gods and for the sake of piety...” [3]. Thus piety was the motivating force behind justice and psychologically might have served as a regulative idea for ethical conduct.

The council of the *Areopagos* were considered were considered harbingers of justice as can be seen in A [25]: “someone who murdered intentionally... should be destroyed by you [the council] and by justice.” Expressed negatively, to “... abandon the vengeance due to a dead man” A [5], was impious. As the murder of the father in this

⁵ *ibid*

⁶ all passages from the two speeches will be referred to in this manner

speech was (so the young prosecutor alleges) intentional, the need for vengeance was amplified. Vengeance being pious, piety being justice, it follows that justice can be sought through legally vengeful acts such as exile (in cases of unintentional homicide) or death (in those of intentional homicide), the two penalties desired by the prosecution in the respective cases. As the Khoregos declares [33/48] (the two giving *verbatim* accounts), impiety can also assume the form of perjury which is unjust and punishable by law as in modern day.

Closely related to impiety and a socio-psychological consequence of it having legal ramifications- was *miasma* (pollution), which was the idea of a supernatural infection passed by the homicide which could spread to the whole community. For practical and religious reasons it was taboo for the prosecutor (or anyone) to associate with the homicide. If this condition is imputed to the aforesaid he is also *atimos* (disfranchised). “whenever anyone is charged with homicide he is to keep away from the things laid down by law.”⁷, “those most ancient aspects of human life.” [4] such as gatherings, sanctuaries and sacrifices. In **B**, the Khoregos was stigmatized in this fashion and yet his prosecutors carried on relations with him in the aforesaid places. Having transgressed such a social convention he brands them “ruthless” and “contemptuous of the law”, which indicates the serious nature of *miasma* and its enforcement, the failure of which could lead to banishment or *atimia* as the gods have been blasphemed against. It surely follows from this that, in Athenian reasoning, that to seek vengeance for a wrong was justice epitomized, as can be gleaned from the following passages:

“[These] laws...and...procedures are very different from those in other cases, because it is of the utmost importance that the issues which form the subject of the trial

⁷ Antiphon (6.39-40) in Macdowell

are judged correctly[and]a correct verdict amounts to vengeance.”**B**[6]. Vengeance here is obviously equated with justice, the two being inherently pious, and it is *Bouleusis* which necessarily conjured up these analogous concepts.

Athenian homicide procedure in Antiphon’s time was, as can be gleaned from an examination of the two speeches, quite elaborate, and the best method to use in doing so would be to follow the delivery of the speech, the so-called “case structure”.

Firstly, the plaintiff, *a posteriori* the alleged crime would issue an appeal(*epheisis*) to the *arkhon* and presiding magistrate who dealt with homicide cases(the *Basileus* incidentally the *arkhon* in charge of religious matters which illustrates the connection between the religiosity of justice and the severe taboo of homicide) in the form of a written indictment(*graphe*)**A**[2] which stated the alleged charges , the “accusations in writing.”[10].

Secondly three *prodikasiai*(pre-trials) would be held in three separate months with the trial in the fourth **B**[42] if the case was to pass into litigation. From **B** we learn that the *Basileus*, acting as the presiding magistrate in a homicide case(a *dike phonou*) couldn’t legally bring a case to trial less than three months before completing his term of office(the duration of a year) and that he couldn’t pass it on to his successor.

All cases of homicide I will add, could be initiated *ho boulomenos* **B**[35], (by “he who wished”, which presumably excluded Women)as can also be seen in **A**[29-35]:

“[T]hen if they[the aggrieved while on the verge of death], ...they tell them[friends/relatives] the identity of the killer and solemnly instruct them to take vengeance for the crime.” In the above the victim’s solemn instruction was a specific

non-formal procedure termed *episkepsis*, which often set in motion the political machinations.

The cases passing the *anakrasis* (preliminary hearing), a sort of rehearsal of the actual trial itself the two sides delivered their speeches which were the rhetorical efforts of the orator (ie: Antiphon). These consisted of an often biased narrative of events, witness testimony (*martyria*) and relevant testimony, the former especially illuminating the procedures of Athenian homicide.

Paragraphe, a fairly complex procedure that chanced to be included in **B** is telling as to how developed the law was at this time. In this case the prosecutors were themselves being prosecuted by the defendant in a prior case and are attempting to bar legal action (which is what this procedure effects) via a *paragraphe* trial to prevent their own case from coming to trial. This meant that the defendant countersued the prosecutor alleging that the action is inadmissible on technical grounds (ie: that he, the khoregos, was *atimos* as an alleged homicide and couldn't participate in the political freedoms he could otherwise have; for example prosecuting criminals). This means was generally effected because of the weak position of the defence who were often grabbing at straws to postpone their trial or to exile the prosecutor as in this case.

The narrative affords us with much relevant insight, specifically in **B**. *Basanos* (slave torture), one such procedure, was considered by Athenians as an effective form of evidence, "the one source of sure knowledge" **A** [6], "...the fairest test", **A** [8] that the suppression of the facts would be thwarted. To take legal advantage of this procedure a *proklesis* (challenge) had to be issued by the party who was desirous of having this information disclosed. This challenge could be accepted "right then" or at a "subsequent

time” presumably for as long as the charges were maintained. Questions were put by the first party(in written form to be read by the second, typically the accused) to either his or his opponents slaves who were forced to answer them. If they gave contradictory or negative answers the recourse was *basanos* as the Athenian rationale was that: “ actual is stronger than future compulsion”**B[25]** with reference to slaves. The legal distinction between free men(Athenian citizens) and slaves in giving veridical testimony was in the motivating cause , in the former and oath of honor, whereas in the latter(in negative according to which party) it was torture. If the challenged party declined, as in both speeches their “refusal suggest[ed] guilt”**B[11]** in the eyes of the law. Macdowell⁸ speculates that the threat of *basanos* in the tangible form of *proklesis* was used as a rigorous but truthful method, although it was very often as a rhetorical ploy;both of which seem to be the case in the speeches.

Testimony, and it’s practice[16] admitted of no irrelevancy but was purposed to adhere “to the main issue itself”**B[9]**, which the law prescribed. A direct contravention of this law(the speeches give us no insight into it’s penalty) might not have existed-although it might have been considered perjury and thus exile would have been the attached penalty-, but to introduce irrelevant testimony meant that the law was “not represent[ed]...fairly”**B[21]**.

As for the other forms of argument-probability and inference- the two speeches are fraught with them and they compose the bulk of the rhetorical package. These probable arguments (*eikota*) are intertwined with persuasive evidence (*pisteis*) which was utilized by the defence in both speeches and was dichotomized by Aristotle into artificial

⁸ Macdowell(pg.245)

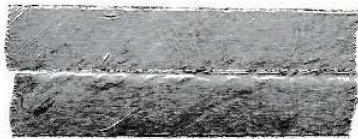
(*atechnoi pisteis*) and artful (*entechnoi pisteis*), the former looked upon as taboo while the other literally had the power over life and death. The opponents of Antiphon, which ever orators they were, in representing their clients were up against an artful speaker who's speeches adduced very convincing arguments by this means and a bulk of knowledge pertaining to Athenian law for posterity.

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po-tae-toe po-tah-toe?
pə'teɪtəʊ... pə'tɒtəʊ?



In the following essay I will examine Govier's and Walton's individual schemes for non-fallacious tu-quoque/ad hominem circumstantial arguments, their respective notions and interpretations of consistency, commitment, credibility, and the inter-relation and reciprocal conditioning of these same. Also I will discuss direct and indirect evaluation and the use made of these notions or modes of evaluating arguments in Walton and Govier's individual frameworks (dialogue models), their positive and negative attributes. The notion of burden of proof, the political/social dimension of argument and an appraisal of each scheme's relative merits and lacunae will also be undergone.

Such a charge(of tu quoque), if accepted by the audience would diminish the credibility of the other party as the first point or proposition in the non-fallacious tu-quoque¹ stipulates a condition of consistency upon which the credibility of the arguer hinges; credibility is here proportional to consistency and if not then at least correlated with it; the more consistent one is the more credible.

In Walton's scheme, comparable weight of importance is attached to consistency though in the scheme[for the circumstantial ad hominem which Walton² identifies with the tu quoque as an interchangeable term following the analysis of van Eemerman and Grootendorst, 1992] commitment becomes the preponderating term over consistency though the latter is implied through the concept of commitment. The distinction, presumably, lies in commitment being something advocated or believed and consistency being the maintenance of this same and related belief statements, positions, or actions which (allegedly or otherwise) indicate a determinate entity (a belief, etc.) to be committed to, and to, possibly, diverge from in inconsistency. When committed to

¹ Govier, pg.19

² Walton, Pragmatic theory...(hereafter 'P.F') pg.217

something such an act presupposes a belief in the truth-the 'realist' truth- of that something on the part of the committed. His concluding proposition in the scheme states that, in the event of such suspected inconsistency(which the audience is led towards through the arguer's commitment divergent/inconsistent as proposition #3 states) the arguer's commitment is 'open to doubt', is suspected. Such a relationship between consistency and commitment seems one akin to identification or what I had interpreted it as above. Commitment to one standpoint and commitment to another that could be labeled inconsistent (or not) with it, often brings forth the charge of insincerity (the violation of the Gricean maxim) and with it a loss of credibility. For the person (a) who is 'attacked by a tu quoque[ad hominen circumstantial] argument'³ must, if their credibility is to be affirmed, disprove the charge; they have incurred a burden of proof.

The fact that an arguer's commitment is 'open to doubt' begs the question further as to whom it is open to doubt, as to the audience which is to confer doubt or belief on the arguer's credibility in these types of cases, ie. His consistency amidst and among commitments. The scheme Walton adduces here presupposes the 'primary case'⁴ model that occurs within a type of dialoguc(Walton) and which is based upon the Gricean cooperative principle of conversation⁵ in which the participants (present interlocutors; proponent and respondent) must be consistent in their speech acts (statements) to ensure credibility⁶ and to what degree one possesses it depends, in part, on this factor(consistency).

³ Govier, pg.16

⁴ Ibid., pg.184

⁵ Cited in Walton, Relevance in...(hereafter 'R.A'), pg.111

⁶ Walton, 'P.F', pg.145

Who is the argument open to doubt for? For something to be open to doubt for someone (audience) this latter is placed into a position of evaluation. According to Govier, argument evaluation is either direct or indirect and the manner of evaluation of argument depends upon the audience to whom it is addressed. Direct evaluation is the evaluation from the standpoint of an audience who is excluded from the following categories: 'an absent hypothetical interlocutor or antagonist...[,] an absent indefinite heterogeneous group'⁷

Direct evaluation is undergone in the primary case model of present, non-hypothetical interlocutors who argue dialectically, a proponent and respondent in Walton's framework. The Govier framework seems more accommodative here of the possibility of an audience which, though heterogeneous (pluralistic), is present and possibly (though not necessarily?) definite, and, unless Walton's framework can assimilate a pluralistic audience or group into the proponent/respondent dialectical model, the use of his framework is restricted to cases only of direct/indirect evaluation in which two parties reason together towards some purpose of the dialogue, can evaluate each other's arguments or have both evaluated by an absent other but not those of groups or parties which exceed (if indeed they do) the bounds of the proponent/respondent dynamic. There admits of no large scale political dialogue in this framework. This doesn't seem to be difficult for Walton's however, insofar as those parties dialoguing are doing so interchangeably, in a dialectical exchange. But this is not always so, as an audience can be non-interactive. The framework Walton puts forth can be utilized, so to speak, by such an audience and also applied to one, though the diversity of this reference is rendered impossible, unless, as in example #1, the pluralistic/'heterogeneous'

⁷ Govier, ch.11 (I can't locate the quote)

audience or party (that could be considered a proponent or respondent) can be given an identity which comprehends its difference (though this is almost never the case, and a failing of identity politics-its hegemonic nature).

The question to be addressed here in terms of the breadth of evaluation is whether Walton's model can accommodate both forms of evaluation. Where the primary case model of direct evaluation holds in Walton's scheme is when two (and only two, presumably) interlocutors or parties argue back and forth to achieve synthesis, the goal of a dialogue type. The primary case model does not, however, apply to hypothetical arguers and to evaluation by these same through a real situation being assimilated into this theoretical/hypothetical model. Insofar, Walton's is not a primary case model and its scope, its applications, are restricted. Or are they? It allows for a hypothetical and actual audience, objector (or alternative proponent/respondent) who can therefore evaluate and criticize the arguments of another, raise objections and propose alternatives. The fact that Walton's scheme includes a broader spectrum of possible stances of evaluation of various arguments renders it more useful in argument evaluation on the condition that the proponent/respondent interchange can be extrapolated upon diverse and heterogeneous audiences, their arguments, objections and responses (which cannot always be accommodated or even known, but if so, then they may be represented as an interlocutor. In knowing them also, as a process, one's use of hypothetical positions and arguments facilitates this end, for one can examine the panoply of views which one might be forced to do in any case in the event of the indefinite and unknown audience/interlocutor.

In the first premise (statement) of both schemes for the evaluation of *tu quoque* arguments a norm and necessary condition of consistency is adduced in the indicator

words 'require' (Govier) and 'ought' (Walton). The former does not differ to any great conceptual degree from the latter in this premise but, when viewed holistically as a normative substrate binding the former premise to its implicated conclusion it does insofar as Walton's imperative 'ought' linked to propositions #4's 'therefore' conjures up the notion (and is perhaps intrinsic to the mechanics of the scheme) necessity, of deductivism, in which the premises entail the conclusion. Even though it is a presumptive scheme it would appear this way pragmatically in an actual dialogue exchange. With the word 'require' and that of 'probably' as a mitigating term, Govier's framework displays itself in its presumptiveness, as putting forth a conclusion that is defeasible upon further evidence. The credibility clause (if it can be so labeled) of the fourth proposition is an absence in Walton's scheme and something upon which the use of these schemes hinges entirely.

Apropos her analysis of Walton's treatment of consistency and credibility's relationship to it in burden of proof in the ad hominem(circumstantial) scheme, Govier points out the lacuna in Walton's treatment, namely, he doesn't offer an explanation as to why 'it is correct for us to shift our attention'⁸ from the position of the arguer to his character. Such an explanation is crucial to an audience's evaluation (of whatever type) of an argument adduced by a proponent as their acceptance of it (in the end, as proposition #5 in Govier's scheme states) depends upon their belief in the arguer's credibility. And to answer the critical question of a related scheme⁹ the ethotic argument - #2. 'Is character relevant?' - determines the tu quoque argument that might be alleged by an arguer for an audience or by an audience as fallacious or non-fallacious. This is

⁸ Govier, pg.18

⁹ Walton, 'P.F', pg.152

perhaps an absence in the series of (pertinent?) critical questions in Walton's circumstantial ad hominem scheme, and determinations of relevance redound to the social context for its evaluation¹⁰. Consistency in one's position Govier cites as a norm of argument acceptability, conditions this same's credibility which, transitively, conditions and audience's acceptance of the argument propounded. It is the audience who confers the 'rational' acceptance¹¹ and likewise credibility of arguer's and their arguments. The necessary condition of acceptability of an argument is belief in what is advocated (spoken, uttered) as an argument and this redounds to arguer credibility¹². Credibility is defined by Govier as 'worthiness to be believed'¹³

The problem with a reliance upon audience for the acceptability of arguments and the credibility of an arguer is that of audience relativity in which those who may be credible are often disqualified as such and their arguments, rather than exercising their benefits upon an audience (such as educators, etc.) are viewed negatively. Even with qualified audience relativity¹⁴ (if this notion can be correctly applied here) rhetorically disadvantaged people as arguers whose arguments are potentially acceptable, would often be trampled underfoot as the 'ways'¹⁵ in which they act may, audience relatively, render their arguments incredible a priori and may give way to fallacious, though unrecognizably fallacious to the audience who advances them, tu quoque allegations. Also in the cases when such arguments are put forward by them (the rhetorically disadvantaged), their attempts to shift the burden of proof, eo ipso, may be ineffectual.

¹⁰ Ibid, 'R.A', pg.237-8

¹¹ Govier, pg.119

¹² Ibid, pg.23

¹³ Ibid,pg.26

¹⁴ Ibid., pg.225

¹⁵ Govier, pg.19

Thus in the fifth proposition of the Govier scheme the word 'aware' is what can easily be rendered equivocal in the audience's *awareness* of inconsistency (ostensible or otherwise) and in the primary case model can reduce to a mere rhetorical device('I wasn't *aware* of your action' or, conversely, 'I am all too *aware* of your inconsistency'). The word, conversely, acts in a mitigating fashion in the scheme, rendering the conclusion conditional upon audience awareness, which audience, if 'rational',¹⁶ would (ideally at least) be just and non-fallacious in their tu quoque allegations. Walton's lack of reference to an audience at all points to indirect evaluation of argument and the proponent/respondent model.¹⁷ The explicit reference to a 'reference class' in the second proposition of Walton's scheme illuminates the idea of political participation of an individual (even an identifiable group such as 'the U.S government in example #1) who attains political status through such participation and who, through being attacked with a circumstantial ad hominem, is rendered suspect in terms of credibility, this charge coming about through aberrative behavior (in word or deed) relative to this group, which (proposition #1) 'everyone in a certain reference class C ought to' avoid. The link between the first three propositions belies the inconsistency (at least formally) and appears to entail (though it is the presumption of) the conclusion, namely, the dubiousness of their 'contention' (prop.#1) through their dubious commitment to it, and thus its rejectibility. All of these 'social presuppositions'¹⁸ are implied and yet audience plurality would nevertheless be precluded as they must be

¹⁶ Ibid, pg.226

¹⁷ Although reference is made in 'R.A', pg.237, which thereby establishes the relations between arguer and audience in primary cases and social forums, while in 'P.F' the audience receives no mention.

¹⁸ Govier, pg.20

identifiable, a proponent or respondent, an identity 'a'. Thus Walton's framework is ineffectual when a present audience of diverse character is concerned.

There is a parallel between Govier's framework and that of Walton's in terms of a political dimension where groups of people, 'audience' and 'reference class' are indicated, the difference being significant in that the former confers value upon arguments and arguers based upon their relation to them and the latter indicates an origin, a group, that supplies standards of consistency in context. The standard of consistency redounds to the group's identity as norm, which is *prima facie* stated in the first two propositions, whereas Govier's has no such reference, but rather erects the audience as the sounding-board of credibility, the standard of consistency. This establishment of the audience in that position seems only just as they are the objects to which the arguments are put forth and so must evaluate them as rationally acceptable or not. This very notion (of arguing) presupposes evaluation as to evidence a claim is to demonstrate its prior unacceptability or lack of acceptability to an audience who then, upon receiving these arguments, evaluates them in this manner which depends upon their belief in an arguer's sincerity and credibility.¹⁹ Walton's approach, though implicitly entailing an audience, lacks any developmental norms which could be achieved through dialectical interaction between arguer and audience, though this latter dynamic may be assimilated into Walton's framework (but not entirely as already stated). The norms are rather conferred by the group and they pre-exist the situation. Clearly progress on any standpoint/issue is restricted to the range covered by the reference class's norms. Walton's critical questions²⁰ do not treat of this problem of the reference class and should be supplemented

¹⁹ In Govier... somewhere.

²⁰ Walton, 'P.F', pg. 145

with ones which, upon denial, would negate the applicability of these same norms in the instance, such as 'Does 'a' belong to this reference class?'. But such a categorization of an arguer as belonging to this reference class or that is a matter of judgment on behalf of the other party, the evaluator of argument, namely, the audience which doesn't stand out in any relief in Walton's scheme.

Govier's thorough treatment of her scheme's 'inferential steps' adequately substantiates its use but only upon reading it in her interpretation.²¹ Walton's corresponding critical questions enable efficient evaluation of arguments as an economic device. A handy reference to the scheme and its critical questions could (in the limited way I've spoken of) provide a useful framework in which to make judgments concerning arguments of the tu quoque kind, whether they are fallacious (upon yielding a negative answer to any one of these critical questions) or no. Is Govier in need of critical questions for her scheme to match Walton's in efficiency as a handy reference, for it exceeds the latter's application in some respects? If the interpretation of the 'inferential steps' between propositions (statements) could be re-formulated into an economical device of pragmatic dimensions then her scheme would be more functional.

The inference from (1) and (2) to (3) is probabilized ('so probably,...') based upon the factors of the case to which it has application, each of which could be put forth as separate arguments explaining the inconsistency of the arguer to an audience or by an audience (indirectly or directly in evaluation of the tu quoque). The second critical question in Walton's scheme addresses the issue of 'grounds for a claim of practical inconsistency[?]'²², questioning their presence and sufficiency in the case. What is

²¹ Govier, pg.20-1

²² Walton, 'P.F', pg.145

deficient about this sort of question(the whole question) is that it solidifies the indirect form of evaluation referring to the 'textual evidence of the discourse'²³ and not any empirical kind. The second question in Walton's scheme applies to the inferential link between the first three propositions of Govier's scheme in their function as explaining pragmatic inconsistency and analogously loss of arguer credibility.

The link between prop. #3 and prop. #4 follows in the manner of Walton(as I discussed earlier) and his theorizing the existent transitive relationship between commitment, consistency and credibility: if an arguer is not committed then this same is not credible: '[N]ormative principles requiring action'²⁴ stipulate that correspondence between advocacy in speech/language and action must exist for 'genuine acceptance'²⁵ to be demonstrated and known about, and on this condition credibility depends. Critical questions to be asked here are quite obvious and are perhaps implied, namely: 'Is A committed to non-P?' a verification of prop.#2, which itself would then be evaluated, in addition to: A's advocacy of P-ostensible or otherwise, the crux of the argument-; the relationship of conditionality between the following of P and X(prop. #1); in short, all contextually evaluable factors that would be more easily evaluable with the supplementation of the scheme with critical questions, not dealing with 'pair[s] of propositions'(critical question #3 in Walton) but with empirical factors formally considered.

Through such an amplified schema, evaluation of tu quoque arguments would be more economical and probing.

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Govier,pg.20

²⁵ Ibid

The consequences of credibility and its lack in Govier are the acceptance (or not) of the testimony of others. These may be experts and lay people and the corporate body of knowledge itself depends upon such testimony in the form of testimonial claims(narrow or broad), the condition of their acceptance being belief which underlies credibility and its support.²⁶ Honesty, sincerity and reliability are the necessary elements of credibility and the functional inter-relations between these elements is present also in the Walton scheme in that for 'a's' commitment to A to be rationally acceptable to the audience, it must be believed by the audience and 'a' must be considered a credible arguer whose arguments are therefore acceptable. Inconsistency, or lack of commitment evidenced by circumstances, undercuts the audience's belief in 'a' and therefore also renders his credibility doubtful(prop. #4 in Walton). Such circumstances may be oriented around the 'aspects of persons',²⁷ which leads to their stereotyping, the apriori rejection or acceptance of their arguments and imputations of credibility or its lack.

²⁶ Govier,pg.26

²⁷ Ibid,pg.27

'Osama'- example #1

Osama alleges that the U.S government is hypocritical (inconsistent) in its charge of terrorism

1. *U.S government* advocates *no terrorism*, where *no terrorism*, if followed by *U.S government*, requires U.S government to do *no terrorist acts*
2. *U.S government* does *terrorist acts*[Osama's allegation and the contrary of their claim]
3. so probably,
U.S government is not committed to *no terrorism*
so probably,
4. *U.S government*, in asserting *no terrorism* in the course of an argument [or its actions], is not credible
thus probably,
5. for an audience[listening to the interview], aware of *U.S government's* inconsistency, *no terrorism* [as advocated by the *U.S government*] will receive no [real] support from *U.S government*

-
1. *Peter* advocates *immorality of animal use*, where *immorality of animal use*, If followed by *Peter*, would require *Peter* to do *no immorality of animal use*
 2. *Peter* does *immorality of animal use*
 3. so probably, *Peter* is not committed to *immorality of animal use*
so probably,
 4. *Peter* is not credible
Thus probably,
 5. For an audience, Bill, aware of *Peter's* inconsistency, *immorality of animal use* will receive no support from *Peter*.

Example #2-Peter the immoralist

Example #1-Walton

1. *U.S government* has advanced the contention that everyone in a certain reference class['*allies*'?] ought to support *no terrorism* and be committed to it
2. *U.S government* is in the reference class C['*allies*'?]
3. It is indicated by *U.S government's* personal circumstances that it is not committed to *no terrorism* (or even worse, committed to *terrorism*)
Therefore
4. *U.S government's* commitment to *no terrorism* is open to doubt

Example #2

1. *Peter* has advanced the contention that everyone in a certain reference class C['*animal rights activists*'?] ought to support *no immorality of animal use* and be committed to it
2. *Peter* is in the reference class C ['based on the arguments...[he] has presented', namely, '*animal rights activists*'?]
3. It is indicated by *Peter's* own personal circumstances that he is not committed to *no immorality of animal use* (or even worse, is committed to *immorality of animal use*)
Therefore,
4. *Peter's* commitment to *no immorality of animal use* is open to doubt

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Power:
It's manifestation in Individual and State



“A desire for independence, which was transformed necessarily into one of power.” This would make an excellent quote and surely one appropriate in expressing the history up to it’s “culminating point” of Germany under Nazism at the beginning of the 20th century and the U.S in it’s present day manifestation.

Each of the nations, the former at one time an empire in “*Potentia*”, the latter one in “*actua*”, were historically an “overcoming”, a response to rival organismic power which was to be thwarted. Rome in the case of a semi-disparate collective of Germanic(Allemanic) nations and England, the contemporary Rome during the time when the Federalist U.S sought independence. Historians would say that the motivating factors involved were infinitely minute and circumstantial in their plurality but I will say, with Nietzsche, that it was a manifestation of the will-to-power on an imperial scale that was the efficient cause in forming these nations, an absolutist expression of the irreducible principle of human nature.

How did this come to be? Through a belief, on the national scale, in the nation as a cohesive organ, one potent and able to achieve the envisioned ideal. What? Did the whole nation apropos of nothing “envisage” this ideal in a moment of clairvoyance. What nonsense! No, rather it was a single individual who propagated this unity which as inward gathering-up-of-strength found outward expression within the circumstantial constraints of economy, international relations and profit among others perhaps too minute to be knowable.

Germany manifested it’s national strength and idealized vision through the Zarathustrian ideal of one man, Hitler, who was a boon to the discovery of Allemanic identity. Embodying the elements of a truly great man in the classical-heroic sense of the

Neiblungenlied, an orator captivating large audiences, a man strong through an intensely protentional, driven *modus vivendi*, such a one as found objectivity in a worldly sense in the particular case. His lowly birth, rather than diminishing the national sense of proud self-identity, rather exemplified what is humanly attainable through strength of will, that of excellence and leadership, in short, nobility; a nobility which was to be reciprocated in the now cohesive (ideologically and otherwise) Nation-state, under the Hellenic symbol of powerful radiance, the swastika.

The intrinsic structure of Germany at this time was that of class unity as a consequence of self-identity. The Nation thus was prepared, as goal-driven, for an output of power, allegedly a response to economic pressures (an *arriere pensee* in the light of a primordial irreducible and the results of it: dictatorship, nationalism, strength); this output was world dominion.

Was Germany a self-subsistent entity? An ideology which was, in its ground, one of power, could not possibly be self-contained-as its very nature was an overflowing-and so kindred manifestations were present in Italy under "*Il Duce*" and Japan under a more Roman, more dynastic aristocracy, which was natural, the principle of the Western world being "the individual", the Eastern, the body or group. Thus an axis of strength was formed, one of reciprocal utility and benefit advancing the aims of each of the three nations, if and necessarily at the expense of weaker ones.

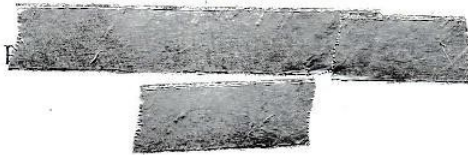
Many would assert that the "American ideal" as it is understood today is, if anything compared to the Zarathustrian one, a homogenized, democratized form of Siegfried, a suit and tie Davy Crockett who incorporates the pioneering spirit, the overcoming of an antagonistic environment which is a wilderness no longer. This is

G.W. Bush, middle America's figurehead, who, though scarcely a venerable figure is nevertheless an man invested with supreme power, in the form of an economic vehicle, the U.S. In this sense, the economic principles governing all Liberal-Democratic action are derivatives of the irreducible. In fact, national unity itself in its achievement is divided into the "will-to-profit" and the patriotic ideal of frontier America, both of which can be subsumed under the head of power. It is the vastness of homeland America, the so-called heartland, that ensures Republicanism (viz: "Democracy") its throne as the rival party bi-partisan system, the "either/or" limits absolutely the pseudo-freedom of the vote, thus maintaining a concentration of power at the peak of the hierarchical pyramid with its watchful eye. Is this a bad thing? Has the American public been deceived by the façade of democracy, what was once *libertee* in Napolcanic France, and will always be a falsehood, one to be distorted and soft-pedalled by the peasant thinking (everything originates in thought) of the weak, the homogenized equality of modern day? The answer is in short, no. The hierarchical presence is a necessary one as, from an anthropological standpoint, a numerous body of the weak must be controlled by a small, cohesive body of the strong (a natural antithesis) owing to the fact that in-order-to subsist as a group, men must be allotted their specific function, each coalescing in a functional body composed of intricate, complex parts. The answer is in essence utilitarian. Why would the "so many" then choose to acknowledge this when it amounts to being downtrodden and manipulated-after all, the communist experiment is still a hope in the minds of some-? Self-interest and a rival, antagonistic force which is powerful enough to subjugate them. This is economy, the universal standard of value compared to which insignificant men are

so many grains in the balance scale of pro et contra; the scale which is in the hands of the profiteers, the powerful, and in the U.S the Republicans, the Romans of modernity.

This powerful class has, perhaps for lack of a better, selected one individual "representative of the people"/dictator, as it's *frontis* piece, and this is Bush. Here the power of the individual unites with that of the state amplifying the unity of it's populace through the façade of the American ideal and the very real phenomenon of profit; an overflow of strength results and globalization occurs, an empire in it's dialectic is recognizable. Doesn't dialectic negate itself, in this sense meaning the terminus, the destruction of Empire, perhaps even the dawning of communism or a democratic derivation? No, dialectic is the mediated negation of a negation and thus an affirmation. Empire will always be a constant in human nature, the apogee of it's civilizing in it's regressive movement from a pseudo-height of "equalizing"(ie: democracy in it's politically correct form-how far are we willing to go along that route?-)to a primordial antagonism, under whatever garb it may be, such as profit or Allemanic pride. Thus, regardless of the *arriere pensee*, the human excuse, power will always manifest itself through a catalyst, but as an output of strength and affirmation of life, cosmic force itself. Who can deny the evidence? Human history provides a tableaux of mutually antagonistic forces, and forces, especially at the individual level that are a wholly positive *ding-an-sich* (thing-in-itself), that are in fact the origin point of all subsequent relations, the ground of human activity, the will-to-power.

Practical Reasoning, Compulsion and Repudiation



I intend to evaluate Sach's translation as to whether it adequately illuminates Aristotle's thought through a comparison with another recent translation, Lawson-Tancred's 1998 edition and other scholarship. I will focus on book Zeta, chapter 7 lines 1032a¹⁰-1032b²⁵ and, simultaneously, attempt to answer the question: Is Aristotle doing a treatise on practical reasoning in this section; apropos the whole of his oeuvre or merely as a scattered fragment if at all? My answer is yes and this is contiguous with the whole of book Zeta though it addresses more specific issues.

Lawson-Tancred believes that chapters 7-9 "constitute an independent treatise" of what he calls "immanent form"¹. Is this formal actuality? (discussed later). The translator nevertheless makes no mention of immanent form within his translation, just as Sachs none of formal actuality² which appears strange since it is the focal point of this chapter, which nevertheless is not independent but non-dependant, having a conjunction with the prior and posterior chapters in the book itself dealing with thinghood and, more globally, being per se or qua being. As this treatise might (and very likely) have been addressed to Athenian gentlemen who were Aristotle's contemporary audience I draw the inference that practical reasoning was (as it is) something of great use and might have inclined Aristotle to treat of it here.

I will begin my evaluation at line 1032b in which both translators differ in their terminology, Sachs rendering *techné* 'art', Lawson-Tancred 'skill' as cause on the condition that the form of these things (or those things that are 'produced'³ 'L-T' or 'coming-into-being' 'S') are in the soul (S)/mind (L-T). (These latter terms are absent from their glossaries so the distinction is possibly arbitrary). On this condition one has

¹ Pg.47

² Footnote no.17 in bk.Zeta

³ 'L-T' renders Lawson-Tancred, 'S', Sachs

knowledge of the products resultant of the cause. What distinguishes Sachs' from Lawson-Tancred's terms, 'mind' and 'soul'? Is the mind anthropocentric? When art/skill is cause on this condition, is the art/skill knowledge as knowledge refers to a knower and this is perhaps stipulated as a cause? This would, provided the agent had this capacity(of agency-of potentiality being actualized through its thinghood and motion), create an identity between knowledge and power or ability to produce the products, to make them come-into-being and create a triadic relation between the above three modes of production(skill/art, aptitude/ability, and thinking) within the whole process. This reference to agency implies an agent if they cannot become/be produced through themselves as a *causa sui*.

The same form(in this section, lines 1032b³⁻¹⁰ may admit of contrary things and all forms in the soul give onto knowledge(eg. Disease/health) of the good(in , presumably, ethical choice and action). Inferences of necessary/sufficient conditions-or causes, a cause being what is responsible, 'that for-the-sake-of-which, ie. a means-are made in the manner of dialectical reasoning⁴ using the hypothetical method (a tracing of distant ends to be realized-eg. Health, to the present state-of-affairs, eg.disease, through intermediate moments requiring agency, to achieve *Kalon*, -'S': "uniformity", 'L-T': "bodily consistency"-this process must be undergone). The self as cause via knowledge, possessing the power to act(agency).

This causality is 'production' by virtue of its being an art/skill. 'S' uses 'process' and 'motion' divergently from 'L-T' and keeps the two seemingly fixed, not interchangeable, whereas 'L-T' overlooks(perhaps) the distinction in a more collapsible syntax ie: 'productive processes' as opposed to 'S''s "...the process of coming-into-being

⁴ Passage in 'S': "Since...ff..."

and the motion involved in it..."⁵. Here L-T appears to identify the two. Is there a semantic distinction between 'process' and 'motion'? While there is no glossary listing in 'S', 'L-T', in his glossary, accepts change, process and movement as adequate English translations of *kinesis*, with emphasis accorded to 'process' as most closely approximating the Greek in its generality.

The end(*telos*) to be realized equals the form of knowledge(eg.health) which is in turn the 'good' one might speculate. According to Aristotle knowledge is art/skill(*techne*). How could things-come-to-be which are in the soul qua form if those things are simultaneously an instantiation, so to speak, of the knowledge not the knowledge itself(eg.the medical art)? But knowledge is (a) the form of (b) its instantiation or its end (eg.a-medical art and b-health) not the art itself (eg.a)? Do the things produced/coming-into-being/generated become the form in their instantiation(as this is what is produced)? No but are derived from the form/knowledge which is their producer/cause of which they are instantiations in any number of situations and this form/knowledge is accordingly their substrate. The agent, as "s" clarifies in the footnote(no.17), as the person, is merely incidental to the efficacy of knowledge and, as it were, its catalyst, for the form of a particular knowledge id operating within his 'soul'. (How then, can someone reason practically at all without agency as the latter connotes passivity?). The knowledges (arts/skills) are claimed in line 1032b¹⁴ to be the form and yet[1032b¹⁻²] the forms are 'in the soul';form is identified with thinghood. Sachs footnote assists in reducing the tension here in that the particular knowledge is a formal actuality, a 'being-at-work' of form. The form in the soul could very well be formal potentiality and yet no necessary connection or binary relationship exhaustive of alternative

⁵ 1032b¹⁶?-'L-T's translation is not sectioned off

(sufficient) means to an end(eg.health) is adduced, but it may be presupposed. Thinghood =the end , therefore, transitively, the end=the form(eg.health); what of knowledges then? How then, could a knowledge(eg.medicine), be the form of a form(eg.health) all of which exist (is Sachs can be believed) idealiter, in the soul? Perhaps, if the knowledge(*techne*) is considered qua formal actuality, as the means/cause to the form/end, then the tension disappears altogether, and one is merely entering into a practical reasoning in which the end preserves its implicit form and the knowledge is its instantiation or cause in concreto? The thinghood(health) with all of its contextually necessary conditions, then becomes material(an instantiation).

'The process of coming-into-being' ('productive processes'-'L-T') is divided into: One part as thinking('S' and 'L-T') diverge in their translation of the Greek 'making' which might connote *techne*, the form of knowledge at work in the soul, or 'formal actuality' which could in turn be an efficient cause of mover('that from which the source of motion is'-'S'), and thus both 'making' and 'producing' could be assimilated into this broad category.

'The completion of the thing'/'last stage of the thinking process' is production/making. 'S' precludes any notions of a necessary causality in a process of thinking that 'L-T' generates in his translation through demarcating the act of thinking into stages, though 'S' commits an *aporia* in the translation of the Greek, if the form of knowledge is the producing cause which refers to subjective agency, the instantiation of knowledge, unless he has Aristotle(and interprets Aristotle) as mean(ing) the unmoved

mover, 'good' or 'end' to be realized through this act or operation (strict causality could still play a role however⁶).

The former identification of 'making'/'producing' (*techne*) with the mover (efficient cause) is appropriately conceived (if verisimilitude with Aristotle's thought is desired) as the completion of the necessary antecedent 'process' of thought, the unmoved mover being the form of knowledge in the soul, the episteme or configuration of knowledge being simultaneously the formal cause or state-of-affairs which acts as the condition under which efficacy is achieved, translating thought into action. Here means are employed in the realization of an end which is the 'good', the formal actuality actualized.

Similar to the more global process/act of thinking are the local processes, the 'steps in-between' or 'intermediate stages', that exist between the present state-of-affairs and the future and which enables one to temporalize himself, to exist futurally as the 'now' (stage or step from which the process of thinking originates) changes with the motion, whether it be in thought or action⁷. Thought conditions time and brings it into concretion and this isn't a wholly idealist postulate on the part of Aristotle as thought itself is conditioned by substantial change or what could be called material (empirical). These local processes of thought are brought to greater conceptual clarity in Walton (2004). Here he analyses the deliberation dialogue, the purpose of which is 'the practical one of finding the means in a given situation, to carry out a goal'⁸. It is 'concerned with sequences of actions leading to a goal'⁹. Apropos this analysis he

⁶ De anima, pg. 166-Biondi

⁷ Pg. 119, Biondi

⁸ Relevance in Argumentation, Walton, pg. 143

⁹ Ibid., pg. 144

pertinently dicusses the notion of 'focusing', a process of concentrating attention on a subset of inferences within a much longer chain in a knowledge base.¹⁰ Though here Walton was discussing A.I and perhaps alluding also to systems theory, this notion has a direct bearing on Aristotle's conception of thinking as a process (and here Sachs' translation is manifestly deficient whereas L-T's use of 'thinking process'¹¹ coincides with his interpretation of chapters 7-9 as an 'independent treatise'¹²), whether necessary or no. '[A] focus space [continues Walton,] is closed when a subtask is completed, and a new active focus space is opened when the dialogue moves onto another subtask.'¹³ An example from Zeta chapter 7 lines 1032b¹⁰⁻²⁰ is the focusing of thought on the subtask of its formal potentiality (the envisioned end or thinghood) health, namely 'uniformity' (*kalon*) which would 'complete the thinking' 'S', achieve the last 'stage of the thinking process' 'L-T' and close the focus space through the knowledge of the means which is appropriately considered by L-T as a 'stage' in practical reasoning, the exercise of reason as the inferential capacity reconciling means and end which would then give onto problems with the Sachs translation as a finite capacity, unless the unmoved mover (form) incited the process again which is an obvious *patio principii*. The process may be conceived as finite, however, in that the means is 'present potentially' 'S' and needn't be actual. But this is itself a problem as the potentiality 'including reason [1046b⁰⁻¹⁰ 'S' trans.] is capable of contrary effects, which it must include as a thinking, this being how both translators construe reason. The fact that future focus spaces (or means) must be traced to the present and this present state-of-affairs is what is 'in one's

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ L-T, Pg. 191

¹² Ibid. 189

¹³ Walton, Ibid.

power' 'S', means that it is necessary they do not admit of contraries, as this is the situation/condition one is in ,the origin of his thought. The means must therefore be actual though it is simultaneously potential. This is tolerable but the process of thought being conceived as on finite is not. The process(of reason/thinking) is thus infinite and 'completion', unless it refer to a focus space, an indefinite realm in which the means or subtask is viewed monadologically as a self-contained unit with reference to a broader goal whose distinctness depends upon proximity and experience upon which to base inferences; unless it refer to such a focus space, 'completion' is an inadmissible translation of the Greek.

The mover is, according to Aristotle, either (a)the result of *techné* or (b) the state-of-affairs or environment that enabled the mover (*techné* existent as form) to act though the initiation of the process of thought which, accordingly, gives an empirical foundation to all thinking, itself the ground of action, of praxis. This state-of-affairs is what clearly is the present, the now confronting the mover, or the catalyst of the movement(ie. health and the doctor in the act of healing as it were by compulsion) and this is translated as 'chance' 'S' and spontaneity' 'L-T'. Aristotle claims[1048a¹⁰] one is compelled by desire which necessitates disjunctive choice so long as the appropriate conditions of the desire's actualization are present, potentiality would then be actualized as in the case of the sick desiring health through the appropriate conditions acting as means to this end, namely, warming and uniformity(*kalon*) ; which latter might itself be identified with being-healthy. However, that the form of knowledge which is an art/skill is not possibly existent outside of reason, renders it non-compulsive as susceptible of contrariety (eg. hesitation).This is because 'knowledge is a potency that has reason'[1046b¹⁰⁻²⁰]and that

desire, whether rational or irrational, necessitates disjunctive choice, renders Sachs translation of the Greek 'automaton' (*tuche* not being in the original text-1032b²³⁻²⁵) dubious as chance, bare possibility, is the opposite of necessary and this compulsion is aid to exist[1048a¹⁰]. Sachs himself, in his defense of the translation[liv], admits this apropos of his dichotomization of this state-of-affairs, which he claims to be 'incidental'(accidental in the light of the teleology which finds its source in this state-of-affairs), into 'two or more lines of causes', whatever these may be. I would speculate that he means the material and the efficient(Or 'moving' according to his translation) causes and there he would perhaps be in the company of Ross whose commentary on the metaphysics yields an interpretation stipulating 'a pre-existing matter' in all cases of 'natural generation', the present material cause. This Sachs calls an incidental cause on the premise evidenced by the *physics*[liv-'S'] that nature acts contingently not by necessity (though I would hardly say deterministically). This is clearly an *aporia* as how could the compulsion of desire exist and, in irrational potencies, lead to necessity of consequence.¹⁴ Thus, with a pre-existing material cause[1032a¹⁷], natural comings-into-being 'S' as productions 'L-T' are necessary things admitting of no contrary effects which would negate their production are clearly best rendered by 'spontaneity' as in 'L-T' not 'chance' as in 'S' as a immediate causality(a simultaneity of cause and effect) is present and this is spontaneous action not something which had, as it were, a choice and was wholly contingent.

The formal potentiality being inherent in the soul, when it, as the producer, 'takes its origin' in chance, the it is rendered contingent which confutes this very potentiality,

¹⁴ This natural necessity, the support of teleology, is evidenced by the quote in the metaphysics, book 9: 'one potency is for one effect.'

and thus the translation is inept on this point unless the potentiality be one of reason which would then admit of contraries redounding as it does to the agency of the soul. But it is unlikely that this would be the case as the consequence (future goal as state-of-affairs) does not admit of coming-to-be through the three alternatives to nature: art/skill (*techne*), aptitude/ability, and thinking. Thus it must be an irrational potency not admitting of contrary effects, a disjunctive choice being necessitated through the nature (thinghood) of the thing in question.

Indeed, in the metaphysics as a whole Aristotle fails to clarify the role of reason or the soul in practical reasoning or what Ross called 'moral deliberation and action'¹⁵. Does it have agency and thus choice, or does its knowledge? The latter, which are 'forms in the soul' (/mind 'L-T'). Choice, in cases of reasoned potencies is always present in these cases of knowledge and this is always a choice between contraries. But what of the tension between choice of contraries and nature? The blindness of nature is compulsive and antecedent conditions are necessarily correlated with their consequences which are all material states-of-affairs. Knowledge here is insight into the potential alternatives from a given state-of-affairs, not a different imagined or fictive one as this then wouldn't act as the source or material cause of thought or generation/coming-into-being/production. And such a knowledge is itself the cause and origin of the deliberation referring to the now which the catalyst (subject) of knowledge, its practitioner, faces.

But how are reason (choice?) and desire distinguished? Are they opposed or incidental or something else? Sachs' translation lacks the answer through using them interchangeably [1048a¹⁰] and with it definite notions of necessity and contingency in deliberation which is the central issue of this chapter. The consequences of opposing

¹⁵ Ross, pg. 185

choice and desire likely lead to the nature-human, rational-irrational dichotomies which Aristotle might have wanted to avoid whereas their identity negates their difference and this in turn might be a necessary element in Aristotle's independent treatise on practical reasoning (though a part of the whole *Metaphysics*) which would then be precluded. Thus the colloquy of Sachs' translation is a great impediment to understanding Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. The consequences of opposition (between reason and desire) might be equally wrong and Sachs' ambiguous use of the disjunct 'or' [1048a¹⁰], denotive of interchangeability of terms confutes these important subtleties of Aristotle's thought.

Lawson-Tancred,trans., *Metaphysics*, Aristotle, 1998, Penguin books, New York, N.Y

Sachs,trans., *Metaphysics*, Aristotle, 1999/2002, Green Lion press, Santa Fe, N.M

Ross, trans. and commentary, *Metaphysics*, Aristotle, 1958, Oxford, Clarendon press

Biondi, *Philosophical Perspectives:Aristotle's Metaphysics*, Thompson-Nelson, 2005, Scarborough, On.

Walton, *Relevance in Argumentation*, 2004, Lawrence Erlbaum associates, Mahwah, N.J

Reevaluation of all values: Overcoming the philosophy of the subject and Dionysian
messianism”



“There is a degree of insomnia, of rumination, of historical sense which injures every living thing and finally destroys it, be it man, a people or a culture.”¹

This historical sense is precisely historicism, which is an ontological perspective (perhaps even a moral one as well, as will be investigated in the ensuing text) that rational reduces everything factual, eventful and motivational to the totality of history, it's involvement within the world process of human and natural actions. Nietzsche in this book, would herald the end of historicism as antiquarian historiography and life-mitigating rationality via the route of aesthetics. This brand of history renders humans sick in their animality through over-emphasis on past history, facts that have perished and are no longer of consequence for the present and directed towards the future of human actions in miniature and human actions en masse (events). History is thus the ruination of life itself through it's emphasis on self-consciousness(historical consciousness), reason and rationality-it is this triad that Nietzsche would defeat through an aesthetically renewed mythology², paradoxically a salvation of a historical type in the novelizing of past culture. What Nietzsche's project is essentially is to break away from historical ties to these ascetic, philosophical, bourgeois and Christian values(which all interpenetrate). Through radical historicism he “wants to unmask the perversion of the will to power, the revolt of reactionary forces[young Hegelians], and the emergence of a subject-centered reason”³, to rejuvenate Man *qua* men in their natural aspect through a destruction of norms, the “revaluation of all values”⁴

¹ N.'s course text, pg.10

² Habermas, pg.88

³ Ibid.

⁴ “The Antichrist”, pg.107

The will to power must be rejuvenated aesthetically (it's stimulant according to Nietzsche) and be sublated from its previous Christian and historicist form (above).

Nietzsche's etymological wordplay on "occidental Rationalism" (which is modernity's-contemporary to Nietzsche-abstract value form manifesting itself concretely) establishes it as the target of his radical historicist criticism. From the Latin *occidens* (setting, sunset, west) and *occidere* (to go down), and its denoting an artificial language based chiefly on the "romance languages", we are given to understand not only the targets but their fate, which is supercession. The term connotes or directly denotes the philosophy of enlightenment and/or the philosophy of self-consciousness, beginning with Descartes and culminating in Hegel; and traveling aesthetically from Novalis and Schelling to Richard Wagner.

This ideal of reason as the device upon the prow of Occidental Rationalism was perceived as an absolute human value, a self-knowledge in Hegel and afterwards with the left young Hegelians as a liberating force in the understanding of the production paradigm in society.⁵ With the right Hegelians it was a reversion back to Hegel but projected with greater emphasis onto human self-consciousness as a unifying power of "inevitable diremptions" between state and civil society (ala Stirner).⁶ Nietzsche would break from this tradition in his radical historicism (predominant in philosophy), transforming reason into an objective demonstration of power. Historicism copulated with reason in Nietzsche's predecessors (and contemporaries) in effecting all of these various goals, an attempt to decrease philosophy's burden of proof through the creation of a mass of facts all presupposed as orthodoxy(Truth). It was an antiquarian

⁵ Habermas, pg.75

⁶ Ibid, pg.84

historiography that perpetuated the contemporary status quo and Nietzsche's mission was to expose historicism as the culprit of the deleterious state of modernity/ modern consciousness; it's decadence:

“[M]odern culture...is no real culture at all, but only a kind of knowledge about culture, it stops at cultured thoughts and cultured feelings but leads to no cultural decisions.”⁷

This state-of-affairs was the historical end product that rendered all natural proclivities sterile through their rationalization; people (especially Germans) began to “feel with abstraction”⁸. What was to effect the leveling of this state-of-affairs? How were Nietzsche's targets superseded? Through the construction of an aesthetically renewed mythology, renewed as partially disconnected from it's past in the Christianizing/philosophizing influence implicit therein. For a new age to usher into the world process it must disentangle itself from it's ties to the past, that which conditions it to be antiquated, and an “historical education” in the antiquarian vein would, on this premise, have no place in Nietzsche's conception of modernity.

Religion, Nietzsche's focal target, was in conservative Hegelianism the manifestation of reason as the unifier of a divided age (economic, civil, cultural and religious life) lacking true culture. Reason therefore was not the objective ahistorical (or finitely historical) norm it purported to be and was in fact historically conditioned through and through. The rationalizing as the mode of reason, really having as it's condition power, pronounced the collapse of myth and aesthetic ideals exemplifying itself in those of the ascetic; aberrations of nature and power. Myth and reason are opposed.

⁷ N.'s course text, pg.24

⁸ Ibid, pg.26 N. quoting Grillparzer

Power is the spur of artistic creativity, and yet the latter also conditioned the former through a primordial reawakening in an immediate presentation to consciousness. It is the most fundamental of languages and thus most closely akin to nature, a sublimation of barbarism. Language as the medium of presentation is divested of excess rationality. Teleology underpins this language as the goals of artistic production are formulated in praxis, and in the following advice Nietzsche prescribes a philosophy of praxis serviceable to life:

“By looking forward and setting a goal for yourselves you will also

Curb that rank impulse to analysis which now lays waste your present.”⁹

This philosophy runs exactly in the opposite direction of modern consciousness, wholly analytic and self-absorbed: “modern historiography...rejects all telology”¹⁰. For Nietzsche art is a suprahistorical power of creation (or immediate comprehension of the products of creation) which posits men in the moment and overcomes the degenerating culture of the historical consciousness. An objection to Nietzsche would be that we are not all artists and human affairs, when subordinated to art (the non-, even anti-utilitarian medium of creation) would be wholly inept, and yet as the stimulus of power (in the reciprocally conditioning relationship between power and art) it is wholly justified and perhaps what he meant. But is it really justified? And yet an aesthetically renewed mythology that effects the unification of societal diremptions (above), eg. In a Greek religious festival or modern artistic performance, is perhaps unrealistic. Society and its alienating competitiveness, cannot be unified through festivals as they are merely occasional events and certain artistic forms don't appeal to every type of person.

⁹ Ibid, pg.38

¹⁰ “Genealogy of Morals”, pg.157

Holidays and political celebrations, for example, have become subordinated to this economizing power of competition; why wouldn't they equally well be assimilated within Capitalist structures? How would it have the power to supercede these alien forces? After all, teleological consciousness is perhaps more fundamentally creative as utilitarian than artistic and feels at home in utility as an egoistical self-reference. Nietzsche might have said that when this consciousness is de-rationalized the converse is more fundamental (in the primordial and moral sense), yet practicality may necessitate rationality.

The suprahistorical power of creation calls for myth as it's noblest form and it was just this that Nietzsche and Wagner adopted as their project, the former (after his separation from Wagner) as a renewed aesthetic mythology. Old Norse and Teutonic myths provide the content of this form such as the Nibelungenleid (in Wagner's "The Ring Cycle") and the Scandinavian "edda" which Nietzsche alludes to in his use of the word teutonic (also in the genealogy, third essay). How do these myths apply to contemporary people (perhaps) and how do the two consciousness's discussed in the text (historical/reflective and unhistorical/aesthetic) become reconciled? Through their taking a "Psychological approach"¹¹ to artistic narrative rather than the mere relation of a legend; Nietzsche would call the latter a Germanic failing and for the following reasons.

In the Germanic epic poems (circa 800 A.D./C.E) the historical consciousness is perceivably manifest in the form of the works, which are "very broad and often very circumstantial", telling "unimportant details with great minuteness".¹² Also within these

¹¹ de Vries, pg.48

¹² Ibid, pg.47

same poems is found “the repetition of the same thought in different words”.¹³ The saving grace of these poems and their ethical value (which is nevertheless diminished in the light of the Scandinavian short epic lays), can be seen in the lay of Hildebrand for example, which de Vries lauds saying: “we can be certain that it is not at all a primitive poetic art”¹⁴. More importantly some of these epic poems contain “no history” which precedes it “nor has it a sequel that presupposes this [episodic song].”¹⁵ The above factors all indicate a “traditional poetic style”¹⁶. These artistic works are earlier though representative examples of the German historical consciousness, and the nascence (with the advent of Christian and thus philosophical influences) of its inwardness as self-reflective, individually and culturally.

Nietzsche’s critique of German culture and its inwardness (which echoes Marx’s German Ideology) makes of it an artificial culture¹⁷, a French copy that has (with its supposed historical diremption in modernity and Wagnerian art) now become “badly copied”¹⁸. His cry is simply “Back to Origins!”, pre-(and thus non-) Christian mythology. This noble form has been neglected for content (ie: the historicizing of culture) and this in turn leads to a culture of immanence with an “arrogantly clumsy and meekly ineffectual outer being”¹⁹; superficiality in cultural products and values. Such an ignoble stooping obviates “national culture” and with it “German unity”, that “of the German spirit and life after the annihilation of the opposition of form and content, of inwardness

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Ibid, pg.51

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ N.’s course text, pg.24

¹⁸ Ibid, pg.26

¹⁹ Ibid

and convention.”²⁰The national culture was Wagner’s project as well and yet he also performed an ignoble stooping, a “genuflexion to Christianity.”²¹This instigated Nietzsche’s break with Wagner apropos the latter’s ascetic ideal ²², the unmanly “nature of Parsifal”²³, the Wagnerian outcome of the “Romantic union of the Dionysion with the Christian”²⁴, embodied in Christ. This hybrid form was a messianism of the Romantics that purported to reconcile the unhistorical consciousness as art (Dionysion) and the historical as rationality/reason (Christ). The historical and the superhistorical consciousness (in contradistinction to the suprahistorical) were embodied in Christ the messiah as the herald of modernity. The norms of Truth and Falsity represented in the ascetic ideal negate aesthetic values. Nietzsche’s pragmatic epistemology would subvert normative morality²⁵. In this theory of knowledge, knowledge itself in its foundations is shaken when propositional statements (allegedly where Truth and Falsity lie as necessary elements) are reduced to evaluative statements (through the association of Truth with the Good and Falsity with the Bad); where validity claims are transformed into preferences for anything that redounds to self-interest and advancement. Power is here in its surreptitious form.

It is easy to see how Nietzsche’s previous critique’s descend upon philosophy as the province of the True and the False, of eternal ideas and norms. The ideal of philosophy is represented in art as the Apollonian(the superhistorical consciousness²⁶), the god of Apollo, reasonable, rational and unaesthetic, removed from the fecundity of life in

²⁰ Ibid, pg.26-

²¹ “Nietzsche contra Wagner”?

²² “Genealogy of Morals”, pg.97

²³ Ibid, pg.99

²⁴ Ibid., pg.93

²⁵ Habermas, pgs.122-3

²⁶ N.’s course text, pg.s13-4

extramundaneness. The “wisdom”²⁷ philosophy claims is useless in Nietzsche’s pragmatic ethics and he recognizes the opposition between life and wisdom and calls for unwisdom as serviceable to life. Apollonian morality, when it perverts the will to power and exercises itself practically, transforms itself into instrumental or functionalist reason (J.S. Mill and Herbert Spencer), which stands in antithesis to art as the instigator of noble values. The inevitable terminus of the saga of reason is reason as instrument. “Behind universalistic morality’s ideals of asceticism and claims to rightness, lurk imperatives of self-preservation and domination.”²⁸ Power reveals itself as the face under the veil of reason and it is the task of radical historicism to pull it aside and give the face of Man an aesthetic remodeling. It is Dionysos who is fashioned through the act as the “absent god who is coming”.

²⁷ Ibid, pg.13

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The Greek Ideal of Moral and Acsthctic Balance

Clas

The Greek's ideology of moral balance is evinced in their artistic productions, specifically from the late archaic to the late classical period in which time it had matured into its apex. Although these ideals are a constant presence before this time, perhaps as early as the dark ages, it is during this historical epoch that we can most easily understand their moral outlook through the hedonistic veil attributed to them by the christianizing influence of "civilization" and which has seemingly carried over to the present day.

The ideal of moderation is not only manifested in the true morality of the Greeks, but in a practical component, that of natural, physical balance. The former, moral component is best illustrated in the pictorial arts such as painted scenes and images on vases (*pamphikiloi*) whereas the latter assumes a form in the plastic arts such as pottery and sculpture.

These quintessentially Greek ideas were more conceptually refined in other areas. Poets such as Homer—who wove the moral fabric of society in his poems— and later Euripides, appealed to all echelons of their contemporary society through their poeticized instruction which was a large part of a Greek's education; an education fundamentally moral. This moral education was amplified by the teachings of the philosophers, who, despite their appreciation for the profundity of art (ie: Aristotle's *Poetics*) were often the object of public scorn (ie: Socrates in Aristophanes' *The Clouds*) and even banishment. Yet, in the eyes of modernity, philosophers during this time are considered distinguished ideologues and representatives of the Greek character. Democritus, Aristotle, Heraclitus and Plato fashioned morality in a more explicit and tangible way, further refining it into dialectical/logical systems, and probably weren't the antinomy of the Greek *qua* Greek. Aristotle's doctrine of *Eupraxia* (as the etymology denotes), that to act (*praxis*) well is to

fare (*eudemon*) well prescribes a moderate way of life, right (moral) conduct being a mean between opposite potentialities, the “excess” and “deficiency”. Earlier, but still during the height of this ideal, Democritus also stated that “In all things, equality is fair, excess and deficiency not so.”[102]¹. Heraclitus echoes these moral sentiments of moderation in his maxim that equates virtue with “acting according to nature”[112;F], one that doesn’t advise the individual to conduct himself as a beast would but to limit excess(in the form of pleasure especially) and avoid the pitfalls of deficiency; in short to moderate all things and live as nature intended. One such example of moderation’s antipode “excess”, is the *hybristis*, the man of overweening pride, exemplified in Sophocles’ (a fifth century poet) “*Oedipus Rex*”:

“Pride, when puffed up, vainly, with many things
Unseasonable, unfitting, mounts the wall,
Only to hurry to that fatal fall,
Where feet are vain to serve.”²

Homer’s poem *The Iliad*, says Aristotle³, has this vice(*hybris*) as it’s leading motif and he “intended it to illustrate[that]which leads man to his downfall.” Thus philosophers and poets, both ideologues in their own right, possessed a kindred notion of morality, and this was moderation.

Art, plastic and pictorial, as a creative emanation of the Greek outlook and way of life was to reflect back upon them in completion. The Greek’s desired to see themselves portrayed in their creative products, typically in an idealized form, although they were not above depicting their faults as well. In fact they went so far as to exaggerate them,

¹ Kaufmann, pg.64. All like brackets are from this source. See bibliography.

² Sophocles. Pg.31

³ Aristotle, *Poetics*,ch.23

always with a purpose, in this respect, moral education. The purposiveness of art was its conveyance of a theme, and in doing so, had practical application. The two are closely related, the arts as-it-were extracted from daily life for a purpose in daily life.

Pictorial art, best represented in vase painting best illustrates the Greek's belief in the morality of moderation, although the balance between excess and deficiency also manifests itself in figural and physical form, the latter in both the scenes/images and the construction of the *pamphikiloi* (the potter's art). Various moderate ideas are related through these creative products, those elemental in the Greek character, which owing to the wealth of these products, we could say they took great pains to demonstrate. As Aristotle's ethical doctrine shows demonstration was all-important and a typically Greek demand.

That of restraint and its converse were frequently depicted in the scenes painted on vases, and it could be presumed to be of some value. In funerary practice among the Greeks during the fifth century B.C the offering of white-ground, vases containing perfumed oil, came into convention as a sign of respect for the deceased. The well-preserved scenes painted on these⁴ often included a grieving woman who displayed this emotion, but with accompanying restraint. The audience (perceivers) of these scenes were typically women in the same position, the dedicator of the Lekythos, who would glean an idea of proper behaviour during such a time-one which necessitated respect-. This pictorial lesson was also purported to instruct them about proper behaviour as a woman:

⁴ Attic white-ground Lekythos, inscriptions painter, c.450 B.C. Also painted on Loutrophoros Amphora, ie: Attic Red-figure Loutrophoros Amphora, c.480 B.C, ht.0.81m, Paris, Louvre

to refrain from excessive displays of emotion, which was a commonplace, the ideal often being transgressed as can be seen from many of the literary sources of the day⁵.

Restraint's opposite, licence was also a significant feature on vase-wear conveying a notion of what was disapproved in one's practical conduct. Myth based scenes derived mainly from Homeric sources such as *The Iliad* or *Odyssey* were often utilized to show this, having characters emulable by all property classes and ages. They were thus quite an effective means in moral education, the "learn by example" method appealing to the Greeks in their penchant for demonstrated "facts". One such vase, a red-figure hydria⁶ shows a scene of Ajax the lesser about to rape the prophetess Cassandra adjacent to which is another showing Neoptolemus (pyrrhus) preparing to kill king Priam with a sacrificial weapon (*machaira*) in a temple (possibly of Athena), adding an impious insult to injury. The climactic moments being captured-characteristic of Greek vase painting at this time- the idea of vice in the form of licence is all the more prominent. The maxim's of Democritus obviously apply in this scenario disclosing what the Greeks thought *qua* Greeks⁷.

The ideology of balance in the moral sphere is implicit in the value of athletics, a "sound mind in a sound body" being what Aristotle asserted to be an inherently true proposition, and vase painting revels this in it's venerated portrayal of athletes. The well-roundedness of a Greek's education, a significant component of which was *gymnastike*⁸ tempered a Greek's life toward the Good, although not in the idealized sense of Platonism, but closely approximating the Homeric ideal, one more earthly in essence.

⁵ speeches from Antiphon and Lysias

⁶ by the Kleophrades painter, c.480. B.C. ht.0.42m in the Naples Archaeological museum

⁷ "It is hard to fight desire but to control it is the sign of a reasonable man." [236] also: "The brave man is not only he who overcomes the enemy, but he who is stronger than pleasures." [214]

⁸ Plato, Republic, book 7

In any case excellence(virtue) could be achieved through moderation which could in turn be conducted through athletics. An Attic red-figure amphora possibly by the Kleophrades painter⁹ from 490 B.C, now housed in the Kunsthistorisches museum in Vienna , depicts an isolated image of a boxer. The physical form of which is but one example in many of the rue anatomical proportion and aesthetic beauty of the athletes much admired by the general populace for these reasons as well as their skilful quasi-heroism. Such athletic exploits seemed to them to mirror those of Herakles as can be gleaned from an Attic black-figure Lekythos from around the same time¹⁰ which shows him strangling a lion, perhaps in the aspect of a wrestler as the pose suggests.

The purport of these vases was self-glorification, as an *athlon*(prize) for the victorious competitor. This served to substantiate the Hellenic pride the Greeks felt in themselves as a collective and might have been a conduit for *hybris* as a potential actuality in other spheres of life(such as the political) although this is just a conjecture. If so , a balanced life was the result.

The balance of the Greeks also inhered in their political systems, notably those of Athens, it's aristocratic, oligarchic and later democratic forms. The oligarchic was the historical as well as the ideological mean in terms of just distribution of power between the unequal (aristocratic) and excessively equal(the democracy), as Aristotle bears out¹¹, both antipodes weakening the soundness of the state. The beginnings of the idea of the democracy, which led to it's homogenized and effeminate present-day derivation can be seen as the epitome of moderation in the Homeric myth-based scene painted on the Attic

⁹ 0.43m in ht.

¹⁰ 490-500 B.C, ht.0.26m, Diosphos painter, Paris, Louve

¹¹ Politics, ch.3, sec.8

red-figure cup from 490/80¹²(before a democratic constitution was established in Athens). On the front of this cup is a scene of conflict with Ajax *vis-à-vis* Hektor arguing over the weapons of the dead Achilles and on the opposite side Athena, as just arbitrator, resolving the *stasis* by way of a vote. No recourse was had to render a verdict, and, by this objective means, moderation prevailed, perhaps conditioning the political outlook of the perceiver; an outlook which Democritus would have had.

Such a traditionalist attitude of the Athenian statesman philosopher carried over into his maxims. It was Democritus' belief that "The good things of youth are strength and beauty but the flower of age is moderation." [294]. The *gymnastike* element of education having it's place, the lacunae in a young Greek's education had to be filled, and this was with Aristotle's first philosophy, Theology (religion). Who was to fill it but the elders, those habituated to knowledge through a long life, whose moral obligation and duty it was to counsel their juniors as to the nature of piety among other things. An amphora by the Antimenes painter from 520 B.C¹³ illustrates the practice with an old man, his grandson and father(or brother) the latter who is a hoplite soldier inspecting the liver of a sacrifice to determine whether or not the signs are favourable. The elder is gesturing for the boy to attend to how it is accomplished, the "why" being implicitly acknowledged by each party. All the elements of education in balance a moderate way of life is begun, open to the ameliorating benefit of experience.

The pictorial art on vase-ware between the late archaic and the late classical periods thus was infinitely practical and even utilitarian in it's civic influence, always having a purpose for the practical minded Greeks.

¹² signed "Douris", diameter a.34m, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches museum

¹³ Attic black-figure amphora, ht.0.41m, Boulogne-sur-mer-, Chateau musée

Nothing could be said to have met the Greeks demand for demonstration more adequately than the larger-than-life¹⁴ statues which were their idealized representations: their gods and heroes. These had a similar moral quality as the vase scenes and it was shown immediately in the semblance of comportment of the representation, rather than in a scene pregnant with meaning which had to be extracted in reflection. The moral quality was thus a unity rather than a plurality, each carrying this in the noble look¹⁵ it bore which was very often as true to life in its physical aspect as to appear invested with a psychological one¹⁶. This psychological aspect reflected the emotions of the Greek character, which were typically absent, a source of self-glorification and pride, distinguishing themselves from those who succumbed to the vacillations of emotion rather than remaining moderate, the barbarians.

These statues came to be formed from the canonical idea of *symmetria*, that of balanced, true anatomical proportion, of which Polykletos, a famous sculptor of the fifth century, was said to have written a treatise, and exemplified in his "Doryphoros" which bore "the same name of canon"¹⁷ (which means "measuring rule"). *Symmetria* was the abstract objectivity of the body as reduced to a geometrical construction, a unity formed from numerical proportion, each body part assigned a relative dimension¹⁸. (ie: from the base of the chin to the top of the forehead equalled one tenth the total height of the figure).

¹⁴ averaging 6'9"

¹⁵ ie: Doryphoros of Polykletos and Aphrodite of Melos (head), the latter in the Louvre, Paris

¹⁶ The bronze seated Hermes from Herculaneum being one such example.

¹⁷ Claudius Galenus Galen (c.130-c.201), from Carpenter, pg.102

¹⁸ Rhys Carpenter hashed this canon out in his "Greek Sculpture", pg.92-109. ref to R.Bianchi-Bandinelli in the series "Quaderni per lo dil'Archaeologia", I.Policletto (Florence, 1938)

The practical nature of these statues is a clear indication of the status they held of gods and heroes. As dedications to the gods, they embodied all the superhuman qualities related in Homer and Hesiod¹⁹, concrete reminders for the Greeks to be aware of their fallibility. The looming Bronze Zeus or Poseidon of Artemision, housed in the Athens National Museum²⁰ is a powerful display of this superior contrast. Yet as can be seen in the bronze charioteer of Delphi from between c.478-4 B.C²¹ the Greeks attempted to approximate these qualities in the human quasi-heroic exploits of athletics, the statue being a typical *athlon* of one such competition.

The following question may be posed: Did the Greeks overstep the boundaries of morality and play the part of the *hybristis* in their competitive nature and national pride as Hellenes, or did the idea of the gods serve to regulate these Icarian aims? Their works of art provide the answer that it was their moderate way of life that allowed them to take pleasure in it as “moderation multiplies pleasure; and increases pleasures.”[211]²²

¹⁹ Theogony

²⁰

²¹ 5' 11", Delphi museum, bronze w/copper lips/eyelashes, silver headband and onyx eyes

²² Democritus

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"These are Desperate times"-or-"The Panicky Days of Our Lives"



This essay is an investigation into the symptoms of capitalism as theorized by Gorz, Jameson and Baudrillard, their negative critique of the present epoch of history and of Marxist and other modernist's positive proposals for socio-political and economic change. The three theorists also put forth a positive proposal (often drawing on their modernist antecedents) and I will attempt to detail and evaluate these below with special emphasis placed on the role of the media in capitalist societies and its consequences on individuals.

Andre Gorz's critique of Marx's "scientific socialism" (67) claims that there has been a historical divergence since Marx's time as the workers have been completely alienated from their labor and are thrown into it as an exteriority into something pre-given (the system of multi-national capitalism). Such an expanse of capitalism (which corresponds to Jameson and Mandel's theory of 'Late Capitalism') engenders a new class of post-industrial proletarians who have virtually supplanted the traditional working class, making of them a minority (69). Work, for this new class, is considered as an oppressive necessity and insofar as it contributes to the *summum bonum* is obsolete, widespread automation and the technological transformation of the means of production being the culprit (71). The production of the essential and the inessential through (and in conjunction with) technological development (/automation) renders the production or facilitation of production absurd (72), and to pervasive commodification. This, according to Jameson (74), signifies in a Marxist vein a purer stage of capitalism as technology and capitalism are correlated in direct proportion, a development in one signifying that in the other (55).

The ethos of this “non-class”, a motley group of individuals who work part-time, is “free subjectivity”(73) and in it Gorz places hope for a “post-industrial revolution”(75-89). It is a non-class as it , in contradistinction to the Marxist proletariat, has no class-being to reject, and is free, as “it plays no part in the production[only the reproduction] of society” and therefore views society’s development as alien to itself(73). Alien and oppressive, but a worldwide (or nationwide) takeover it is indifferent to as what interests it is its own cultivation, namely the cultivation of a “sphere of individual sovereignty”(80) which will be discussed later.

Why Gorz places no faith in a proletarian revolution is obvious-it (this class) has disappeared; why he thinks the same of socialism is because:

“[Its specificity] lies in [politics pre-determination] as an objective chosen by the Collectivity”(77)

Wherein each and all’s goals/activities are constituent elements of, and adaptations to , the collective goal. The problem is to define it which he claims is dubious if not impossible. “Even pluralism”, he says(78), requires planning and for this a state is needed. This reveals the tension of Laclau and Mouffe’s Radical Democratic Pluralism and its necessarily hegemonic and unaccommodative nature, for: any theory which totalizes will “never be the expression of a common civic will”(ibid.) insofar as it precludes difference, and to state that everyone must advocate democratic values is a contradiction as the theoretical level, the practical being necessarily statist and institutional, ie: power concentrated and not *realiter* dispersed, only *idealiter*.

Gorz rejects socialism/communism on the premises that: there is a difference between the scale of communal life and the social totality and this precludes the utopian

ideals of equal labor time and widespread communal life; also, society as a whole must remain embodied in a system of “institutional organizations” to ensure its regulation(76). Finally, individuals (unlike the proletariat) do not produce society by starting from themselves but merely adapt to the system as a pre-given totality(ibid.).

In terms of economy “the plan [of socialism] has no advantage over the market”(78-9), but points of view can be fabricated. The capitalist free market presents itself as a necessary moment in the democratic ideology(having its theoretical origins in Locke’s political treatise and Smith’s laissez faire bourgeois economics). This, in Baudrillard¹ is the “democratic alibi” in which “consumption presents itself as a democratic social function”(ibid.), something to be pursued in the capacity of a consumer in the name of an anthropological function of “human needs”, a “universal” that is the right of each and all, equally to participate in the free market as a consumer. Thus democracy supports capitalism when construed in this left(or right) liberalist way and creates, through an ideological genesis, an illusion of equality and a “summit where all would enjoy the same prestigious standing(60), obscuring the real class rifts. Baudrillard targets the upper classes , those possessed of greater abstract value in the form of property and other forms of wealth, as the culprits of this democratic illusion, stating that it results in the assignation of this ‘right’ or ‘privilege’(actually an ideological construction which plays itself out on the free market) to the “irresponsible classes”(61), namely, those without power who are thus rendered subservient in their “slave morality”(having rights only for procurement and enjoyment not responsibility unlike the ‘master’ moralists, those with the powers of decision)>

¹ Sign function and Class Logic, pp.57-8, 60

The hope for genuine democracy lies, according to Gorz, in the sphere of "individual sovereignty"(80) which is not based upon consumption but rather upon creative activities that affirm individual sovereignty as it should exist. Such creation at the hands of individuals is gone about independent of or in liberation from the ties of possessive individualism and its functional-rationality which is necessarily aligned with capitalism. Such is the hope anyway.

The reality of why there is no autonomy is theorized by Baudrillard in "The Ideological Genesis of Needs"(63). There he discusses why individuals are being assimilated into the melting pot of consumption as consumers and why, how and by whom a productivist/consumerist mentality(based upon efficiency, satiety of 'needs', etc.) is generated. "consumption", he says(63) is a "thoroughly vulgar metaphysic" entailing a subject motivated by needs and confronted by real objects as sources of satisfaction. The object of consumption "finds meaning...in a hierarchical code of signification"(64) and is thus charged with sign value. What governs and determines these sign values is the code, regulating the social logic of exchange(66). Like Saussure these become floating signifiers (forms of 'content') which are meaningful in their "differential relation to other signs"(ibid.). And with the equation of the subject and the object in a gigantic tautology(71), subject's(consumers) are defined by their needs(objects) and this constitutes the "vulgar metaphysic"(63) which reduces individual autonomy to a bound variable in a system of sign exchange.

A consequence of this "meretricious legitimacy of needs and satisfactions"(72) by economic and social science is the repression of the question of the purpose or the value of productivity and thereby, under cover of an anthropological axiom, production and

consumption replicate one another in all spheres of human activity. This is what fosters pervasive commodification. Ideological, "outside of the competitive sphere there are no autonomous needs"(77), consumers being invested with this character in relation to their participation within a free market [conceived both socially(sign form) and economically(commodity form) these forms, when exchanged, resulting in a coalescence of exchange and in competition and consumerism] in which they exchange "objects, ideas, even conduct..."(ibid.). This becomes sign exchange as all are given a value as signs. "[N]eeds" he continues, are defined as a necessary function in individuals by the system(by ideology) and are generated by it to facilitate its reproduction(82). Therefore it would appear that an ideology of needs is absurd and only a theory of the ideological concept of need ala Baudrillard would make any sense. The purpose of such a theory is a negative critique of capitalism and its doctrine of values, to "overcome the ideological understanding of consumption[ic:as satiety of needs and as craving, and] to surpass [it] in order to define consumption not only structurally as a system of exchange and of signs, but strategically as a mechanism of power"(85).

Baudrillard calls the consequences upon this doctrine's adherents "controlled desublimation"(ibid.) wherein individuals are governed by a "pleasure principle entirely controlled by production planning"(ibid.). His conclusion is that this anthropology of needs is mythological, another product of capitalism and because of this use value (contrary to Marx) finds its replacement in sign and exchange value. Baudrillard's positive proposal is that we escape this metaphysical snare and the crusoist myth of need-based anthropos.

Gorz agrees with much of what Baudrillard said (so far as can be gleaned from the text) stating that the industrialization of the private sector (and all of its ostensibly autonomous activities) is designed to generate capitalist profits(84). The blame is also to fall on the shoulders of technology (in the form of video games, the internet and other media devices serving 'autonomous activities') which serves the "productivist criteria of profitability, speed and conformity to the norm"(ibid.). This is the commodification of the sphere of individual sovereignty, the hope of Gorz, reducing work(and its productivism) to the level of a secondary inclusion in human life through the amplification of a familial/communal oriented ideology, and "inversion" of the relationship as it exists at present between 'private' and 'public' sphere to end "political economy" and realize "post-industrial socialism"(80). Thus the revolution adapts itself to the present and is situated in this autonomous sphere, not in the work place, in a non-class. But with everything commodified the present seems to overshadow any such future however realistic or utopian its actualization.

Gorz's diagnosis of this new age brought to light the transition away from "classical capitalism", namely the primacy of industrial production and the omnipresence of class struggle" which Jameson theorized in his article "Post-modernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism", as a further development of Capitalism, a *puer* stage"(15) of which Post-modernism is an echo of and a response to(both culturally and politically).

Why has "aesthetic production today...become integrated into commodity production generally"? Why is Post-modern culture, as defined by Jameson the expression of an economic and cultural dialectic? He answers these questions through

implicating a cause, namely "American military and economic domination throughout the world..."(ibid). Is this purely Americanization or Westernization, the cause not being so singular (in terms of geography) but singular in terms of trans-nationality? Such a diagnosis on Jameson's part seems restrictive but sound otherwise. The symptoms of Post-modernism are, among others, a pervasive "depthlessness"(58) a superficialization of culture via a transformation of art into commodities and vice versa. This depthlessness gives an answer as to why there is a widespread apathy amongst individuals. "The waning of affect"(60), namely the negation of the individual ego in anonymity(through immensity of population) is Jameson's term for the consequent (to Capitalism) negation of feeling ('affect') and further consequent apathy. How and why it arises is through "producers of culture" creating a pastiche of past art forms in a homogenized way, and "imitation of dead styles"(64). Also being a part of this depthlessness is the predominance of the spatial over the temporal and a departure from genuine history, yet another symptom of Late Capitalism in which "the past has become a vast collection of images, a multitudinous photographic simulacrum"(66), "the identical copy for which no original ever existed"², a simulacral identity. Another question: why have we entered a 'new' epoch wherein historicity is to be found in pop images and simulacra(as in Hollywood) exclusively(71)?

The historical event is for Baudrillard "invented and manipulated by the simple operation of *the code*"(159) what Best and Kellner claim to be a typically vague and undertheorized term(117). What is the code? The fact that, as Jameson had said(66) "exchange value has been generalized" to the eclipse of use value renders our culture(emanating from the occident) simulacral as in such society "models or codes[of

² Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulations*, pg.147

what constitutes status; what tier on the hierarchy of value something is as in Baudrillard's "Sign Function and Class Logic"]structure experience"(119) and form the hyper-real, "the generation of models, of a real without origin or reality"³; this situation or fact is the code. This 'code' occurs through the inherence of the sign in the commodity form (by virtue of the fact that they are both form) so that it assumes "the effect of signification"(ibid.) and these (signs) worm their way into the commodity form through the same ideological process of abstraction to the level of form(ibid.), in the "entrenchment in a system of signs"(98), in the "abstract equation of signifier[form] and signified[content]"(146). This is the metaphysics of the sign. All value forms, therefore, become signifiers floating in the code, a generalization of exchange value⁴ across the borders of what was once modernity(ie: the semi-autonomy of the cultural sphere, pg.87). This, with Jameson, reveals itself in the "crisis of historicity"(71) in which the subject loses temporal organization(though Habermas in the philosophical discourse of modernity would disagree) through reliance upon spatial categories. The author (Jameson) puts forward a positive proposal for "[d]isalienation"(89), for a "practical reconquest of a sense of place" and this is to be found in cognitive mapping. This term Jameson gleans from Althusser's redefinition of ideology(89), namely the "subject's imaginary relationship to his or her real conditions of existence"(90) and this requires "the coordination of existential data(the empirical position of the subject) with unlived, abstract conceptions of the geographic totality"(ibid.), our relationship to 'social space' in the form of our lived relationship (albeit unbeknownst to many) to "local, national and international class realities"(91). But what is confusing about Jameson's 'position' is

³ Ibid., pg.169

⁴ Jameson,pg.66

whether or not he endorses it, putting into the mouths of historicists the historical contingency of "living ideologies"(ibid.) and that there are times(for whatever reason) when these cannot be 'lived' and that is the case with the present situation. But I suppose he does endorse cognitive mapping as feasible in the present with his belief in the eclipse of "History"(71) by a simulacral culture of pop images. Also he goes on propounding this aesthetic practice(92) as an individual's situating himself in the "global system", the "world space of multinational capital"(ibid.) so as to overcome the spatial (at the cognitive level) and social (at the ideological) confusion and to become more political active. But the question is: if this space is simulacral, now can it be mapped? In "Simulacra and Simulations"(169), Baudrillard claims the map precedes the territory not vice versa, which I would take to mean the code's determination of reality as an ideological production or reproduction of meanings (sign values) which are exchanged across socio-political lines of communication⁵ and which embed themselves in consciousness as the standard of right perception, of reality, what Baudrillard calls the hyper-real. This is the ideological genesis of simulacra and "present-day simulators[like the media] try to make the real...coincide with their simulation models"(170). Such simulators perhaps, manifest themselves most clearly in the media. By virtue of their form, Mass media "fabricate non-communication"(169). This is Baudrillard's response to McLuhan who would have media technology reappropriated under democratic auspices. It is not their content that requires change, the "only revolution lies in restoring the possibilities of response"(170) and thereby subverting the code generated by these simulation modules which cannot(his response to Hans Magnus Enzensberger) be a means of subversion in their present state as their form is totalitarian. The fact that mass

⁵ -or non-communication as in "requiem for the media"

media (or media in particular such as radio or newspapers) are ideology generators, dispensers of models, is most readily perceived not in the content of commercials and propagandist messages but in the form of the media which present these. Jameson's theoretical divergence from the 'code' can be gleaned from his statement that "technology is not the ultimately determining instance of our present-day social life or of our cultural production(75). The problem lies, rather, with our "faulty representation" of the global system of multinational capitalism(ibid.). To this Baudrillard would say: But what controls 'right' perception but the model? "[P]recession of simulacra(169). Our representation is altered by media to which there is no response and as a consequence of this, an active stance towards them is precluded. This is why Jameson believes our present situation is a post-modern(as aesthetically based) and not a (technologically based) post-industrial one. And yet their theses are quite similar, only Jameson pursues a cultural and politico-economic path wherein, in his analysis of post-modernity, there has occurred (here he shows his Marxist orientation)_ "a prodigious expansion of capital into hitherto uncommodified areas..[an] original penetration and colonization of nature and the unconscious..."(74). For this reason the problem of aesthetic representation or cognition is dealt with as a possible lever to political action. We, Jameson believes, cannot rely on socializing the means of production(88) as these same have, with Gorz, exponentiated to the point of being superfluous(producing that which is unnecessary). Moreover the unrepresentable apparatus of technology and multi-national space(economic/political institutions) is base upon "machines of reproduction rather than production"(75) and this is why we must conceive of new models of representation so as to situate ourselves in the present and (perhaps with Enzensberger and McLuhan)

reappropriate these means of reproduction (computer networks, etc.) for the realization of socialism. And yet Baudrillard objects as is seen in an example in "The Spirit of Terrorism"(2) of the hacker who destroyed a vast communications network. According to him anyone oppressed by a power as hegemonic as the States at present would turn terrorist and in terrorism there is not a "purely destructive logic"(6) but a negation of the negation and hence an affirmation, a clearing away of relations of oppression. But to turn subversive through utilizing the 'medium as message' would be to turn the event into an "image event"(ibid.) and to mediate it for consciousness, to render its spectators (in the case of visual media) passive.

Though individual transgression ala Baudrillard's conception of everyone as potentially criminal (in relation to a hegemon and its laws) is fine, it doesn't seem sufficient when the grand scale of multi-national capitalism is (if it can be) acknowledged. Thus the Radical Democratic Pluralism of Laclau and Mouffe provides itself as an alternative *most* accommodative to difference. Their conception of the N.S.M preservation of unity under democracy and its values and autonomy, each legitimizing itself as worthwhile is one such example. This purports to be an anti-essentialist theory, unlike Marxism or Socialism, which, through its escape from the discourse of foundations (ie:essentialism) enables it to achieve its goals under a horizon of democratic discourse and values. This identity preservation, coupled with the democratization of the means of production and economic transformations made trans-nationally, would precipitate Radical Democratic Pluralism. But how can the means of production be democratized if, by their very form, they are totalitarian? And here I am also referring to media production (or rather reproduction) of the ideological model, this through

encouraging a passive attitude in the receiver of the message/medium, their being disempowered through the ignorance and lack of critical reflection fostered by this same. An a "transformation of capitalism"?⁶Insofar, as Baudrillard would agree, as it exists, it is by nature hegemonic and alienating, fostering (with Gorz) relations of dependency and oppression. To control capitalism and its media organs is simply to displace oppressive power in more hands:

[One cannot] take power over media ... unless the monopoly of speech is broken; and one cannot break the monopoly of speech if one's goal is simply to distribute it equally to everyone" (170)⁷

It is this McLuhanist reappropriation that seems to be advocated by Laclau and Mouffe and , moreover, is perhaps fostered by capitalism itself through everyone's becoming simultaneously producer (of goods, services, or media messages) and consumer. Democracy construed in this manner acts as the alibi of capitalism. Baudrillard would recommend a transformation of media forms and not the dispersion of their control and alteration of content, for this leads straight away to propaganda, hegemony and commodification, to the perpetuation of the code of sign exchange, values and simulacra.

⁶ Smith, pg. 11

⁷ Baudrillard, "requiem for the media"

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" THE RIGHTS OF [REDACTED] " PRIVILEGE

In Athenian society the rights of its inhabitants depended upon status as can be gleaned from the two cases "In Reply to Euboulides" and "Against Nieara". The status classifications were fourfold: either one was a citizen(1), (2) a resident foreigner or *metik*, and either(3) a slave or (4) an alien(*xenos*) and each category had criteria all of which are self-explanatory with the exception of citizenship.

In accordance with Periklean law (promulgated in 451/0 B.C.E) both parents¹ of an individual had to possess citizen rights, which meant that both of their parents-the child's grandparents- were legal Athenian citizens and this was as far as "mandatory lineage" extended as the condition of citizenship. Prior to Periklean law one parent having his/her parents Athenian citizens sufficed to make for a legitimate child, whereas now legitimacy was a product of wedlock (*engue* or *engye*) between legal citizens.

One exception to this rule that was treated with grave respect as will shortly be seen, was the award of citizenship to *xenoi*. This award was subject to the following conditions: (1) "excellent conduct"[B-89] towards the Athenians qua nation-state, (2) the validity or confirmation of which depended upon the tally of 6,000 secret ballots in favour of the conferrance of this honor-which they prized highly-(3) this conferrance being subject to *paragraphe*(the procedure for objection) brought forward by a citizen feeling that the granting of this status contravened the laws. A noteworthy example of this is recorded in B concerning the Plataians[104] which also affords us an example of the extremes to which the Athenians went in their guardianship of this privilege. This group of *xenoi* from another *polis* assisted the Athenians at the battle of Marathon and were thus deemed "benefactors"[93] eligible to receive the gift of citizenship status. As the speech relates, a rigorous scrutiny of each Plataian was conducted and, although benefactors they had to confirm their merits. This suggests the presence of an "us vs. them" dynamic in Athenian social convention, its citizens equating "us" with superiority; a superiority jealously guarded. They were, however, as another condition (4) exempt from any archonship or priesthood although these were open to their offspring.

If challenged, one's claim to citizenship had to have been supported by proofs which in turn must be evidential. These evidential proofs also had to have been based on concrete associations to Athens(such as genealogical ties-"relatives", living or dead) although persuasive argument was a conventional standby as the cases illustrate, both defendants being prosecuted as aliens(*xenoi*) masquerading as citizens.

In A the defendant has been "voted out"[11] of his *deme* on the condition that he is not a citizen, and he would contest the verdict as null because the pre-condition of submitting the vote to the "whole *deme*"[14] was allegedly falsified through weighing the ballot without everyone having voted. Another proof he adduces is that he wouldn't have been allowed to hold office as *phratriarch* to which he was elected[23] if he hadn't already have been scrutinized under *phratry*, kin, *deme* and *genos*. These proofs comprise his defence against having been voted out of his *deme*, and of his rightful claim to citizenship.

Next in his defence he gives genealogical background on both of his parents sides, some of which is disputable in its lack of concrete backing. His father, he claims, had been given property by the latter's "relatives"[20] and that if no such bond existed neither would a share in the property. Property was a tangible form of wealth and perhaps this

¹ Euboulides=A(here [17])

Nieara=B, hereafter expressed in this manner for the sake of brevity

was a reason why citizenship was so jealously guarded, only Athenians being able to possess it (property). The more substantial part of this argument is that only citizens in the legal sense could own property within the city and the defendant has his statements corroborated by *diamartyria* (witness testimony). The final nail in the coffin of his father's alleged *xenoi*-status is that the defendant's siblings (his father's children and thus perhaps his mother's as well) are buried in an ancestral tomb within the city's limits.

The evidence he puts forth that his mother is a citizen is of the negative kind and hypothetical. Firstly he claims his mother is a ribbon-seller in the *Agora*[31] which can be readily verified by any citizen. If she were a non-citizen she wouldn't be permitted to work there as is proven by Solonic law and the later laws of Aristophanes. If she were a foreigner the "foreigner's tax (*xenikion*) would have been levied against her which could be verified in the records of market taxes. Finally, if she were a slave her purchaser, the man who sold her or another "should" have testified for or against her status claim. These hypotheticals exclude all other possibilities and questions as to her status. The defendant also claims he has ancestral ties to known citizens[37]-his mother's father and others-who are buried in the public tombs.

An interesting fact is that the defendant's mother is Nikarete who was the owner of Nieara and this might have served as Euxitheos' defence, the condemnation of Nieara and Stephanos by Apollodoros who is incidentally a distant relative of Euxitheos.² Either way the two cases are interdependent.

The other provision of Perikles' legal reforms with respect to citizenship invalidation is his marriage law (451/0 B.C.E) which legislates that marriages between citizens and aliens are null and that any offspring had therein are considered non-citizens.³ In order for a marriage to be formalized and legitimate, the woman's *kyrios* would give his permission uniting the two in *engue/engye* (betrothal), a civil life "procedure" having legal ramifications. In fact the validity of marriage depended on this process as well as a dowry formality the absence of which was used as evidence that no marriage had taken place as in the present case. Those who participated in relationships of concubinage didn't require *engue* and these issues all centered around that of the citizen status of Nieara are what the second case is essentially about.

The charge laid against the defendant Apollodoros is a *graphe xenias* in that he is living with an alien in contravention of this law [B-16] under which the indictment is brought forth before the *Thesmothetai*. The penalties for this law differ for men and women and "the same [machinations are] to apply" in either case, except in the latter the penalty is a fine of 1,000 *drm* and not slavery and confiscation of property (a third of which going to the successful prosecutor), and both express the prejudices Athenians held towards their "inferiors" non-citizens.

The evidential proofs (based themselves on *diamartyria* and ready to handle traceable evidence) are as follows: Theonnestos, prosecuting on behalf of Apollodoros claims Nieara was owned as a slave[23] by Nikarete and sold twice, once to Stephanos which confirms that if not at the present time then at one point she was a non-citizen (she could later have been granted her freedom which would make her a citizen) and that she worked as a courtesan which latter seems to imply non-citizen (*metik* or *xenoi*) status, and this is proved by her being required "to post bail before the polemarch as an alien." [49].

² Carey, pg.215- genealogical chart-

³ Plutarch's "Perikles" in Macdowell, pg.87

The issue of Phrastor (a citizen) and his marriage to Nieara's alleged daughter Phano provides more persuasive evidence (*entechnoi pisteis*) that Nieara is an alien although it leads nowhere as entailing a presupposition that she is in fact an alien, and is thus more an appeal to belief based upon her reputation than hard evidence. Phrastor claims he was "tricked at the betrothal"[51] as he also "learned" that she was Nieara's daughter and not Stephanos' which was the defendant's claim and, in withholding the dowry after ejecting her and a *dike sitou* brought against her by Stephanos, her kyrios, who represented her as a "legal minor" in the trial, as in the one under discussion, which suggests the status of Women was such that they were viewed as incapable of asserting their own rights. This conflict of claims led to a countersuit (*graphe paranomon*) in response to Stephanos' one for maintenance (not keeping a wife) against him after ejecting Phano, one in which Phrastor prosecuted Stephanos for claiming that his "alien" children are actually legal citizens and it was open for Phrastor to demand proof of this in the form of *basanos* (slave torture)[120]. Phrastor's suit under the law specified in [52] would have, if successful, resulted in the confiscation of Stephanos' property (with one third going to Phrastor) and his disfranchisement. A settlement was reached as Theomnestos claims on Apollodoros' behalf, the penalty surely would have been effected.

More persuasive argument which would confirm Nieara's alien status was Phrastor's attempt at rejecting his son by Phano in his *genos*[56-9] which failed as a result of his reputed status as the grandson of an alien woman. Phrastor's refusal to take the oath confirming his son's eligibility and his respect towards it[63] in addition to his marrying another woman of citizen birth suggest his belief in his son's illegitimacy as a citizen.

Another episode related as evidence by the prosecution is Stephanos' attempt to prosecute Epainetos for the seduction of Nieara (*graphe moichaia*) in front of the *Thesmothetai*. This suit was countered by the defendant with *paragraphe*, and in citing the law forbidding the seizure of "a man as a seducer with any women who sit in a brothel or parade publically"[67] one suit annulled another as they resolved their dispute by way of a settlement. The implication here is that Nieara could not be the victim (or accomplice) of *moichaia* as residing in a brothel as a prostitute.

Yet more evidence is cited in Nieara's daughter Phano's public marriage to Dionysos, a proof which could cut both ways either confirming or disconfirming citizen status, a woman's citizen status also being contingent on her ability to participate in state religious festivals which was also one of her few privileges. Theomnestos claims on Apollodoros' behalf that such an action transgresses the "oath of the venerable women"[78] and that as the *Areopagos*, when it found out about the alleged fact of alien status "was inclined to punish theogenes (yet another tricked into marrying Phano) to the limit's of it's power." [80] out of respect for the oath as they married in contravention of Perikles' law.

Thus "Against Nieara" relies heavily upon persuasive evidence as it's crutch of support whereas "In Reply to Euboulides" deals more frankly with concrete evidence and is more convincing while in the process, circumstantially, facts about Athenian citizenship and civic ideology relating to it are discovered.

Sexual violence in Classical Athens fell into two *prima facie* ambiguous categories: adultery and rape. Both were considered forms of *hubris* as outraging or insulting the sexual honour (time) of the victim(husband, wife, free males and females). The fact that *hubristic* acts defeated the “values of honour and shame”¹ the Athenians venerated, rendered them the most serious of offences. As a public offence, one against society as violating the above honour of the Athenian collective and it’s moral principles², *hubris* was prosecuted through a *graphe* (public suit) and in cases of rape it was open for any citizen(*ho boulomenos*-“he who wishes”) to bring a charge against an offender. Another stipulation of the law of *hubris* was that no restrictions on the proposed penalty were available, that a case was *agon atimetos*, the prosecutor being at liberty to propose to the *Areopagos*(in cases of adultery) any penalty he wished.

A *dike biaion*(“private suit for violence”) was one charge brought against an alleged offender for having “coercive sexual intercourse rape)”³ with free men, women or children. He was then subjected, on conviction, to a monetary penalty⁴, which Carey, Cohen, Fisher and Macdowell agree contrary to Harris that this fact indicates the greater seriousness of the crime of adultery for which the penalty(or punishment) was unrestricted as said above. Rape could also be prosecuted through a *graphe hubreos*, a public suit, which act demonstrated to the public the seriousness of the affair should it be wished to be exposed by the plaintiff. An example of a penalty for rape is cited in Macdowell⁵ for the violation of free women which amounted to one hundred *drachma(e)*. A fine was set against the offence paid to the woman’s husband or *kyrios* who

¹ Cohen, “Law, Sexuality and Society”.pg.161

² Fisher

³ Cohen, Ch.7,pg.143, “Law, Violence, and Community in Classical Athens”

⁴ Harris

⁵ pg.s 124-30

represented her and brought the action forth on her behalf plus an equivalent amount to the state which shows the state has also been wronged through this action and must be remunerated accordingly.

Why was rape considered a hubristic act? Fisher provides an answer in defining the essence of *hubris* as an intentional attack on the *time*(honour) of another⁶, having the ramification of inflicting shame or public humiliation on the victim. The legal distinction between *hubristic* acts and those of *aikia* (violence) becomes clear especially in the case of “A reply to Simon”⁷ in which the issue is an act of homosexual *hubris* which Cohen⁸ distinguishes from heterosexual *hubris* (“behaviour damaging the sexual honour or reputation of a free person or family”). Heterosexual *hubris* is dichotomized as follows according to Cohen: (1) using free males in sexual services and (2) holding a boy under one’s control. The first constitutive factor doesn’t apply as the particular boy is a slave-as *basanos* could be employed against him to yield “truthful” evidence. **B**[33]-. But number two does, the defendant being prosecuted by the charge of “*trauma ek pronoias*”[“wounding with intent (to kill)” or intentional homicide] before the *Areopagos*, whose jurisdiction was, at the time of this speech, over homicide cases and those concerning wounding with intent to kill, “intent[applying] to a wound[only if] the person inflicting it [wanted] to kill.”**B** [41

The little control possessed by the victim of a rape reduced the crime’s seriousness, even though it qualified as a *hubristic* act.⁹ E.M.Harris objects to this scholarly consensus on the grounds that **A**, formerly used as evidence to confirm this

⁶ ch.II,pg.126

⁷ hereafter **B**; Eratosthenes **A**; Nieara **C**

⁸ “Law, Sexuality and Society: The Enforcement of Morals in Classical Athens”, pg.175

⁹ Harris

opinion, is a biased case as it is a defence written by a skilled *rhetor*, Lysias, for a client of his. Through scholarly conjectures Harris reaches the verdict that the Areopagos, before which this case was tried, doesn't punish adultery/seduction with the extreme penalty of death, contrary to the defendant Euphiletos' assertion, which was a rhetorical ploy. Seduction, he concludes, was of equivalent seriousness to rape although a *graphe hubreos* could be brought forth against the *moichos* leaving the death-penalty option open and thus perhaps reinstating the former scholarly consensus, as rape was an offence admitting of a restricted penalty, was *agon atimetos* and the seriousness of hubris or hubristic acts is also garnered from the penalizing of the litigant in event of false accusation.

C.Carey counters Harris' rebellious theory that rape was an offence equivalent to adultery through precisely delineating the nature of rape and adultery which has the result of lending weight to the consensus of opinion. Adultery, he affirms- and he would affirm with the Athenians in ideology- was a worse offence. However with the major premise that *moicheia* is defined as "illicit sex other than with a man's wife", contrary to Cohen, Carey, in-so-far as I understand, contraverts his whole theory, the wife being viewed by the Athenians as a sacrosanct figure, upon whom the future of their civilization rests, and so to treat adulterous activity with a wife with less than the utmost seriousness(unto death) is absurd. The following passage from **A** again raises the question:

"[A]nd the lawgiver was so convinced of the justice of this in the case of married women[-justified killing of the seducer-] that he imposed the same penalty in the case of concubines, which are of less importance."**A** [31]

Yet, Euphiletos the defendant goes on, a harsher penalty, if available would have been employed, which demonstrates the probable attitude the typical Athenian would have had apropos the seduction of his wife or the wife of his neighbour. With questions such as these left floating by themselves, Cohen's opinion that the law of adultery was misunderstood¹⁰ is clearly a sound one. In fact, Cohen defines *moicheia* quite differently, arriving at the conclusion that it was a "sexual violation of the marital relation", the *moichos* or adulterer was a *kakougos* (evil-doer) and only criminals so classified were subject to apagoge (citizen's arrest) which suggests that the public by and large had an interest in punishing the offender.

The seemingly obvious proof in favour of Carey's thesis that this offence was greater than rape is found in A [32]: "Those who use force [rape] deserve a lesser penalty than those who use persuasion [adultery]." Yet, Harris rebuts, the case is a biased one, rendering the "proof" dubious.

Carey distinguishes rape from adultery by appending the use of violence to the former, persuasion to the latter as adulterous acts played upon the corruptibility of a woman's mind and body¹¹, they being the typical victims of seduction and the means of effecting this was persuasion. A quote from the speaker in A, Euphiletos, corroborates this belief:

"persuasion corrupt[s] the woman's mind...so the whole household is in their power and it is uncertain whose the children are, the husband's or the seducer's." A [33]

¹⁰ "The Social Context of Adultery at Athens", pg.147

¹¹ Macdowell, pg.124

What the Athenian's attitude towards the seduction of free males or females under the age of eighteen was, or, in the case of the former, above, can only be speculated upon as the sources I've examined fail to touch on the subject. Rape however, does apply to all free citizens in addition to their women, the penalty for this being merely pecuniary. Cohen has his insights as to why adultery appealed to the seriousness of the Athenian mind¹². On pg.160 he refers to "the autonomy of the women's sphere" and her power to "destroy the reputation of a lineage" by begetting illegitimate children (nothoi). Also the fact that they required a purpose¹³ to leave the house, a sort of social sanction imposed on them to prevent the instigation of adulterous conduct, corroborates the thesis of Carey and common opinion among scholars relating to this issue. Cohen also question why the *moichos* would choose to practice his call when there were other readily available forms of sexual relationships existent. In answer he alludes to the "various motivations"¹⁴ of the offender, be it conquest or the notion of committing a taboo act, not simply the sexual gratification adultery yields. In his book "Law, Violence, and Community in Classical Athens" Cohen addresses the social meaning of adultery which more thoroughly details this social fact.

The fact that charges brought against *moicheia* (adultery) were public offences (*graphe*- "a written indictment for a public offence) thus forming a *graphe moicheis*(or *moikheias*) shows that hubristic offences against the person, namely the third party the husband and his family had over-reaching relevance from the private to the public sphere. This was so because the Athenians conceived of adultery as a moral as well as legal outrage, a *hubristic* act jeopardizing the legitimacy of the husband's offspring which

¹² "The Social Context of Adultery at Athens"

¹³ *ibid*, pg.141

¹⁴ *ibid*, pg.164

would in turn confuse the proper allocation of his will, *nothoi* (bastards) being exempt as members who can inherit (*anchiteia*), which could reduce them to poverty as well as legitimate female children or relatives who might thereby lack a *kyrios*, *nothoi* also being exempt from exercising *kyrieia*. Also the legitimate daughter of a man had to have been chaste for any potential marriages to be legally valid. Thus, according to Athenian belief, a slippery slope of ill-consequence would ensue by way of adulterous actions.

Euphiletos, in A, confirms the contemporary public's interest in punishing *moichoi*: "It is not I who shall kill you but the city's law." A [25]. This law he alludes to has been the source of much controversy among scholars¹⁵ whose collective view, from which Cohen differs, has been the orthodox one—that it is part of the Athenian adultery statute-. The alleged statute adduces the exculpatory conditions for the unintentional murder of a man engaging in "intercourse with [the murderer's] wife, or mother, or sister, or daughter, or concubine kept for the procreation of legitimate children...", that he isn't to be exiled. Cohen believes this statute is actually part of that of justifiable homicide, that it refers to any act of sexual intercourse which has incited murder, be it rape or adultery.

More evidence that adultery was a grievous public offence though happening to a private individual is found in C in this same so-called law on seduction:

"And when he [the husband] has caught the seducer, the person who has so caught him may not live in marriage with his wife; if he continues to live with her he is to be disfranchised..." C [87]

Here the man's obligation to set an example for other citizens and retain his *time*, to uphold the society's moral principles is clear. The fact that a penalty was imposed on

¹⁵ Cohen, "Law, Sexuality and Society: The Enforcement of Morals in Classical Athens", pg.100

those simply affected by the *hubristic* act of adultery, demonstrates the insulting nature of this conduct and seriousness of the crime in the opinion of contemporary Athenians.

The more direct extension of the law's punishment, to those parties actually engaged in the act is found in A [25] that, proceeding and admission of guilt on the *moichos*' behalf¹⁶ the husband and presumably the *kyrios* in cases of other free-female relations was legally permitted to (1) exact money from or (2) kill the offender. If no admission was made (always with witnesses present as the speaker implies [27]) a trial would be held in the *Delphinion*, the court which tried cases of justifiable homicide, one of homicide's three categories. With regards to the first penalty of monetary compensation, the offender who had admitted his guilt would be imprisoned until he could pay the stipulated amount or provide sureties guaranteeing payment or he could be held captive by the *kyrios* who would negotiate a ransom to be paid by these same, a practice that was subject to abuse¹⁷. If the alleged seducer succeeded in proving his innocence no penalty was inflicted and the sureties were exempted from paying also. A failure meant that the sureties had to deliver the seducer to his captor before the court who can invoke the maltreatment penalty "short of using a knife"¹⁸, to publicly defame the offender. Thus, although some scholars say this law admitted of self-help, others argue¹⁹ emphatically that the death penalty was carried out by state officials or under their jurisdiction.

The abuse of the so-called law on seduction (Which might have existed nevertheless, although no sources survive) could lead to a *paragraphe* ("countersuit") for

¹⁶ Arist. 52.1 "Athenian Politieia"

¹⁷ C [65]

¹⁸ *ibid*

¹⁹ Macdowell, pg. 134

false imprisonment as a seducer from whom money was extorted with the threat of bringing a *graphe moicheia* before the *Thesmothetai*, a suit which was open to any man beyond and including the age of eighteen (*ho boulomenos*).²⁰ The *paragraphe* brought against the man attempting to extort money from his victim by this same entailed the burden of the proof of his innocence and if it could be proven that his opponent was a blackmailer presumably a like penalty for blackmail would occur.²¹ An exculpatory condition for the seducer was the law forbidding the seizure of a man “as a seducer with any women who sit in a brothel or parade publicly.” C [67]

One certain incriminating fact we know from A [4] is that of the presence of hostility between the seducer and his killer, who could therefore not justifiably commit homicide under these conditions (if at all) or for the sake of profiting financially from the deed.

Although the law may have allowed the practice of self-help in the event of catching an adulterer *in flagrante delicto* as he posed an immediate potential threat, the option of *apagoge* (“leading away”)²², a summary arrest was available to exercise over the offender, bringing him before the Eleven for trial. However, the speaker in A [25] cleverly couches what might have been the law in his rhetorical speech by presupposing that after the *moichos*’ admission of guilt the options were as stated above [(1) and (2)] and that death was a customary punishment. Cohen believes that death was rarely the desired penalty which he perhaps gleans from C [65], for the maltreatment penalty stipulated the restriction of blood-letting, which in turn might deter the aggrieved

²⁰ Cohen, “Law, Sexuality and Society: The Enforcement of Morals in Classical Athens”, pg. 115

²¹ C [68]

²² Cohen, “the Social context of Adultery at Athens” pg. 147 and “Law, Sexuality and Society: The Enforcement of Morals in Classical Athens”, pg. 122

husband or *kyrios* from turning to the law and carrying out the punishment of death himself.

In the act of *moicheia* the woman who was seduced was considered by the Athenians as an accessory to the deed and was also to undergo punishment. If she was married she had to be divorced by her husband who would suffer disfranchisement if he didn't comply. However, the husband's penalty could only be imposed "if another citizen brought a lawsuit and proved that the husband was aware of the wife's adultery."²³ The husband may have had motives for not disclosing his wife's acts such as escaping the obligation to return his wife's dowry in the event of a divorce or the more noble one of preserving the belief that his children were legitimate, that they were in fact his and not the *moichos*'s. The Woman engaging in *moichos* was also forbidden to attend public religious ceremonies as she might pollute the sanctity of these environs (cause *miasma*, "pollution"). Also she was not permitted to wear jewellery as she might attract other men thereby polluting them. If she violated these penalties any one could slap and strip her publicly, or subject her to "any mistreatment with impunity, short of death." C [87]. Another reason for this legal severity was to prevent future occurrences preserving the women of Athens as the height of moderation and discretion. Euphiletos, in his defence, justifies this assertion:

"[N]obody is so lax as to think that those who are responsible for actions of this sort should obtain pardon or deserve lighter penalties." C [3]

Thus with regard to punishing sexual offences the Athenians considered their extreme measures firm but fair.

²³ J.Roy, pg.14

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Utilitarian dreams, moral nightmares

Responsible? (Social utility of the myth of the rational man)

Profe

The ideally rational person is in fact free from all legal sanctions. Such is the presupposition of the legislator and of the legal system throughout its pragmatic operations of maintaining and interpreting the law as the vehicle of civic utility and justice. This is one function of the mechanism of the rational myth, that all humans dwelling within the warming arms of government—"citizens"—are teleological thinkers who prize the means qua functioning society as the end, and as human destiny. One other function of this mechanism is ideological, purporting to alter the belief patterns of the masses through propagandistic tactics, winning them over to the popular agenda of all that is reasonable through these means. Both are necessary lies masquerading in the guise of truth each singing out the boisterous creed of utility, preserving the *summum bonum* in the mind's of it's adherents who constitute the vast majority. However, the individual considered as the summit of all human endeavour differs greatly from who he is *realiter*. Reason and rationality, though effective devices, must concede right of way to the overbearing nature of their supposed opposites which are the constituent factors of men.

This myth expresses the Pavlovian psychology of law, that it is our self-preservative instincts which dissuade us most of all from violating the liberty or pleasure or power of the next man in serving our own ends. Those who do not follow these dictates, those of reason, are the mongrels who receive the shocks, what has been called their just deserts¹. The myth has been used to dispel the problems arising between all legislative/legal acts and the individual's liberty. The logic of the myth is as follows: "The rational man does x. Everything the rational man does is legal. Therefore...". Or to express it negatively: "Everything the rational man forbids is forbidden by the law of government as the absolute rational being." Thus laws are created through the

¹ Feinberg, "What, if anything, justifies legal punishment", pg. 727-

anticipation of how the abstract rational man would act in a given situation, one which always occurs in the public realm, affecting it adversely; law being the response of civic intolerance to the anomalous person. This prohibiting action of the law, as Mill believed, shouldn't extend into the private sphere for the all-important sake of individual sovereignty². The only moral, and in a liberal democracy legal, restriction is on the individual's expression of his mind and body for others as creating a potential harm, the tacit agreement upon the principle of minding your own business being thrown out the window apropos the act. If the legally offensive act was the product of malicious intent the law assigns culpability to the offender who is correspondently punished or penalized³, depending on whether the law is violated in it's punitive or regulative aspect.

Sometimes, Feinberg argues, the pitiable bad-man "irrationality" or "unreason" runs amuck causing all sorts of crimes. It isn't the degree of intensity to which he usurps the mind from reason but of the duration of his stay that constitutes insanity, the "pitiable" individual in question being paternalistically forced or persuaded with the threat of force to avail himself of the state's psychiatric services to the great restriction of his overall liberty. It is this man's "incapability to conform to law"⁴ that formally excuses him from punishment or penalty at least in-so-far as he is a criminal, not a wacko, the latter being permissible under the given circumstances and also pitiable.

The degree to which penalties are enforced, however, depends upon the sum of it's complainants, and, in a liberal democracy the court of public opinion often decides the fate of the accused (in criminal law) be he guilty or innocent. It is the second mechanism of propaganda which achieves the wholesale indoctrination of the masses

² Mill, "On Liberty", pg.259

³ Feinberg, "The expressive function of punishment", pg.688-

⁴ Feinberg, "What is so special about mental illness?", pg.674

... serving to enlighten them with the ideal of reason and to dissuade them from rendering capricious and tyrannical judgments, making of them rational men and women. In contrariety to this state-authored theory of public mores, Kent Greenawalt⁵ calls upon the individual's inner "sense of justice" to use in accordance with what could be termed the intrinsic morality of man or "natural law", in voting in a jury-court setting independently of his fellow jurors, endeavouring not to be influenced by the tyranny of the majority.

But, the question is posed, does this same court influence him, the individual "criminal" or juror, redounding to his displeasure or causing harm to his person and livelihood? If so, than the very sound principle of J.S.Mill addressed above becomes the victim of an instance of *reduction ad absurdum*, the court of morality degenerating into that of tyranny, their judgment the expression of humanity's "retributive urge"⁶ An example of this moral corruption, though in part valid, is the-recently in the last forty years or so- liberal agenda of "Equal treatment and compensatory discrimination", discussed in Thomas Nagel's essay of the same name⁷. This ideology seems to subvert the most common-sensical principle of liberalism, namely "equal distribution qua quality and quantity", not just quality, the two categories of sex and race being the real operative factors in determining desert in a meritocratic society, which has transformed the meaning of the word merit into that of an adjective excluding the "average white male"⁸ from impartial consideration in blind admissions tests, application, etc.

These "compensator discrimination" standards , purporting to include minorities and not exclude majorities and yet suffering the defeat of this same, have produced the

⁵ "Jury nullification", pg.407

⁶ Parker, pg.596

⁷ pg.492-

⁸ *ibid*, pg.498

homogenization of society, foregoing the civic benefits of those endowed with merit to sate the ravenous ambitions of those who lack it. Indeed, attempting to balance liberty and equality in this manner upsets the foundations of morality itself and is thus wholly absurd. A quote from Dworkin⁹ sums up this topic nicely, as the: "class of persons whose freedom is restricted is identical with the class of persons whose benefit is intended."

The same principle covers the issue of mental illness and the insane which Feinberg has torn¹⁰ from the grip of vice in the context of a trial where it is often used as a defence to cover-up the self-interested motives or agendas of the accused, those necessary conditions of the rational man. He reasons that the insane man commits disinterested crimes yet neglects the very sound counter-example of the desire to commit a crime-in-itself, for it's own sake, no affectations of the person arising from the act, no pleasures or pains¹¹. Punishment as a criminal is what would be avoided through this deception (the insanity defence when sane) yet a form of punishment, as said above, will accrue to the "wrong-doer" nevertheless, whether the form be a jail-term or one in an institution, each subsumable under the head of "preventative detention". This is essentially the purpose of punishment, a Pavlovian mechanism of fear causing the deterrence of future crimes always with the rational man-the creation of governmental ideologues-as aegis.

How do we dole out punishment in just apportionment? Parker has devised a theoretical "device for determining blameworthiness"¹², which is the risk of harm created apropos the act. The question of blameworthiness admits of degrees ranging between the

⁹ "Challenge to self-determination", pg.273

¹⁰ "What is so special about mental illness"

¹¹ as in Gide's "Lafcadio's adventures"

¹² "Blame, punishment and the role of result", pg.594

extremes of recklessness and its antithesis negligence, the former having the greater culpability. Factors to be considered by the rational man in his capacity of judge or jury in deciding blame and its analog punishment are the event's circumstances, the agent's intentions and knowledge, intention possible in the absence of knowledge but not vice versa. In neither case, with the exception of proof of insanity, is the act legally excusable.

Punishment is essentially reprobative if it is to have any civic import and this is its main expressive function¹³. Qua condemnation "punishment has a symbolical significance"¹⁴ that of its and the law's vindication in the eyes of the majority and its expressed non-acquiescence¹⁵, which latter presupposes the guilt still to be proven and which it often prematurely effects. Feinberg concludes his essay with the maxim the punishment should fit the crime, which itself must be established with reason, that worthy faculty of the rational man.

His criticism of the social utility theory in another essay¹⁶ serves to question the justification of punishment, destabilizing the righteous basis of the state's agenda in answering that social utility regarded as an end lacks regard for the individual who, in being posited as a means, becomes lost and alienated in the amorphous mass of society in both a moral and legal sense (a prison or institution). Paraphrasing the harm principle that the "punishment of the guilty is at best a necessary evil justified only as a means to the prevention of evils even greater than itself"¹⁷, the state renders its version of justice through the legal mechanism of social control. Designed to effect this and shaped from out of legal prohibitions, ostensibly or otherwise the community's ill-will-, the nay-sayer

¹³ Feinberg. "The expressive function of punishment", pg.688-

¹⁴ *ibid.*, pg.690

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ "What, if anything, justifies legal punishment?"

¹⁷ *ibid.*, pg.728

Mr. Rationality, the creation of the law has the final say as it's judge and jury perhaps even executioner when "natural law", demanding tribal justice, is a tissue. Which of the two moralities, one duty the other aspiration, is most coincident with justice where the individual is sovereign is difficult to perceive.

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THE ADVENTURES OF PETER PARKER



The Adventures of Peter Parker

I walked along the hall just thinkin'? What am I saying? I pronounce things correctly, I'm an intelligent man. I supposed I'm just trying to conform to the superhero ideal.

These contradictions are difficult to get over so I've got to keep reminding myself who I am, how I define myself. This superhero business can get kind of tricky after a while. Heck you never really get used to it.

Peter walked into his bio-chem room those five minutes early he always allotted himself. In his own words he was 'a keener' even though he understood the judgments of his peers. Knowledge was just an allure for him and 'that was that', he just couldn't put the books down. Perhaps the main reason for this was Mary Jane, the apple of Pete's eye whom he, though perhaps he didn't even know it yet, wanted to provide for and the emphasis being on intellectual capital in this modern age, as a supplementary fact of his natural propensity to learn, this truly was the most feasible path. At night he would dream his spidey dreams even amidst his crime-fighting. Sometimes they would grab a hold of his conscious as he stood over the subjugated criminal trapped in his webbing. These dreams consisted of white picket fences, of sunshiny backyards glistening with dew and – Mary Jane baking in the kitchen as he and his son investigated the biological atmosphere of the backyard, so named as Pete's scientific bent was such that he just plain couldn't help transforming all living things into theories. But at heart, though this bent sometimes gained him ridicule from his friends, he was an ethical man, one who put the right thing first, before all pleasurable ends. This was demonstrated in his crime-fighting and it was this moral, purposive sense that initiated these dreams.

Here I am in Bio again. Though I love science so much I can't help but be bored in here – or at least distracted. Oh what am I saying? - Least? I should say most. Who could be bored in a class when Mary Jane Watson attends? Boy oh boy I sure wish she'd hurry up though; just to see her in that mini-skirt – Quiet! My spidey sense is tingling; better think about something else until she gets here.

Wow this Spidey gig sure is an obstacle in my social life. But, now that I understand things with this ethical spidey sense of mine, I can't give up the profession. And my promise to Uncle Ben... - Here she is now! Oh what a knockout – and brains too! This is one chick who sure is swingin' (oops must remember to speak more intelligently, less colloquially). "Uhh...hiya, Mary Jane. Would you like to have a cup of coffee or... you wouldn't? Doug Frazer's already asked you...oh well, maybe some other time then."

-Just my luck. That Doug Frazer, what does he have above me? Why, I'm brimming with qualities, I'm...ahh well Mary Jane will just have to wait for the epiphany of Peter Parker, alias Spiderman!

Peter, though a first-class student is also an athletically-inclined individual who believes in hard training to perpetuate his superhero physicality. The balance beam, track, pole-

vaulting, and discus are just a few of the activities he includes in his spidey regimen. Here we meet Peter after one such workout.

Boy am I tired! Just down a bit of spidey juice for recovery and zowee! (Or is that theright superhero? Never mind), I'm a new man again. Oh just my luck here comes Doug and Mary Jane. Talk about rubbing it in. "Yeah, hi Mary Jane, Doug" – what'sthat smirk for? Why, I'm twice the athlete Doug is; just give me a chance and... take it easy Spidey- you'll get what's coming to you. After all nice guys don't finish last when you're – a superhero!

Here we encounter Peter Parker on a date with a girl who is not Mary Jane.

"How's your soda, Candy?" That's great; I'm at some boring old ice-cream parlour witha girl who's got cream for brains. Well, easy come easy go. Take it easy Spidey... that spidey sense. I wonder how to shut it off!?" "Well Candy, it's been fun but I really have to be going, I have a test coming up and...you're sure you understand? Great – well...see you around." No certainly not the type for me, why Mary Jane outstrips her any time...now there's a thought...Spidey! Take it easy yourself now; we've got to do what's right and I have a feeling this isn't it. Now to get to studying before my crime-fighting punch clock starts going off. Oh the busy lives we superheroes lead.

A robbery has been committed in an urban slum in the heart of old Chinatown. Wang the grocer had a sack of plums stolen – and at mark-up price too! Enter – the Spider-man alias Peter Parker.

This time it looks serious! Why, old Wang can hardly afford the condo he has now letalone the yacht! Now Spidey don't go joking at other people's expense; old Wang is a kind-hearted old cripple and his profession, however lowly it may appear in the eyes of the bourgeoisie is nevertheless a very honourable one back in China. Ahh Mary Jane I can't keep your image out of my head even in the most quasi-serious of crimes.

Swinging into action, Parker ejects web serum from his palm shooters, specially designed by Parker himself to immobilize the criminal and mobilize his one-man crime- fighting gang to the scene of vice.

"I've got you now foul miscreant! Your thievery is at an end!" Did that just come outtame? Better lay off the spidey juice. "Now, to remove your mask - Mary Jane?! How couldyoustoopsolowtothelevelofacommonthief?Whywithyouallofwomanhood has been brought to her knees." "Well of course you recognize my voice; it's me Peter. I have no choice but to reveal my secret identity...I'm Spiderman." "What kind of a lucrative career is that you ask? So you've considered me as the one before? Why, Mary Jane, I'm a scientist by profession; this is just a hobby. Does that reconcile you to the idea? It does?! Then my white picket fence dreams are to become a reality after all. But...what about Doug? He doesn't matter to you? At all? Mary Jane, I get down on

my knees for you...will you, Mary Jane Watson, marry me, Peter Parker? You will,well...but you stole the plums! Old Wang will send you to jail! He has decided to act as the minister? Well now everything's official but...you stole the plums! You have no ethical sense and I condemn you to the life of a spinster!"

With that Peter Parker, the righteous man wholly right in his ethical sense departed from the crime scene leaving Mary Jane a sticky mess of webbing, ripe for the picking of the law's strong arms.

Well, there is a bright side to everything and I'm sure those white picket dreams can still become a reality though with a different woman – Candy!

And with that our adventure comes to an end. There will be others and I'm sure Candy will factor in quite prominently. On that you can be sure (wink!).

Propaedeutic to style in the "Adventures..."

I'm surprised I didn't write about more distinctively human problems, and attempt to find solutions to them for myself. Typically I'm writing in the third person, distanced from the world and yet in it as the mighty citadel of soothsaying (so I claim). The medium of the adventures of Peter Parker will likely facilitate these problems in showcasing them in a non-objective empirical context. However the narration that I have so far used in these stories has been just this impersonal disconnected voice which creates its own philosophical reality – a parable of my life. And so to embark upon a Peter Parker adventure is really, is it not boys and girls, to embark on a philosopher's quest for truth through the understanding of social reality and reality per se, the former laying bare the social truth as I encounter it in my empirical activity (however theoretical), the latter truth per se in its desiderata.

Now this leaves for myself to embark on the imagined empirical reality of the seemingly average college student Peter Parker (and perhaps the nerdy reality as well – some might be so crass as to make this judgment).

The Adventures of Peter Parker: 2nd episode

(Note: these episodes are independent of one another and yet...not)

Mary Jane, o' you are in my dreams always though I may revolve around you like a satellite around its planet; you are always kept at a distance by your gravitational attraction, which is so intense as to keep me at bay, startled by your shining iridescence. Ah what am I thinking about now? This biology homework is impossible

to concentrate upon. Here I am trapped in my abode, poor Aunt May cooking and doing all these chores just to support me – I know she would be quite content to live in an old folks' home now that Uncle Ben is gone; for the company and all – and I – just slacking off daydreaming! But Mary Jane, Mary Jane your name is music to my ears; you're the sexiest dame I ever was near – enough poetry, time to study! – At least for Aunt May's sake!

And that's just what our web-slinger did until his exams came, surprisingly for Peter, to an abrupt end. It was at the end that Peter's life took on a quite different form. Summer courses would ensure that he would complete undergraduate school and he, naturally, elected to take them so as to speed up the process towards graduate school, 'the next level' as Peter referred to it.

It was on one of these bright blindingly bright and stiflingly hot days that Peter was seen by Mary Jane Watson, also a summer student making his way along the campus boulevard, dreamily gazing at the trees with an absent-minded look across his face. She greeted him from across the boulevard but so lost in thought was he that he didn't even notice at first until she spoke out a second, louder time.

Boy those finals sure were hard. If it wasn't for all that daydreaming and romantic silliness I could have been done studying in half the time – let that be a lesson to me! No longer shall I lose control of my life like I'm constantly doing, it's what defeats me and – I refuse to do it any longer! From now on it's all effort and hard work – and then the big time! “Oh hi Mary Jane...Gee I'm sorry I didn't see you at first. I must have been daydreaming again. You were wondering if I was free tonight to go to a jazz club down in little Paris? Why, uh no all my studies are as good as done (a little lie won't hurt this relationship Spidey) – sure I'd be delighted to – uh...pick you up at 8:00 then? Alright, I'll see you then. - Later, Mary Jane.” Boy oh boy here we go Spidey, talk about the big time! Tonight, tonight when the stars are shining bright – yea! Long-term goals can wait! Why neglect the present for the sake of the future when the former is necessary to the latter's existence?

And so, after sitting through the hours, filled as they were with schoolwork and chores around the house, Peter Parker donned his casual suit jacket and best (and only) pair of spats and got ready for a night on the town, which would be nothing in itself if it weren't for Mary Jane Watson, the apple of Spidey's eye. Swinging from tree to building and onto other buildings, Peter made his way down to the Parisian section of town and to the nightclub specified by Mary Jane. Nervousness was the meaning of the sweat seeping through Peter's suit jacket which was thankfully dried as the night breeze cooled the Spiderman swinging steadily closer to his destination. Thought Peter: *oh well, it's aphrodisiac properties would be more of a help than a hindrance but...just in case I've brought some spidey serum which I've modified into the state of a perfume with the*

addition of a little rose water. One squirt and – Presto! I smell like a charm; one which is also an antiperspirant. Being a scientist does have its perks!

Wow is that Mary Jane over there waiting at that outdoor table? What a hottie. Now to approach her; easy Spidey: Hiya Mary Jane, sorry to...maybe it's better to forgo the preambles; let's just go in. Gosh this music is loud – how can we talk? Well I guess being together is better than nothing. (That's it I gotta get outta here for at least a minute or two of fresh air – all this alcohol and cigarette stench, not to mention the loud music, is driving me nuts.)

Peter managed to navigate his way through all the hyped up obstacalia finding him outside and it was this which altered his life. Looking characteristically to the night sky, starry with a mixture of half-pleasure and disappointment our web-slinger sat down on one of the unoccupied chairs, everyone having gone in to join in the milieu of entertainment and sensuous delights. Turning from the infinite reaches of space he glimpsed a beautiful figure caught in the half-light, her essence preserved in the crystalizing effect of the Chinese lanterns. He was drawn to her, and, without deliberation sat down at her table as if mesmerized. Noticeably startled she cast her eyes on the stranger yet was put at ease by his features and dreamy look. They introduced each other and after excusing himself, Peter asked her why she was outside rather than in. She didn't know what he was referring to at first but his pointing out the club elicited the reply that she liked it better alone. He questioned if "you don't often feel lonely in your solitude." At this they connected and Mary Jane, Peter's former infatuation, was spirited away but her irreplaceable replacement that Peter married and had a white picket fence and children with.

Peter Parker's Adventures (non-contiguous episodes)

"Mr Parker pay attention to your studies!" "Yes Mr. Zumbruler sorry sir...uh gee." Just my luck, old Zumbruler, my former mentor, catches me napping and doing what? – daydreaming about Mary Jane. Well one's entitled to some consideration of personal problems even in and amidst this age of hyperactivity. Science, though you are a high-ranking love, you will always occupy second place in relation to Mary Jane. Gosh, now that we've finally started dating, I'm becoming really apprehensive about sex.

What pressure is put on a man, on a child throughout his whole life to perform and do so in omnipotent and domineering style! And I've gotta meet these expectations! I know that sex is supposed to be a casual thing in this liberal age, but something just doesn't seem right about promiscuity, I..just don't feel right about it. However M.J. is truly someone with whom I've been able to establish a bond, to have a history of relations with and this, I feel, is the condition necessary for a sexual encounter.

We've dated for a while now and have gone as far as necking but, gosh, the apprehension sure does wear on a guy's nerves, especially when they're the supersensitive nerves of a Spiderman! All I can think of is a look in her eye, a sort of aura around her telling me that she's ready; all I can envision happening is a confused series of movements, an infinite series originating in A, my web-slinging across the city to her house in suburbia. After that...well...I don't know how to make any sense of it! Perhaps things just occur spontaneously...but, to plan things out, to engineer an effect is too ingrained in human nature to avoid and hence the apprehension. Ah well, que sera, sera.

Peter Parker's apprehension motivated him to take extra precautions for the date with Mary Jane and it's – if Peter can be believed – inevitable consequences. Condoms were purchased, cologne applied, hair pomaded – all of the charms consonant with masculinity, the quality Peter exuded even though it typically lay dormant under a bookish exterior.

Arriving at precisely the stipulated time on Mary Jane's doorstep, Peter was immediately greeted, and not without a note of discomfort that masked itself in manly brusqueness, by M.J.'s dad, Judge Watson. “Hiya Judge Watson, sir. Is Mary Jane ready?(Oh gosh I blew it – I forgot to ask how he was, to introduce myself properly.)You say she'll be down in a few minutes and this will give us time to parlay as you call it? Forgive my...uh...impoliteness sir, I forgot to ask how you were...uh...doing and all. Fine and the wife – oops never mind indeed! Sorry sir...uh...sit down here? Yes I've been dating her for some time Judge sir, uh...your honour. Uh...we...haven't sir I swear. Why these things probably shouldn't be discussed your hon– oh, daughter's security and everything sorry I forgot, well sir my feelings for Mary Jane are more profound than than sir; I wouldn't think of her in that way...uh...

“Oh, hi Mary Jane! Ready to go?...

And so Mary Jane and Peter went to a movie, etc. On the way back they, as Peter's house was a mid-point between the other two, decided to stop there. Peter's Aunt May was in the Caribbean and this prompted that decision.

“Yes Mary Jane so that's just about the whole tour of my house...uh...where do I sleep...well...all right I'll show you my room as well – must have forgotten or something. How do I feel about you Mary Jane – call you M.J.? – Alright...I mean, I'll do so – I care about you more than I've cared about anyone else, maybe even more than...well I care about you a lot M.J. You...uh...what? No don't repeat it...I understand that that's how you feel. In fact I've suspected for a long time and...perhaps we can act on these feelings...It wouldn't be a...uh...bad – Oh M.J.....

And so Peter Parker woke up the next morning with a love consummated and established through experience, conditioned through a closeness he had never felt before, a closeness by the name of love.

Peter Parker, average-everyday college kid, is buried in his projects of scientific import – though Science capitalized as a totality, does not recognize his efforts, much to the latter's chagrin. He has worked waveringly and with hesitance upon his labour of love and this unsettled mode of action – owing to his great concern over what he deemed his 'real troubles', which are thus his real concerns and we may believe him for his experiments and researches have been inconsistent with his previous efforts and with his lofty ideals – This mode of action has been in his own mind a failure. He has departed from his self, estranged his ideals and therein languishes in depressing, lacklustre movements.

Golly these experiments are hopeless! How am I to achieve the result I've been seeking if I can't even concentrate on the means – that is to say the given situation, the here and now. All because of Mary Jane! Why did she have to reject my proposal? Is it so difficult to set aside an hour or two to go to a movie? Well it doesn't matter anyway 'cause she wouldn't care enough to be with me in any case, that's why she rejected me after all! Gosh this sure is depressing being all alone among these lights, more like black lights than anything, blocking out the world through their inverted glow. See how such an emotional confusion makes me poetic – boy oh boy Parker you gotta get control over yourself, this is the only way to amend the situation!

From the Desk of Peter Parker – Alone

Escape is a hopeless sojourn from myself My
finite prisons

Those infinitely labyrinthine catacombs
-Help!

I cry out into the darkness, into the infinite reaches of
this place which I call my home
-homeless I am, apart and
thrown, into the distance –
alone

Your voice a fierce peal of hope
that sped across my mind
but inside it must dwell
no longer a living tone
deadened, ringing throughout hell
I remain – alone

A face to kiss, to stroke gently
would mean salvation
free me in birth pangs of ecstasy hear
my mission
screamed aloud
with no one to receive these words
into their mind's eye
they are covered by a shroud
and I must die –
alone

The Adventures of Peter Parker

Peter Parker's life was a monotony that he felt was in need of alleviation so he embarked upon a sojourn around the town in hopes of procuring this item. His journey was a long one, fruitless and futile, along which he encountered a woman his age, young and modestly pretty, yet not without her charms. He began to speak to her, for she had piqued his attention with her solemn and introverted deportment, and this appealed to his lonely circumstances and the desire for their negation.

Gosh here we are just standing around inspecting nature. Don't you think it's fairly lonesome simply to stand apart inspecting rather than engaging in nature itself – I mean, doesn't the act of reflection apart elicit the desire to act together? You say I guess but just the saying of something – is that sufficient? Doesn't change lie in the doing and, should we not do together that which we do apart, if a kinship of interests exists?

Ah, all I can do is imagine these conversational nuances – what have I to do with them, they are not willed and so I am distinct from them entirely – an island! “Um... ah...hi, how are ya?” fine she says and this is the cessation of the conversation; she looks apprehensive of more discussion, of a discussion, even receptive, and myself also, yet what is to be unfurled but nervous relations, tapering off into nothingness. “Well... uh...I guess have a good day”, and off I go again in self-hatred! Another opportunity spoiled! Easy Parker, let's not get the old Spider-sense piqued again, remember our tendency towards violence, that which we promised to use for the good and not the converse. Peter Parker when will you, in all your merits, whether acknowledged by your modest self or not, acknowledge that you are desired by the objects of your desire – and act accordingly? - For their fears are yours and neither has any knowledge of the other aside from this reciprocity of desire, each focusing on themselves on the other exclusively, and to the exclusion of the relation between the two. Ah lament for better times!

Parker, our intrepid hero, after coming across a certain media article, was rejuvenated in his desire to work. Heretofore he had been suffering under the yolk of depression and, eo ipso, this yolk had been cast off for loftier forms of praxis, namely that which he termed his calling: science.

The objects of depression were devalued through this article that Peter happened to come across were also supplanted by his authentic mode of activity aforementioned, that which he devoted himself towards wholeheartedly and without reservation. The source of the depression had vanquished, as a cause to effect the depression itself was vanquished and Parker could now be his own man, no longer a dreamer idling away perhaps the most intense year of his life. We here encounter Parker engaged upon a research project of no little merit, the nuances of which are too discreet for the layman's comprehension – we must acknowledge only that it is indeed a project of some merit on the basis that the virtuous Parker is devoting his every effort to its fructification.

Gee I sure feel like my old self again working away at my project. It seem like the depression just went away after I encountered an example in the media. A really hard- working and noble man who would let nothing stand in the way of his success – this to me is the path I must lead. And yet I can't help but think that the other life of sociality is perhaps of equal (if not greater) importance – for no man is an island, or some such corny proverb; corny but true. And to bridge this gulf between the social and the practical, while one's work is exclusive of sociality – why it's almost absurd to try... and yet I feel it imperative to do so – but what can I do, here in my house and without any foothold! Better simply follow the example set by the man in the media.

Ahh Parker, when will you realize a life complete and without these gaping lacunae? Sure you have your work, and yet – is that alone sustainable of man? Can a man work day and night to the extreme of negating all other influences – and still call that a life? Someday, perhaps, you Peter Parker will learn that life consists not in any one thing if it is to be a valuable life, but of a plurality. Devotion must be had – and to maintain it, for without maintenance of the good, the bad will issue in immediately in its wake. Find the knowledge Parker, and you will find the value in life!

The Adventures of Peter Park cont....(in narrative form)

Peter Parker, immersed in his studies for the academic year, didn't heed the industry which was rife about him. He lived as in an impenetrable glass box and the walls and its dimensions were so regular, so unblemished, that room for the neoteric in life was wholly excluded – after all the perfection of the box was at stake. It was a transient and changing commodity, was this box; sometimes its walls lost their transparency, made a transition to opacity and in extremes to tenebrousness, the exclusion of any perception of the outside world at all. This was the principle defect of the box and its mundane characteristics, colourless, featureless, and unaesthetic. It would grow dim, gradually as his studies occupied his time and would negate all light by which to guide him.

Within this box, which was movable and could be transported as he moved – was suspended through an immutable mental force emanating from himself, his will to solitude – he went in full career to this place and that, with his academic objective in place in front of his eyes. He was alone and yet comforted by the heat which issued from this objective, which always (or nearly always) assumed a form coincident with the situation in which he was posited. When the ideal failed him – this objective lost its lustre – he would experience the greatest cold, the purest and most empty solitude that was

experienceable within his given conditions. His conditions: they were prescribed by loneliness and were identical with it, self-perpetuating complexes that came and went in proportion to his maintenance of the academic objective.

Peter lived such an existence and yet hoped for something else, something that would not merely supplement his living conditions, but that would wholly alter the structure of his reality. This something meant the dissolving of these crystallized walls, crystallized from out of wavering hopes, hesitations, and fears, those which in dealing with meant a risk that gave onto still greater degrees of the same forms. Thus he had shut out reality as if it no longer prognosticated these auspicious somethings he hoped for.

And Peter could always hope, this was the only prophecy that he thought he could avail himself of – for past experience confirmed it and hope was the very light which shone through the diaphanous walls of this box. The mind's memories, those he laid claim to as his spiritual reserve, that constitutive of his very being – these were not wholly bad, though they were peppered with the fears and hesitations that had constructed his limited world. Happy thoughts, and noble, intense hopes and values were what constituted a large part of this reserve – the majority, and it was through this that he managed to charge his adrenaline to act and to live towards these, as self-perpetuating ends that would give onto even greater ends.

What was this something that Peter wished for? He desired to live amongst his peers who stood at a distance, placed outside of his box and who could not reach him on account of it. It was outside that all his yearnings were directed towards. The inside remained a mere barrenness, the manufacture of these yearnings and their consequent escape towards the objects of value he so ardently sought.

Then one day Peter moved his box along familiar hallways and in familiar circumstances – the whole project was rife with familiarity! – But something in this scheme of life altered and the clockwork movements he made assumed a plastic form and were shifted from their prior rigidity. A voice spoke and he heard it penetrate the thickness of the walls of his box; lucidity arrived and he regained his capacity for sight. The world beckoned to him in invitation to its bounteous fruits and infinite experiences and he was there! – He had arrived in the world and effected a unity with it, so long sought after and so long absent. But the voice grew dim and faded away towards its decease; life grew shallow and cold again and he was again left to those solitudinous conditions he had so long known and, in tortured acceptance, made his own.

The Perishing of Peter Parker

Peter Parker drifted in a black depression imagining that he was contracting relationships through spontaneous conversations and was deriving great insight and togetherness therefrom. He would speak to another person in his mind, in an intrinsic dialogue that was, though candid, nevertheless correspondent with conversational norms he had learned through observation and infrequent first-hand experience. This inner-world he entered into was a sweet past-time that was simultaneously a torturous event as it implied its contrary – and that was the world as a totality that he felt he could

never reach. In not being able to reach those particulars in this universal substrate, these people he ardently wished to welcome into his life, Peter's depression mounted and his thoughts turned away from the levity of conversation, turned towards bleaker, more universal concerns and fears.

The thought of a transient life to be lived out in struggling loneliness he presented to himself in imagination and became desperate at the thought of endless generation and corruption of forms, endless attacks on the physical form by Father Time and his minions of doubt, uncertainty, fear, and apathy.

The thought that no one would even enter into his life as a blissful external cause haunted him and jeopardized the value of his life – he was not an atomic unit and it was now impossible for him to live in this mode. “If no one comes within the next week, [he thought] I will kill myself.” – Such bleak thoughts bracketed off anything as with an impenetrable wall, beyond which nothing could be seen of the horizon of future tidings. The herald was heard in the distance proclaiming a message. This message was Peter's fate and he was to accept it whether or not it coincided with his plans. “In one week this message will become intelligible to me and I will follow what it dictates whether or not they are indulgent to my desires and wishes. Now my desires and wishes are all empty half-wishes, I do not understand them in the light of reality – they are believed in as fairies and goblins and I have long been a stranger to fairies and goblins.” Peter walked through the dark night in apathy pondering an unknown future. Peter fell asleep later that night and did not wake in any real sense until the following week was upon him. Surprised at how soon it had appeared, he spoke to himself thus: “Now I am prepared for any other verdict the herald brings.” A door in the wall, which was imperceptibly cut into its stone surface, opened without any gentle announcement or intimation that the herald was there and ‘lo! – The herald stooped before Peter in an ostentatious costume and, unravelling his scroll, read aloud: “Peter Parker, you are unsuitable for this world; you have not gone through the appropriate motions and have transgressed the implicit rules of common decency and human relations through your explicitly and decidedly weird character, your shyness and refusal to participate in any of those affairs wherein your peers engage and to the greater good of both themselves and society – ah-men. You have been sentenced to perish by your own hands.” So saying the messenger drew out a tarnished kitchen knife. “With this implement of destruction you will put an end to yourself and will do so graciously and without excessive pathos. Furthermore, you will do so within the shadows of society, just as you have lived, and the groundskeeper will dispose of your remains as part of his duties.” So saying he handed Peter the knife which the latter took with empty, apathetic eyes, contemplating its dull sheen and well-worn wooden handle. “You may begin, in the name of the state and all its good citizens!” – Peter plunged the knife into his breast and, gasping last breaths of air, fell to his knees, no longer feeling any pain or injury; feeling as if all of society melted away and he was there, just clasping the protruding handle of the knife, which was more of a comfort to him than any looks or words he had received for as long as he could remember. Just as he was beginning to fade into a blissful dream he noticed a girl who had spoken kindly to him the other day and who had intimated to him that she would have liked to see him again. He looked up, reaching out with his eyes towards her, and as she turned their eyes

met – one with horror, the other with despair, he cried out: “not yet!” – The blackness of death surrounded him and he was gone.

Neo-Peter Parker or the Lazarus Spider

Parker awoke from a dream. He had dreamt that the whole of his life had been a reclusive affair, that he had been approximating the Calvinist ethic in a philosophical vein, working hard at a major that he had only recently adopted after having made the decision to forgo any attempts at realizing the scientific dreamscapes of dollars and cents. The sweat poured from his brow, his sheets also, were bedewed with sweat of horror produced by his dreams. He had dreamt that such a life amounted to suicide and that as the very last vestiges of life seeped out of his ever-dimming eyes, he had perceived a figure, a young woman, who shone through his despair and redeemed hopes even as he met a tragic end. “This must not happen,” he articulated in a hoarse voice throughout the stillness of his cold room.

Morning light bathed him, through the curtains, with a ghostly glow and he understood that his life was an irreconcilable dilemma that shook him, ever more threateningly, from the fence of indecision and forced him eventually to make a decision between hope and despair the former having as its province a warming social environment, the latter a cold reclusion in which he was immersed in at present. “This mustn’t happen,” he again spoke in a defensive voice, hardly above a whisper. Repeating this as a cadence he cast of his blankets in nervous movements, slipped on his slippers and trod downstairs to meet a lonely and still scene that mimicked the one which had driven him from his bedroom.

The time for action, he understood, was imperative for the previous night’s dream had shocked him and the inexorable movement of the messenger to his door was known to him implicitly as a force of juggernautical proportions – he would ride the fence of hope and despair but only for a time; and the fence was becoming unstable just as his life; soon it would be uprooted after it slanted in one or the other direction and at this time, Peter would know whether or not the shovel would be used for other purposes or not.

The song on the radio, the medium of culture that was his window into the world as it was for all reclusive types who harboured auspicious memories of past times in childhood – auspicious merely in the light of peace of mind and this a waning hue as with the setting of the sun. The station played an old country song in which the singer spoke of his fondness for his departed son who had died in an accident. Such a son was the childhood that Peter had lost and his tears gave testimony to this identification with the emotional value of the song, which reverberated through Peter’s mind as the cadence he had spoken to himself earlier that morning.

The university awaited Peter and he met it with an apprehensive fright in the face of its possibilities. Would they be realized? Would he manage to realize the hope which had incubated in his breast for so long, causing emotional fluctuations and occasionally wrenching tears of despairing importance from his eyes? His class rolled around, along the cyclicism of calendaire time and its necessity and, in a strangely non-necessitarian manner Peter arrived at an unaccustomed time taking in the stillness of the room before

the arrival of any of his peers, who were, to him, merely isolated individuals and groups with who he could find no parity. The sameness of circumstances was abolished by his decisiveness which overlooked the fact and gazed upon his surroundings as fruitful potentialities not sterile possible worlds that were to be left alone through fear and self-hatred.

Gradually, as Peter sat contemplating his dilemma, sat contemplating its skeleton – for he did not wish to determine anything before the situations in which determinations occurred confronted him – the peers he so long wished to be a part of entered into the room in random, and yet typically random groups and isolates taking their seats about him, leaving him autonomous, within a protected circle of loneliness. Such a circle was truly vicious for Peter as it evoked a self-hatred that brought him ever closer to despair.

The class began and went as usual which left Peter's hopes crushed – for he relied upon an external cause to render him assistance; insofar he was truly a dependent man and childhood reared its head this time not in laughter but cloying self-pity. He, Peter, stumbled through the halls as others laughed at him in their derisive manner or looked with fearful glances at his strangely constituted appearance. He was truly a fallen warrior, only in this case he merely looked the part – for he had never been a warrior in any conventional sense, had been a warrior only in the private sphere, behind closed curtains that left any possibly receptive people guessing and silenced their questions through his weirdness, his antinomial comportment, which was the label of relegation he bore.

Thinking thusly Peter walked into a doorjamb and cracked his head on it which sent him abruptly into blackness. He saw the messenger standing before him and trying to articulate the words of its message, yet – it remained mute and merely mouthed the words, giving Peter to understand nothing and it was in this confusion that he felt a soothing hand upon his tortured brow, caressing away all of the concerns which he had amassed through many years and still, empty nights. Upon awaking Peter's eyes met a face which approximated this caress of its hands, which matched the warm chestnut eyes, developed brow and concerned, anxious features. In smiling Peter saw the face smile back. He was met with the question of his well-being and he answered affirmatively in an audible whisper to which he added: "so long as you're here beside me..." The smile of the face broadened and, perhaps out of the closeness between men and women in intimacy, perhaps out of a concerned relief for Peter's plight and its alleviation, it bent down and kissed him. Peter had realized hope through the external cause; had been redeemed as a valuable, worthy person.

Peter Parker stumbles across a novel hope

Gosh! There's gotta be a way that I can achieve some form of happiness in my life. The only thing within my mind is women and their images, dancing about on a background of hazy pink and brightly coloured spectral hues. They dance in a frenzy even though some are silent and still – these are the long sought after dames of imagination, of a life which has been corrupted by the siren call of women. And once they are achieved and procured life begins again, otherwise it is a waiting in the

wings until the curtains are pulled aside by their forms. How can I, a mere introverted college student, manage to gain inclusion within a group of people or with even one person which entails the hope of the presence of the opposite sex (to call them fairer is a dubious act indeed – but that is, as the Latins say, obitur dictum and not germane to my purposes).

The thoughts of Parker, average-everyday college student, strayed over a gamut of possibilities that would place him into a strategic position from which to procure, to assail and lay siege to, women the objects of his desires, the long sought after, the absent goddesses who are coming. Thinking thusly he failed to notice a sign board until he slammed into it head first.

Gosh! Did that ever hurt – my own introversion (my pet, my child with whom I have a relationship of complete animosity) has once again waylaid me – at least there was no one around to perceive my downfall from intellectual seriousness to slapstick comedy, from the tragic to the ludic – and perhaps back again! For lo': it is a sign which signifies something I might work up, construct, as a window of opportunity through which to crawl into the receptive arms of women. 'Dating service,' it reads – 'phone part: the hottest source for dating contact since the serenade.' Certainly a grandiose claim, but... is it not worthy of pursuit, as means to means, women being a mere means towards my loftier goals of science and earnest inquiry. But, though a means, they nevertheless are tinged with the telos of love and marriage and children, each of which fading in degree of promise across a scale the order of which is expressed by the textual order of the above three concepts: love, marriage, and children, each a sage along life's path, each, in relation to the present moment, progressively tenebrous though containing within themselves the auspices of happiness and all of which being borne of a woman (with the necessary impetus of the absolute, the prima causa, the primum mobile, man).

This dating service occupied Parker's thoughts time and again until finally he decided to shirk off the burden of his 'independence' as he called it, and attempt to achieve something with one who could yield the possibility of worlds and hope – a virtual system, an electronic database which placed its clients in thraldom to it, not through a lack of 'freedom of choice' but through a servility in the willingness to don the yolk of domination – when one conceived of the system as the means towards the realization of his goals, its limits as 'negative freedom' (and this being the only way, or at least a way that he had to devote time and effort to, to place and invest therein, his humble form in the form of voice to be accepted or rejected by all the possible women therein, adjudicated by the merciless hand of fate and its legerdemain, he of necessity.

In the ensuing week Parker devoted a surfeit of energy to this one hope that he had stumbled upon and decided to 'work up', to 'cultivate'. The system he entered into took him away from himself and led him into a world that was quite ruinous to consciousness – he entered into it and found that virtuality supplanted the real and that he had lost consciousness many hours before. His head ached and his ear pounded, the surface of his skull, conduit to the sensitive inner lobes which registered the heartbeat thudding of a

pulse that was amplified by the incessancy of the phone's radiation and the loud obnoxious character of the voices on the other end.

From one to the next Parker scanned through the database, attempting to find a kindred soul with who he might achieve those long-forgotten worlds that childhood contained in their dormant state. But alas! - He met with nothing but charlatans, rogues, and cunning women bent on personal gain. The questions were always centered on his making money, whether he was destined for a pot of gold or a pot of gruel – and the slightest personality defect sent the women flying away under the cover of Parker's own ignorance. No, they did not stay long when they found out that attribute – relative to themselves, whatever it was – which disagreed with them even the slightest bit. This led Parker to exclaim, despairing the system and its utter consumption of time and life: “Why must these soap bubbles be forever yearning for it, and then when they have it contained within their sphere of power, they either burst or fly away through the impetus of its too-close proximity, too soon, too much or too little. – But never adequate to their conceptions of the good?”

I feel pure, like a being respected in myself, someone who has been vindicated in whathe espouses, a man of ideals and greater hopes than the majority, a man who does not allow his sacred temple violation. I had transgressed once, perhaps even three times, but I had debased myself in the act and recognized my error. Now I must maintain myself as who I am, not through limitation but through an affirmation of my purity, however tarnished by the gouges and ruinations of the past.

Now I feel as if I've overcome and accomplished worlds – that I have preserved a world of purity and banished the evil which lay dormant within it. And Monteverdi and the heights call with a siren call of compelling desire of sublimated beatitude – the old impassioned constraints severed by a nobler penchant, nobler as seated in the mind and in that organ which can feel – which is the source of the feeling of life.

Life and existence are perceived to be conferred by the potent act of the mind simply because it has the greatest organic potentiality and is that most receptive to existence and is the very source of meaning and conceptualization, processes which are understood to attain the utmost complexity as opposed to Schopenhauer's 'root' and it's base striving. That striving may well be the root and source of life but life transforms its parent into its own image of same – from a god to a monster to a god again.

*A state of incubation, of self-containment and recuperative empowerment:
the desired ethic of a state of sickness; to overcome which is the goal, the means the above cited.*

I can only feel existence; I cannot do anything beyond that. Life is a mere passivereception of everything that flows past and the pool in which I sit, a recuperative pool of self-generation, is the locus of my potential health, the waters of oblivion, actuality, flow across my form and invest me with a hope for the future.

Lunacy descends with heightened nerves and heightened sensibility – every aspect of my being is as if stimulated by acupuncturist needles – the nerves are rife with feeling and the brain is the center of a storm of affect and nervous energy – sensitivity has ascended the throne of actuality and the whole of existence is walking on pins, needles, and hot coals; existence being conduced and borne by these nervous responses – meaning stimuli out of which the world takes shape from a world otherwise unknown.

I sit now in front of the computer with Liszt's accompaniment – the one radiating and corrupting my form, the other inerting it to impassioned dance. The attraction for so many of electronic media is a fortunate absence for me. Of what value is the electronic world aside from facilitating communications amongst people who would better be kept separate from one another; sure, one discovers advantages and makes us of them

– but are they really advantageous when the virtual world sucks one inside of itself and obviates all independent and autonomous inclination and action.

I always say and have said that radiation has addictive properties and the lust after a computerized world is indicative of this summum malum of human health and healthy praxis. Now one merely stays inside in front of a false world to do his communicating; communications of an interactive nature flow past one like water under a bridge. – And what then of that former mode of existence which deals with an ideal which is necessarily held at a remove by the electronic matrix of a society which has lost all value and thought.

When I think of the computerized world and the effects of the microcosmic cold winters which emanate from these subatomic bombs (i.e. computers), I am saddened at the portent of doom that those catalysts initiate. – And Liszt's music in the background, its inspiring tonal layering and virtuous presence take that superficial reality of the virtual and obliterate it into a thousand notes in the tempo of pianissimo, as glass shards fragmenting under the hands of a destroyer – a critic of the electronic scene – and falling upon the earth scattered to the winds of oblivion. The philosophical friend has been an unfortunate absence in the development of my thinking and, more importantly, lest I allow the life of oneself (myself) to be rendered subordinate to the mind and its entire supportive means: reading, writing, thinking, musical influences – general exercise.

O' how I wish (he says) I could have a philosophical friend – but the loneliness naturally arises from shyness and introversion and to spirit these away to make way for friendship is perhaps too strong in its permanence to make way for sweeping gestures and desperate attempts at asserting strength and control – for a would-be removal – of these things, obstacalia, impedimenta.

One really must have at least – the circumstances which establish the means to the end. These I have attempted to 'work up' in their present poor state but have found that invariably that are a house of cards too instable to preserve anything but the fissures of a weak foundation – a foundation based upon and built from the character

of myself, something itself still so naïve and developmental as to render the means nothing but a working up of itself. But that's just it – what is desired – one cannot

achieve the world from the arm chair he must engage it, not to do battle or achieve armistice but to cultivate an alliance as everything is a war and battleground, from the dirty looks of the petty to the aspersions of the 'disinterested' and 'objective'.

It's merely a theory – and that alone. The philosophical friends are friends / enemies / allies / enemies and everything else, not in potentia and in them but merely as texts to be read and interpreted with fresh perspectives each time. Those perspectives which aren't fresh become dogma and fuel limitations' quest.

On 'Parker'

'I' when pronounced, collapses into immanence and then no discussion can follow in its wake whatsoever. Hence the 'Peter Parker' figure, who carries the 'I' and yet allows for more possibilities to exceed its bounds into a relatively boundless sphere of existence. Did 'I' just say 'relatively boundless' and utter a contradiction? No, because it was not 'I' who utter it but Peter Parker reflexively referring to himself and since he is an infinite machine to produce infinite works and acts and gestures, he cannot be circumscribed by the narrow vocabulary of 'I' and its 'I-hood'.

Hence 'Peter Parker' is an escape from self, as a means of entering into the transcendental and escaping limitation. The author is eclipsed by his progeny as the father by his son, and so disappears into nothingness, leading one to ask the question of all those who clamour for a determinate speaker, a determinate subject of reference, author of meaning: 'what matter who's speaking'. Parker contrasted with the 'I'. Parker takes up a pen and it is a tool of his praxis, a means to an end, and furtherance of goals; yet still something to reflect upon, something with a determinate shape, contour, and dimension. To the 'I' it is another of words, a labourer and a point of great pain, a source of suffering. And yet 'Parker' and 'I' are not heterogeneous, not because one emanates from the other but because they are united in the text, in their being described, descriptive, and a whole ensemble of attributes which yet does not determine their being but merely puts forth a loophole and escape for interpretation, not fixed but fluid.

Peter Parker's adventures

All the chaos of decision-making – gosh! What confusion. All I wanted all along was to be my philosophic, artistic self and to avoid the pettiness of bourgeois careerism. Finally! Boy have I learned my lesson! Now I once more embark upon the spirit quest of philosophy, away from the fields of petty labour and towards the distant seas and coastal regions of humid, oxygen-rich atmospheric bliss. A locus, a haven, of philosophizing contentment, under the warming sun of a parochial earth, an earth familiar to one as a home and place in which a cap may be hung.

So Peter spoke as he walked out onto the dismal and blinded streets of the prairie city, an oasis of sleaze and vicious enmity and hostile hatred. The place had seared Peter in a thousand places, had gouged him with the barbs of its judgments, absolute restrictions

of auspice and depths of privation. He walked knowing full well that in fewer than two appearances of the full moon he would never again witness its ghostly mien from this

geographical position. The city of vice was decaying as present reality and tangible existent – now he could feel the yearning arms of a distant unknown Eden feeling for him in the darkness, spurred on by these longings he himself had sent across the furthest reaches of space as hooks to corral the heights of his conception, the auspicious objects of his overweening imaginary, the glowing substantives of his hope.

Finally! I said it before but was yet unprepared. Now I finally have the nobler conceptions of things incubating in my mind and a will to its pursuit. Now newness is welcomed with a will to receive it and to accord it a precedent value before it makes its appearance. All is light and a floating feeling of ecstatic yearning. Finally! All of the practical gymnastics I've been the patient of, a catalyst for fate to play out its farce, are at an end, but rather than being exhausted I'm instead rejuvenated, for the kinetic machinations of my life have now become calm and have arranged themselves into a given scenario. This scenario is the ensemble identifiable with my life and it is a solid lump to be rolled towards goals – to assimilate them into itself and to grow larger and larger with the regular and pre-meditated rolling – directions have been discovered and one rolls towards his goals as it were along a linear path rigidly followed and unfurling into the misty reaches of the future.

Now the nature of my life is: 'general generality'. Soon it will be: 'content-filled generality', a generality always particularizing itself. And this will be called the philosophical project, that towards which one rolls as a lump so to speak.

The Adventures of Peter Parker

Parker sat calmly on the steps of the concrete staircase gazing at the purity of blue the sky cast forth, enwrapping the totality of the horizon in its razor like congruity with the ensemble of buildings, trees, and rolling hills. He sat calmly in a small town, his one-time home, thinking calmly of the future life which awaited him in his still far off and mysterious home and all of that which it held as promise he looked towards with favour, and this was the meaning of the smile on his face, one which had known the depths of despair in the face of unknown beings which came at him as enemies, were subjugated, befriended, or converted in enemies.

All of his enemies he had beaten down and a resurgence of same seemed an impossibility – he was free of the strife consequent of his experiences; through them he had conquered and left them behind as dead possibilities. It was from this vantage point that he was now reflecting upon the future, with no longer the Janus-like backward glance a personal hell bound to and emanating from endless analysis.

Peter: "Yessir I sure am looking forward to a future that I can finally say is one filled with happiness. The ecstatic nature of my present inclination towards the future is my anticipating that unknown great beyond. No more Mary Jane, no more Mr. Jameson – all of

my ties have been cut – now it's time for me to swing towards my possible future, dawning as it is conception.

Peter Parker's last article of hope was shed and he faced the winds of despair unmovingly, without any protection against their harsh element – and what did he face but more of the same: the lashes of a wind emptied of any warmth, diverted of any happiness – and all he wanted to do was to move forward, towards the unknown and away from the actuality all too well known. But the world that he sought was too shrouded in the icy gleam of this wind's coldness, spread forth its sheen with all – too bright hatred – like the winter's sun glinting off the snow a painful brightness that his eyes had never grown accustomed to perceiving and which had grafted thews – jagged points of light streaking through bloodshot eyes – into his brain, enervating and reactivity or responsiveness and stultifying the aggressiveness which lay within. But the very word „aggressive“ to him was the stick which attacked – it meant to hurt to impose and then pave the way towards injury.

All the while he walked he thought of the Mary Janes of the world – how he could, having the potentiality, be a part of their lives and enjoying himself under the rosette auspices of the feminine. But he must remain under the covering of the masculine, feel its hardness and cold lifelessness, that which, as a gear mechanism, grasps and reaches for one, grinding him and molding him to fit into the places where animus was needed in machina. He animated the machine or was animated by it; rather, his animation was to be a machine and to run the clock throughout its incessant revolution. – Until something would snap, grind, and squeal with fury at being checked in its movements.

Peter: How long has it been- since I've sampled human being; felt the flow of water over my body without having it serve any purpose but comfort and pleasure. The fate of man has befallen me, throughout all of my torments I have achieved the soul of stone when all was will to softness; when all was will to blissfulness – hellish life was realized.

Peter Parker, hapless philosophy student, found one day that the course he had presented to himself was unrealizable. The incident came when he recognized his adopted modus vivendi as an impossible task: philosophy couldn't stand up upon the pretensions of offenses – there simply weren't any. The scientist he had been before, promising youth whose future looked brightly down upon him from upon high and which had grown darker with the

years he had been involved in philosophy – this former self now presented itself in the form of Lazarus – he was here and now in an instant of atavism and was preparing to make a return.

Peter: Boy! Did I ever goof! Science was in my blood for so long and philosophy sat against it like a fat oaf, through its short life, is dead, a mummified carcass whose dried up organs and thin musculature, its gauntness and sinewy frame, stands collapsed against this energetic ensemble – the scientist, Peter Parker in his scientist aspect. Now I have come to understand just how foolish all of this philosophy was – boy! What a relief that it's all over and done with and that other things may take its place – scientific endeavours, studies, contemplation which deals with empiria and not some noumenal non-entity that philosophy insists upon throwing around.

“Why leave philosophy”, Peter questioned rhetorically – „because it is so riddled with propaganda that its pursuit is nothing but foolish. To pursue that which is merely the echo, in a certain genre of discourse (the philosophical), of the judgements, values, and evaluative judgments of the status quo is to me ridiculous – when you’re, like myself, a creator. It's not about my trying to present myself as more worthy than the norm – but that is an inevitable consequence; it's about my own affirmation of creativity in the face of the countervailing force of normativity. So saying, Peter dropped all of his philosophy courses, vowing „never to take arts courses again and to focus his scope upon the sciences. Here, he thought, he could at least investigate reality in a more profound and profoundly applicable way, making of his future the actualization of the models created within the present.

And so he set to work, all with the backdrop of impending happiness and its rosette glow in his mind's eye beaming forth, winking as Mr. Sun rising above the horizon – the dawn! And sunset for that which is no longer faced, which has sunk beneath the line of the horizon – philosophy, the old, the useless and lost never again to be regained or to have a will to be regained.

Hope was placed into this sphere and yet he still felt the emptiness of a life which lacked the presence of others. Where were these desired souls and why must they be dichotomous to him: in terms of position, in terms of ideology and logic. Separation loomed forth every year, throughout his careers as scientist and philosopher, as academic, he had this hope standing forth only to be knocked down once more: a

denouement to every building climax, impotence to the pending release of pent up intensity.

"I had thought," Peter pensively reflected as he walked throughout the autumnal woods as the fiery leaves blocked out and filtered the sun in colourful iridescence, "that life would have more in store for me than the baseness of this life: structure, and rationalized schemata – and nothing more. I had sought out the company of friends and familiars – but who can understand a mole like myself, a drifter, a leaf which frolics on the winds, allowing the fates to take me up into their arms and dance – despite all of the resistance of rationality. Now that I have solicited the sciences I feel infinitely better – they were my prop and support for so long and under their auspices I was instigated to create what my will expressed itself as – a creation, an agency of creativity, creativity itself. Now I welcome it all back. But that lack...that shock of having nothing, nothing and no one – no one there, no one to converse with or to touch and see and experience. - That emptiness...and then? Work, constant struggle, lack underpinning it all, a fissured edifice on the verge of collapse – will it or not – who can tell? Life simply passes me by and everything floats past unattainably. Desire is a lack and I desire life – I desire a life with that fullness of objects, that plenitude of joys and happinesses, that each seems to so easily move through their own most superficiality. And yet that runs contrary, this attitude, to my way of life. How can I...at all..."

Peter ended his despairing through sleep – his own life-preservative instincts got the better of him and they blacked out his senses – now he was enervated, a temporary euthanasia to quell the pain of life had descended upon him, rendering him comatose and dead to all but the world of dreams. Even there he could not escape, but the plague demons of his life threatened him here in this sanctified place, defiled with the miasmal negativity of forces inherently bad, the force hammers which daily lessened the quantity of good upon which he lay, exposing him to the harsh cold of an anvil-hard reality.

PeterParker'sNewYear'sEve

Parker was restless and so decided to involve himself in some sort of human relations. For this he thought it was necessary to vacate his quiet dormitory and to head down to

the campus bar for a chance meeting of minds with some as yet unidentifiable creature; a woman ofcourse.

The drive which churned within Parker drove him outwards in to the milieu of human foolishness. He felt the divergence between himself and the masses that clustered round him as he pushed open the double doors of the faux saloon bar, in the silence the one, lone party exuded and the raucous boisterousness of the revellers. At those he was reminded of a statement by Nietzsche and those of countless other philosophers which foundsynopsisinthetroubledanarchists'vehementwords:madnessistherulein civilizations and peoples but in individuals is rare.

The passage of these words struck Parker's brow like elucidating fallen snow does a heated skull which has just emerged from a scene such as the one into which Peter (for it was none other than Peter Parker) entered – he was ice amidst the heat of human frenzy and mass hysteria.

For this distancing gaze he met with returned hostility – a collective hostility which surged in the amorphousness of the faces of the other party, assuming forms of mockery, disdain, contempt, and all manner of negative acts and gestures.

Words could be heard meeting him in an onslaught, directed towards him as arrows unprepared for so that the shaft embedded itself within him in a few of the instances which possessed the greatest cruelty. But these he endured and they soon fell away to his silence. He purchased a glass of water which cost nothing but the humility of its purchase and paid the cover charge for entrance into the realm of possibility. But possibility was infertile that night, as an hour's sitting proved. Throughout he was assailed by failed appeals on the part of women to entice him thither, to court and pay heed to them through displaying what merits they claimed to have. And the jealous partners or rivals attempted to heap upon him more missiles of envy and hatred but he paid no attention to them. At last the time limit he had for himself expired and he rose from his seat and went back the way he had come.

Peter: Why don't they just talk – these foolish people! The women always have to pay heed to myself, have to put on the most ridiculous of dances, but never go further than bestial display? Is this not a waste and a sad fate, to be trapped between potentiality and actuality without the strength to move. No impetus is given my actions by anyone – they all expect the impossible impetus of a causa sui to occur. This cannot be and so I'm thrust from a hopeful paradise into the wastelands which hem me in. Cast adrift in the undiscovered doldrums of life.

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And all for the sake of displacing some superficial nervousness, a mere physiological condition of a man who is not in his natural element – who is torn from himself by the crowd and its boisterousness.

And so Parker continued to walk into the night amidst the storm of his thoughts through the newly falling snow.

Peter Parker's thoughts on time: historical document

0506 – military time – or is that conventional time? I stop to consider. The digits read „5 in a large numeral, and one point – 5:06, if the points which proceed numbers one considered to be additions to it, units added upon a determinate grouping of same. I consult my „reason to verify this hypothesis, to achieve truth and obviate doubt. If they are based, these dashes and dots, or units/numbers, then surely they will be countable and yield a given amount: 1 unit + 2 or greater. Mathematically I find what I sought – truth. Truth, verification, is the solidification, the achievement of certitude, against the uncertain, the restless negative. Truth is barren. As unitary it is all the more so; add a unit on top of itself again and again – the product? – a unit which yet must be qualitatively different (distinct) from other units in the totality being considered. Else – nothing but a unit. This defeats the notion of math through the revelation of its inherent absurdity: units cannot be added because that presupposes likeness. But likeness would obliterate difference and thus in turn would render everything (without distinction) unitary and thus absurd. Math cannot be added or manipulated because it is rigid.

Units, shapes, categories. Unitary, formalism. A tool, just as a watch is – a tool of measurement, the exclusive nature of quantitative units (what these essentially are; a unit always entails the remainder of the phrase: „a unit of measurement“, with the implicit premise of its being for that purpose). Math should be exalted in its efficacy – everything else that it claims is *ultravires*, namely foreign and inappropriate to whatever task, whatever phenomenon – whatever!

“5:16 – military time – or is that conventional time?” Peter Parker looked at his watch and thought about the nature of time and its mathematical basis (cf. Oct 16th: „Peter Parker's thoughts on time“ on historical document). We take over where Peter left off, feeling as he is in the ecstasy of spirit.

„...whatever! Math is a tool – period. All questions about it having some sort of transcendental value are nil and should be swept under the rug of forgetfulness. But

now that I've taken it up I must concentrate my focus upon it and utilize it as a tool. I'm in the flower shop buying Mary Jane flowers and I note, as with all worldly phenomena that are viewed aesthetically, the colourful multitudinousness and endless nuance, allurements and intrigue of the flowers: their shape and relations to others, their colour, texture – the smile of the salesperson in all its minute detail.

- But alas, it is specifically this detail which leads to the lack of insight into the beauty they parade the atmosphere with. Individuating them into isolated groups, counting these numbers of like species, the teeth in the mouth of the salesperson, and appending the price of the flowers to each as a natural element of the essence – so that the flowers become valued as a commodity, are given exchange and divested of aesthetic value. Their aesthetic relations amongst themselves are devastated – no more blues and whites and orange–purple ensembles; now everything is rendered barren, their relations based upon the abstract quanta of price, compared and analyzed comparatively – to the rumination of the beauty inherent in these natural forms. – Oh well! Mary Jane wanted flowers – she insisted pretty emphatically, and so – here goes; a decision is needed – so it will be made!

Could Peter Parker, modelled on the most conventional skeleton of college-aged youth, the most regular-clothed in the flesh of an empirical generalization – the college norm – be anything but a recluse, the contrary of the norm, the diametrical opposite? As such he is the most absurd of tragic figures for he conceives of himself contradictorily – he is „A“ but espouses „B“, the latter being this college-aged norm: social, an attractive man (behaviourally) – in short a generally attractive character. But who then, does he repulse people? What is it about Peter Parker which generally dissuades people from advancing, themselves flung aside like the opposite polarity of a magnet, and himself also through their own rejection of him? It is unknown to Peter why this is, why he must suffer the fate of the sick animal ill-suited to living like all the rest are capacitated to.

Gosh! The pain of existence sure does become acute up here in these Olympian heights – and action itself undergoes a diminution, a decrease, the sapping of powers through their having no forum in which to employ themselves; stagnation – that's the present actuality – absolute stagnation, as sitting in one's own filth waiting for the god of change to descend and transform the world in consultation with the object of change – myself. No, such a god will never come, all that exists now.

And this endless revolution of aims about my head: here, there, now, then, this, that, what, why

– a compaction of seemingly disparate elements into one cohesion whole – the terror of being incapacitated, disempowered – who could understand this but they who live it – utter confusion.

Peter Parker's Despairing

Peter: Her I am in the old lecture hall from my first year! Yessir it brings back the memories. Why, I can remember that time, my desire to work, and my yearning for inclusion within the group. Now I have arrived once more, full circle – have become even more the recluse I formerly was. It must be this dang philosophy! The fact that it is deprecated by the majority sends me out towards the margins; the fact that I no longer have confidence in my becoming

a professional scientist through my lack of grades is even more an instigation of my reclusion, driving me outwards, towards the places of isolation which constitute my livelihood, my 'sen zum todes'.

Well, Petey, what trouble have you gotten yourself into this time? No friends, no history of friends, nothing of the sort, and a constant furtherance, separation, of myself from everyone. Ah well, what's a spidey to do when you have powers which heighten your awareness, senses amplified to a great height so that all experiences become exponentially meaningful and affecting? All focus dwells on one issue and that is inclusion. A

representative of the social has the power, through poor treatment, however unintentional, of driving me back into the social totality – or rather (!), into reclusion; I said that myself unintentionally, expressing a wish before the fact. – Ah well, I guess I'll just have to plod along in life...

So thinking our intrepid hero went through the motions of his day: he awoke, he went to the university, worked upon his researches into the given of experience, into the philosophical and scientific problems which waylaid his mind and all throughout, as a horrible undercurrent which drove him along half-distracted by the madness of its nature was his sexual drive forcing itself towards him, engulfing his thoughts, his being, his mind, and causing the greatest strife in his loins.

All around him as he pursued his course in life, in this present state, he was bombarded by the looks, cooing, and desiring voices of women, wanton for his flesh. He yearned for them but that they stood separated from himself to a great degree caused him no end of self-hatred, hatred of his own weakness and effeminacy; emasculated by his own inability to be the outgoing and gregarious mate desired by women he cursed himself and his fate of becoming the pathetic nothing that he was, cast out and given the Ostraka

of women's negative judgement. We catch up with Peter in once such instant, wherein he was best by the enervating quality of sexuality, its inability to extend itself towards the object of his desires:

Gosh! Here I am sitting on a concrete wall by the trees overarching the university cannons and a, dare I say, 'hot babe', comes up and sits beside me, though at a remove necessitated by her own feminine logic, a demonstration that she is an object to be procured by myself and that I, as an attractive young male whom she desires, must speak to her and make her the so-called 'first move'. Well I can't damn it! Can't she see that!? Does she not have eyes in her head and a voice with which to speak? Oh well, a typical occurrence and a typical loss as well! – And there she goes, off in the understanding that I am not a strong enough male...

Despairing's Supersession of Hope

Gosh! All I can think of is the G-string which covers the woman's private area – is this indecent? Good question, Peter, but the answer is completely unknown to me. I just walk around trying to calm my bothered mind, bothered by the loneliness of a thousand instances, and then I meet with all of these tempting desires. The torment lies in the fact that it can't be consummated – and the over-sexuality of my presentations, those things I meet with in experience in relation to my non-sexual life – it is torment, torture. And all that exists on my mind is the weight of the word 'sex' – to the vitiation of all prior philosophical thoughts, of all more profound and enlightening ideals. I feel myself to be living a death, in truth, but is there a way out?

Continuing to mull in the manner, Parker's depression escalated, reducing him to an immobilized mass of functional flesh, of bodily rhythms and non-human composite materials. He was a living wound, a gaping hole of seared flesh into which one poured lemon juice – it was the wound which this poured and it was Peter who suffered through the sharp pains of its razor-slashing neglect. Every turn of the head was a wound, was a deepening and surface-scarring of the previously cultivated one. He was so fraught with bleeding cuts and tears that his psychological corpus had been disfigured beyond recognition to the aberrative state it had achieved. There was no hope in independent agency for a solution to his displacement from all things – no, now he must seek out another, stoop to the level of dependence and bow to the yolk of another's assistance. Peter decided upon it one day, through the prompting of one of his ghostly satellite figures, his mother who now existed upon the margins of his life; decided to seek out the harrowing ring of the tone of „professional help“ as it echoed

throughout the room of his vacant mind, vacant through the negation of all thoughts, the purity of blackness achieved through his despair, the only salvation from *felo dese*.

Thus Peter sought out the help of the professional, the anonymous substrate with whom the only acquaintance was its barren generality qua „professional“ an authority which purported to „help“ to „assist“ and remedy, not unlike a physician of the soul, the problem of Peter's entrenchment in his loneliness. Peter's thorough-going scepticism, however, confuted the idea – he had other plans! He would make his life joyous once again through another medium that of a dating service offered on an internet, the computer „internet“ of celebration.

That's exactly it! That's all I'll do, then I will have achieved independence myself, in a causasui manner will have initiated a desirable life for myself. All I need do is pay, an unfortunate John- like enterprise, and then I will have an opportunity to achieve worlds!

But alas! Peter's engagements on this website were poor at best and its absurd quality of intending (however falsely) to bring people together and simultaneously causing a spatial and temporal separation between them (the forms of togetherness, so to speak) made him quickly forsake it. Thus he lost this outlet and was despairing for another one moment but the next joyous, for behold! he had conceived of another plan, that of throwing himself into bars in the hopes that someone would solicit him. Again this proved, though he had never gone at a time when he perceived he would definitely consummate sexual relations, the bewitching hour of proverb, proved to be also fruitless, for circumstantial factors added to his antimonial presence: he had no money, he could not drink alcohol, he didn't enjoy the music or the ambience, etc. For this he had felt that his simple presence was sufficient to fulfill the „bar quota“ – and that an alternative means, namely counselling, would be best in the achievement of – something. What that was he hardly knew. At the counsellor's:

Gee...here I am listening to this talk about other people having problems, about how, though my problems are no doubt valid and can be understood, nevertheless there are other with worse and so I should be happy and satisfied in my life. But how can this be at all relevant? I can never be satisfied living a life like that – it is undesirable and totally outside of my existence and pointillistic sphere of life. My life is like standing on a pin – there is nowhere to go and I cannot leave the present locus, or the present moment in action; I cannot act towards the future but merely gaze out as a spectator upon my past and future, and posit my

present self as the object skewed with another pin upon the surface of a pin. Like the point of one pin

which touches the surface of the other that upon which I lie impaled through the brain I cannot move, else the whole edifice will collapse, I stay inertly immobile for fear of collapse through reckless or even cautious movement. Do you understand what I mean? – No, she doesn't understand even though she pretends to – if you're not a norm, like all the rest, then you're thrown out onto the margins, into the shadows where no light reaches you; the cold stillness of the night envelops you, like a chrysalis you are frozen in hibernation and death reaches out towards you in the wind, flying at horrible speed to snatch you up in iron fist and squeeze the brittleness of your crystalized form to dust. – Can you understand what I'm saying? – No. There is nothing here but a machine which desires money, which performs its endless functioning as a medium through which, through whose actions, money is acquired. I am that object upon which the machine works, a passive object unaware of the machine's manipulation of my being. I sit and, spider-like, the machine weaves its theoretical web around me; cocoon-like I am trapped within it.

The appointments which ensued, of which there were only two, turned Peter away from any subsequent ones. No longer was he interested or involved in the conception of personal betterment through this mode – there must be other worlds, other possibilities, other hopes. What these were at present were unidentifiable, though hope gleamed through their bare formal aspect. Life was now a-drifting – science lay aside forsaken and it was no longer a desirable thing for him to pursue, the arms of his life had to be structurally aligned with their necessary means, of which these were heterogeneous. That the burning wreckage of science, the sole medium of Peter's praxis, was disregarded and allowed to reduce itself to the ashes of memory freed Parker from the bonds which conflicted with that freedom necessary for the attainment of his ends. Now he could all the more ardently pursue his underlying essence and potentiality, the sexual tepidness, the moistness of his yearning after the unknown objects of his affection. The counsellors also he proposed to cut loose but upon second thought he decided it would be best simply to solicit them, to solicit a plurality of their opinions as representatives of the other, that desirable and yet for distant other of the social.

Gosh! Again waiting for the counsellor! Petey, you've given yourself over to the authorities now, you've fallen into utter servitude! But I've gotta do it, gotta get close to all the unknown females of the world around me, must – dare I say it! – spread my seeds in conformity with the dictates of nature as it asserts itself in all of my bodily strivings. The wound that I have become must heal and that requires the hands of those who act as palliative beings, nursing

the torn and rent flesh of my soul through delicate caress, through the softness of their attentive voices and tones, their empathetic/sympathetic core. What must I do but solicit those whose function is the object of solicitation? I have naught else – boy I'm sounding like a Victorian here! – and so must pursue the trek I'm currently on in the hopes that it will cultivate in something.

Thus Peter affirmed himself in the face of his own nay-saying, superseded the negative of his thoughts through positing (I, then the narrator, am sounding like a true Hegelian here!) a content-rich positive in his conception, with a will towards its actualization. That day he wanted for the scheduling of his appointment all anticipation as to whether today would be the day of „being seen“ for he felt the imperative to make himself the object of knowledge for a particularization of the universal „Other“ – someone, anyone; that was the pitch of his despair, clearly ringing out into space and threatening to deafen him with its volubility. Positive turns to negate through inability of tolerating that sheerness of intensity, harrowing and marrow affecting tremble of sexual despair. Life had to be consummated and Parker had to establish the way towards this consummation, so that it need only be traversed.

But it was this traversing itself that was the impossible of his life, or perhaps impossible, he could not say for he lacked strength to speak. His legs – were they strong enough, could they carry him anywhere? He had no knowledge of himself though having absolute knowledge, the Gnothe Seuton had destroyed self-conception in any concrete way, in the way of feeling. That night Peter went to a bar and discovered an old acquaintance whom he met before entering and to whom he made a wager in the coatroom:

You know my circumstances Armbruster – don't you? I thought you did. Though you don't want anything to do with me owing to mutual difference, nevertheless I have a proposal to make to you, which is as follows: I'll wager you 10 dollars that I can't get a woman to talk to me all night; I have proposed to myself to stay here two or more hours and in that time I will achieve nothing, though I won't – so don't say it Armbruster – display standoffish behaviour or antagonism. – Deal? Good. We shall see what happens.

Here I am just being the pathetic marginal that I am, just sitting at a bar and ordering a bottle of water in the despairing hopes of attempt – that being to attract the opposite sex towards me. The minutes tick by and I stare into space, mumbling my pathetic situation through my teeth, discoursing about how lonely and cast out I am – the height of self-pity! But who else will care enough to speak. And there are hardly any women in the bar, hardly any

who show the slightest interest in myself. Oh well Petey, you prospects appear slim to nil here don't they? Alas it looks as if the ten dollars will be mine after all. That is an allegory: women cause men privation through their presence (sapping their manly strength) but an even greater privation through their absence. What's this I hear? Women discussing 'in general' of course, and within my range of hearing, presumably with the intention of my overhearing, their discourse about how 'pathetic and sad' it is when 'guys' (myself) just 'sit there'. Well that is truly the way of things isn't it? The man is Mr. Macho, the woman Ms. Pretty-passive, and their dialectic is such that positions the man as causal agent, acting upon the passive object. And they say: we are equal, we are sick of being objectified! Well then don't act like objects, be equal through being aggressive yourselves! Ideology confuses one as it shapes him, and if one really pays attention to it he is shaped into a monstrosity. That is the way it has gone with me

– dang Spidey sense (!) – they are always running amok with my desire for stoical equanimity and peace of mind. Now the body is a maelstrom, now a tempest of impassioned emotions. I want it to stop but no one can act as the agent of my inner calm – I cannot achieve that state by myself any longer!

So saying Peter was awarded his ten dollars with downcast eyes in the face of a disgusted acquaintance. No longer was Peter at all himself but a reeling ball of despairing emotions, an endless fluxual construction.

Gosh! Here I am in this bar, just sittin' for the first time experiencin' the bar scene of proverband conventional repute. And all this music which blasts against my brain, the sound waves crippling and destroying it little by little so that, in the inevitable result, one becomes quite dull

– and I was at such a height of thinking before my own – to say it all at once 'sex drive' got the better of me and dampened my thoughts. Well, at least I'm here and have the opportunity to achieve something, some women coming around me and soliciting my attention, at the most my body and – the unexpected – my discourse. That I could have another engage in a discussion with me, however brief – that would be a god-send, would be a boon of fate. But I doubt that it would be, that it could be; and I doubt this same doubt. It shows itself on my features, I am so aware of my face conveying my own despond and dinner strife – the inner or transferred outward through an inability to control it and thus I face the world exposed as who I am, the despondent as – perhaps they draw this inference insofar as they care at all – one left out of all the affairs of life. But now my life is lived inadequately, around me I see sparkling bottles of booze and drink them in with my mind's eye, in perception; I see the laughter of others who surround me and I empathize, I transpose myself into their form

*and enjoy the rippling waves which course through my body. And meanwhile the music plays,
loudly knocking at my brain and preserving itself as an incessant flow, an underlying ~~there~~*

of the life experienced herein. I begin to lose my mind; mind becomes distorted and thought isobstructed – I go over to the moment and kiss the icy-cold breath of my own loneliness. Herein I am in death throws: I toss up my will and all its affirmation and seek out a completely heterogeneous way, course in life.

That way is towards the other, but now I cannot achieve it, can only seek out a pathundercover of night for when daylight descends I'm too fearful to show myself to the sight of the adept crowd – those from whom I am bracketed off, the social, economic, and worldly adepts whose lives constitute and revolve around the moment.

Peter Parker continued to allow the „bar scene'bother his mind more and more until the allotted time of his leave-taking, one hour after his arrival. At last and in the depths of depression and despair, Parker threw himself out of the bar and walked shakily down the street followed by the mistrustful and judgemental gaze of the crowd seated outside. The night's cool air calmed his mind to a degree, so disoriented was he that he almost careened as he walked, though he was a complete teetotaler and drank, to his complete humiliation, a bottle of water only in front of the unconcerned crowd. We meet up with Peter again as he walks down the deserted midnight streets:

Golly! (Sob), why does everyone have to be so trivial and render me a complete outcast – for it is they who judge, they who confer value or who take it away. All I wanted to do was to live a life like the rest! But I am so heterogeneous (using words like 'heterogeneous') that no one can relate to me or vice versa. I have nothing in my life which is of social value. It is a teeter totter balance, a scale of practical activities and values: I want the social presence in my life – but I want intellectual value also – and now that I have become what I am I cannot distance myself from myself and seek the other. The other is that distance of infinite yearning and desire – I cannot go over to it, it eludes my every attempt at grasping it.

„Yes I went through a hellish time', thought Peter as he sat in the local malt shop with his girlfriend. Now I am finally out of it and can pronounce my own love of life, joyous exaltation within its arms. And all through simple means achieved through a willingness to stomp from the icy reaches above that has been my intellectual haven for many years. It is useless to analyze all that went on in the past and now the moment takes me away from that horror, to a critical distance, a calmly reflecting observant distance that in my own most satisfaction with life and satiety with what surrounds and what welcome me to life.

The woman who sits across from me is both understanding and concerned about and of my life's complex existence, and though I don't owe this transformation to her it has nevertheless consummated this presence, been the effusion of champagne as it bubbles from out of the bottle

– the cork I had pulled, through my own agency, and the bubbles' laughter was supplied by this creature. Still there is so much to know of one another and thus our relationship could be said to be still in the bloom of youth, rosette and flowering in myriad colours.

And now I have dependence at last – and yet still press onwards toward heights I can't fathom, thrusting myself into the sublime more and more as that which was not attaining to clarity and I reach out my hand to grasp it. Dependency's shackles have been broken and lie at my feet as memories superseded, testaments to my strength. But it yet seems so uncertain and empty, and, though I sit here with this woman, still a stranger, I feel the icy-cold fingers of my own alienation from the other and the world. How can I believe in my own involvement and inclusion within anything that outstrips me, through its own history, when I am outstripped by it? Ah- what does it matter anyway, life is a hellish chore, a hateful existence. And all I dream of are Christmas night – of togetherness with sparkling baubles, smells of comfort and attachment to a reality wholly human. And to sit in a malt shop like this, simply to sit here and do nothing, while the world undergoes its trials and affairs, loves and lusts and enmities – that is to stop its inexorable revolving end to place oneself outside of the circularity of seasons and generations, bodily processes and desires. Is it not better this way – to seek escape and therein, in a hermitage, to break away from the whole of life and shut oneself in a sepulchral environment of musty couches and ancient days – without historical references, without anything binding one to the earth? So that he is then liberated from constraint and might attain his own negation, be effaced from all that hampers him? But is it not the effacement of his own desires and thus a premature death that awaits him within this hermitage, be it a suburban home, a minivan, or

some other commoditized reality? The pretty face which babbles and confronts me across the short distance of a table, which thus becomes „our table“ and attempts to bring us to coalescence, is the mask of the ell-woman – empty and meaningless, a skull clothed in the flesh of youthful vibrancy.. Youth fades and this is its corruption. No longer can anything but the senility of elderly years play itself out upon earth... why?

Because youth is a fatality and gradually recedes unto death like the man who knowsthat the quicksand in which he is placed will be the cause of his suffocation and eventual

death. Youth's death is in its development beyond itself into a metamorphosed state: the corruption of old age. It is no longer something that I fear, rather it is something that is my own fatality, subject matter of description and prescription alone, and nothing else. The totality of existence I find concentrated in this present configuration of tables, laughter, smiles, and subdued music playing in the jukebox. And thus the world is uninferentiable, cannot be known as it becomes crushed into the present.

“Utilityville”

‘And you see...this is how it is...’ / yes I’m quite aware of that but...owing to your...uh / -yes-/yourlackofrelevantcredentialsinthisfieldI...can’texactlyrecommendyou to our – I should say ‘my’ rather – to my manager...I’m sorry/

These words were conveyed in hushed tones, with a sympathetic lilt to them which bespoke the genuineness and sincerity in which they were conveyed. The two women were in an office and the sun was beginning to set slowly over the horizon, outlining the buildings with its grave refulgence, majestic sombre quality.

With the setting of the sun the man to whom these fateful words were addressed also sunk in his chair as if it were his heart that was weighing him down like an anchor, forcing him to sit and affix himself in the murky depths of the office chair. But the strong, burly arms of the man sitting behind the desk stood up and wrenched him from the earth in which he had just begun to root himself. They patted him on the shoulder in a sympathetic way – perfectly correspondent with the intoning quality of the voice – and guided him slowly out of his seat. The manipulated was at first shocked in the hands of his manipulator – as if they were cattle prods getting him, a staring-eyed creature, to direct him towards a slaughterhouse – the perfect motivation – but then he placidly acquiesced and, with a meek smile, allowed himself to be propelled through the slaughterhouse door and towards destitution. He was now back in his familiar state of unemployment and the calming effect of being back in the uncalm of insecurity was more of a shock perhaps – and an absurdity in a quintessential vein – than those hands which had signified his rupture with a future possibility.

It was now dark. The possibility had been exhausted and street lamps lit the way from this dead zone of impossibility; there was no opportunity of deriving and existence from thence. There was not so much as a fleeting glance on the part of this poor unfortunate and the brain continued on its way weighted down with thoughts of future hopes. A plethora of avenues presented themselves and down these the man walked: some blind alleys, others freeways too broad and indistinct to follow along in his miniature vehicle – he was no match for their breadth; others yet were too windy and again uncertain as to when they would open up onto straight courses, others still too circuitous in relation to their finite destinies – and he, this exhausted mind, had none; no destiny, but he had surrendered to fate and was tossed about by it, in the belief that it would wash him ashore in some distant and magical land after cooling the overheated machinery whose vehicular movements were stripped of their potentiality and propulsive effect – he was now adrift.

The great and promising thing was that no doldrums confronted him; the converse was that he had entered into tempestuous weather and its threatening loom. Circumstances surrounded him and he spun like a top to face each in turn, only to be spun again by the hand of fate to face others – blurred by the spinning and uncertainty as to whether any cessation would be realized. The mind has taken on all of the confusion of exteriority; it had imbibed it into its maw – ravenous and insatiable for ends to the point of the ineffectuality of realizing any and going over to the means, for no concrete steps had yet been taken.

He was living in Utilityville. Every microscopic action was to undergo analysis in the causal-functional vein and it was thereby ascribed value – after the fact, after its assessment. The reasoning process thus undergone was functional through and through, a wholly ‘means-directed’ activity – teleologies were ignored – their place was after the means. One might think that the end would guide the means – for this is the lexical logic of it all – but it is the converse – and as follows: the end was merely a subsidiary end and thus became transformed into a means; the means was relegated to subsidiary forms and was to serve – in hierarchical fashion – the means which acted as its substrate. And thus all actions themselves imploded in this means-driven activity – for no ends were to be sub-served by virtue of the fact that they were absolute through the very economy of it all; this functional thought ruled out any conception of the end and refused to allow ends to manifest themselves: humanity, love, praxis, creation – all were now obsolete forms of human endeavour; and the absurdity of it was that all means pre-supposed ends and that the very form of the means was the end of X, the irreducible of human endeavour (perhaps praxis itself). The validation or legitimation of this absurdity was negated through the negation of these ends in an implosion of all human subjectivity in relation to the over-arching criterion of function: function as the be-all and end-all function as means and end simultaneously – a destructive immediate causality which rendered futile any extraneous (to this system) causality – the notion of cause sub-served economy and in that logic all analysis served the bankbooks.

The man, yet another ignorant soul overcome by the perturbation of functionality, gazed about in this blindness and thought along the linear tracks of causality. The street lights caused his blindness – they hurt his eyes – therefore they should not be looked at and the cause would go away, everything then (in that eventuality) would be ‘all right’ and he would be ‘secure and exculpated’. But to be justified in an action – does that not pre-suppose an irreducible motivation for justification, namely security? But this irreducible could just as well be construed as a multiplicity and thereto no ‘irreducibles’ (ala Kant) and they are left in free-floating space as having no content. Thus they are indefinite and arbitrary and the end is again forgone. Name your philosophy – but utility, despite such nominalism issuing as it were ex cathedra, will still reign as the sovereign principle of this world. Welcome to Utilityville.

Nocturnal Lights

Vehicles moved slowly throughout the night keeping quiet pace with its rhythm, the light-speckled towers connecting the human with the divine reality. It was as if divinity had made its appearance in the form of technology – *divus techné* – the god of skill and human ingenuity created a network of unattainable reality, a surreal expanse paradoxically no expanse at all as bordered by the great matrices of light and concrete, metal and glass. The human had been usurped by the non-human and the latter had altered the structure of its related term through dialectic of hegemony.

Not only this cityscape with its strangely subduing and yet harsh glow – reflecting the subduing hum of electronic gadgets which rendered harsh those minds which, original and organic, were forced to co-exist with them – but the imperceptible structures of human destiny in its concretization held this bizarre rapture. The bureaucracies and their machination assumed this usurping function and loomed over the human which it oppressed and carried it along. Thus it was harsh, Draconian in its causing to function of human deployment; but it was also subdued and subduing in its very lackadaisicality, its everydayness; the manufacturer of everydayness and routine.

All systems, all complexes of entities, harsh and soft, tangible and intangible, pressed themselves around their operators, who were defined by their relation to the system and had value conferred on them in relation to their relevant powers; all of these were no more a constraint (and thus all talk of usurpation was a falsehood) than they were a liberation and affirmation of human subjectivity from this constraint; human subjectivity had ceased to exist in its functioning, a paradox of life and death which had placed it nowhere and everywhere, an implosion within the whole of society from which it arose and to which it sunk as a still-birth, a living death. Thus the life/death function had lost its meaning and so to have all values. One must simply go with the flow and derive what value he could from the cacophony that followed from his actions like a butterfly and its ramified wing beats; like a butterfly the human drove in his car moving throughout life and stirring the waters of existence with his operation in the social totality, in the non-social totality – a new cosmos – of concrete, glass, buildings, and night-black skylines. The sun had become eclipsed by its proceeding stage and this later was hanging on for good; but that was old news then and is older still; now the life properly so-called is one nocturnal and one must adapt with the flow – a Heraditean flux – of reality or be torn apart by its vicious inexorability. Thus the road sped by and the lights, and the driver was now content in his blindness.

Operability

Throughout he was defined by his functions, by his operations and actions. All of these synonyms directly denote the same thing: an employment and, adjectivally, he was throughout employable, for this was his function, his action, and operation. Walking step by step, each distanced equivalently through an approximate abstract estimate, head held so that its ocular capacity might survey the oncoming field of objects and objectified reality which his propulsion brought forth into a dangerous proximity; it was dangerous as might conflict with his operations and movements; it was dangerous as it, this objectified field of matter, was structured in accordance with his ends as their means – for necessarily he had to direct himself throughout this world and a direction required space across which direction might be made. Arms swung to equilibrate, so to speak, the flowing operations of his body – each segment operated functionally and integrally with the whole of the system, his organs or, an organ system for employability in the concrete.

The wind which he generated through his quick movements – a wind which was individualized and existed only for him – was inhaled and exhaled in complete precision and regularity with the remaining components; it drove him further as a bellows feeds the flames of a burning fire – his soul. Forward he moved and attention shifted, concentrated, upon those objects which most starkly impeded his task – and that was operation and employability in accordance with the task seemingly exterior to his present state – to become at ease, unemployed and immersed in a relaxing state of passivity; but the employment was perceived – through a functional interference, known by the name of an act of reason – and it served as the appropriate means to the end.

There was no inversion of means and end here, only a necessary temporal causality in which the antecedents anteceded the consequents and vice versa; this was reason in the mode of immanence.

One might here be led to critique the employable man, the operable man as defying transcendentalism through his fixity of gaze upon the ground – it acting as his pathway towards the end, with all of its slopes and gradational angles. – But such an allegation would be without any weight as foreign to the nature of such a man, are indefinable by any other, a fixed entity (as fixed as his gaze) contained within a formal system of functionality, means, and end in a continual cyclicism, a generator or causality which never terminated in any definite end – such was the employable character, its structure being simply and in itself ‘to be employed’ – and nothing more.

Thus no transgressor of divine reality, notional or deific, was acted out through the employability perceived upon this dark street, streetlamps shining and reflecting their light back into its source amidst the wet environment – as if the light, however artificial, did not want to survive on this path of darkness, of blindness; but it stuck there, on the

ground and in pools of frozen water, streaming up as if in supplication to the man who passed by. But the man refused to look, kept his face on immanence, and drug along in endlessly rhythmic gesture. Even now the pen strokes reflect this harmony – but it is not a pleasing harmony so much as a machine-like productivism, factory-line operability about the material being sold to an anonymous audience at an indeterminate time.

A Sojourn into the Artificial

The body being fed the mind can now work. I want to discuss my sojourn throughout the streets of the city during the setting of the sun, a time that spanned its last shimmering force initially and ended in its last vestiges, traces of fiery light being left in the sky to do both the whole of the reality it was leaving behind. The traces were its memory burning brightly in the mind and sky, an abrupt turn of the body winking out its presence and simultaneously that symbol of the night – the moon in its fullness, a proud ethereal figure radiating its own glow upon the earth, yet another deity reaching itself out towards the percipient who stares in awe of its sublimity.

The sign on the commercial pre-fabricated building stood larger, brighter, and more focally on the horizon than did this full moon. It was as if the artificial was attempting to preclude the natural; the one disjunctive term trying to pre-dominate the other and so solve the dilemma of which is ‘most’ real. This is the human vindication of their transformative perversion of nature; rendering it asexual, not underlain with a primordality which had at one point ruled the cosmos and drove humans to the worship of the gods in the service of sacrifice – most appropriate since the gods themselves were barbaric. But now the god is the artificial, the simulacrum and he quells any atavistic thoughts of origin, of nature. Nature, with its faux representatives (faux wood, stone, lights), has been negated, or sublated rather, in this artificialization of the world called the human influence, society and its laws, civilization.

And yet there is a certain charm about these artificial products – namely their decay. For with a will to pristine-state these same products are exposed in their lie, theirs manifest in the rust, the dilapidation and eventual demolition they undergo – keeping pace with the idea of a contingency of forms but superseding the natural cyclicism of birth and corruption. For, when a building collapses or is demolished, a new one is erected in place, one perhaps even more transient, and what is waited for is simply the purchase of an empty lot, the signing of the deed and pertinent legal processes, and one may begin with development – and a new birth has occurred, after the death of its antecedents, the descendent must exist insofar as it plays a crucial role in this necessary causality – and this is the way all things are conceived of to one assimilated into this artificial, closed system, namely as an endless propagation of forms, each as transient as its predecessor

and soon to make way for its replacement who will eclipse its being just as the moon eclipses the sun.

And one thought that the austerity of the moonlight was an expression of nature. Well here he is wrong and the most vibrant, dancing and ecstatic phenomena are the ones who connote the greatest austerity; thus no longer are we living in a world that can be adequately grasped by thought; rather we are living on the surface of appearances behind which click the mechanical gears of their operation. Society as a whole has become machine-like and each component remains in its functional capacity as its source of being; outside of this the meaning of these parts – when sundered from each other – is naught and one who would regain this sole womb of being must scurry around picking up the pieces of a lost hope; for even if he managed to recover all that had become exploded, he would have recovered nothing but a machine of superficiality which recurrently produces and reproduces itself without end.

A levelling of all that has been constructed is the greatest fear of those who ideologically follow the linear path of the machine; a levelling and transplantation back into nature. – But perhaps what should be feared most is the maintenance of this ever-increasing efficiency of the machine's operations and (perhaps) a consequent levelling of all 'positive' elements of nature. But nature is neither positive nor negative nor morally evaluative; and this is the fear given expression by those who so ardently support the functioning of this machine: the unknown, the non-moral, and the non-meaningful. – Our tendency to anthropomorphize has taken its toll, what's next?

Impossible Worlds

If it weren't for the hum of the refrigerator, I could conceive of myself as a nobleman hundreds of years ago stooping over his writing desk (do noblemen stoop, a question requiring pertinent knowledge for its answer is but one that cannot be afforded as the refrigerator continues its incessant hum); documenting his profound insights, or composing a letter to one of his kith or kin, or perhaps going over the accounts of his estates, or business affairs. It is the natural light which transplants me in this ancient time, one covered over by layers of dust which keep on building, corrupting the long-forgotten artefacts of past vitality and testifying to its demise. We would relive this impossible life: a nobleman stooping over his writing desk, for example – but it is all a play of visions, a fantasy.

But what good is reality? With its refrigerator hums and the engine-roars of buses as they speed by – no longer any carts drawn by horses, any chaises pulled by thoroughbreds such as a nobleman would be driven in. Rather we ride now in vehicles without any persona – a vehicle anyone could travel in, a catalyst of his anonymity and

conveyor of the nameless to equally nameless destinations themselves devoid of the promise of future atavism in the minds of others. For to know one is to know all and nobility has left us for the hollow shell of its fabrication; I don't write with a quill nor does my shirt contain embroidery of gold or hand-woven materials, themselves farmed from my estate. No, the contrast is this: a reality and a fabrication, a hyper-reality; two distinct epochs themselves separated by infinitely graded shading between white and black. Without wishing to invoke moral/value terms the white and black both could represent one or the other epoch – that is not what matters. What matters is that all fictitious reality, all noblemen stooping over desks of mahogany, are separated through an opposition from the real, though we don't acknowledge this fact – for in the minds of those who ride alien vehicles – or who don't even ride at all, rather take a ride in cyberspace, a levelling of all concrete reality – that these beings find their hope in a fabricated existence – just look at pre-planned communities, which, absurdly enough, make pre-planned lives. – And thus they have this distillation of reality, distilled into packaging and entertaining form, usurp their present, for the latter is a melancholic plague that descends upon these beings through their very absence and is instigated in the pre-giveness of the alien landscape facing them and alien force of utilitarian necessity which rules them.

But is this so much a necessity as opposed to a sufficiency? That ideological conditioning is sufficient for the incubation of the idea of necessity in their fallible minds? Look what the nobleman has become to them: a reflex reference to impossible worlds.

Surface Appearances

Every single day a new date entered upon the margin of the page (for I would hardly say 'in', rather 'upon'). And it is entered upon the page for two reasons: 1) the superficiality consequent to the fact of 2) a machine-like mode of life. But a cause is begged here and that, clearly, is the exteriority which is the *causa externalis* of internal activity the world impinging upon that part of itself which would attempt a transcendent coup in its transcendentality. There is thus no above or below, simply a totality of flux without depth, perceived only as a surface reality of appearances. Thus the date is entered 'upon' the surface reality of this the medium of my thoughts, given an artistic remodelling. It is all a result of the latter cause, this machinism. And I had spoken of reality qua exteriority 'impinging' itself upon the monad which unites and who is consequently no monad; a non-enumerable entity which confers upon itself its own existence and modalities.

It is (to speak briefly) society which creates this regularization of life and one's activities – for what does the hermit in the woods or the desert need regularity for unless to serve the divine grace? But we, clearly, serve no divine grace, merely a would-be apotheosis of

it in ourselves. But still we do not implant our activities in between the furrows of abstract structure as a service to ourselves alone. No, rather there are competing gods in the Pantheon and they are the enumerable monads who construct – en masse – this system of regularity, a cohesive whole designed for cohesive functioning. And in this mote of life one loses himself to the inexorability of Ixion's wheel, the setting sun bringing forth the night, itself to be eclipsed by awakening daylight; and throughout one marches to the beat of a drum alien to himself and which he didn't construct; one that sounds the tempo of his actions, whether slow, fast, or non-existent, for example in forced retirement and even forced death – it is for his own good! – And with that the march ceases and he can finally escape regularity. Or can he? If he is truly not a monad but an ensemble of relations then his life is preserved – cryogenically – in the sterile clauses of death certificates, wills, and debts. Thus he can never die until all of his relations which use him as a reference point, a slip of the tongue when referring to past experiences: 'that's what so-and-so did... oops' – until they die his life remains in purgatory of legality and memory. And this is because one is caught up in the system which has mapped him out in all of his intricacies, has demarcated the areas of activity and categorized him thereby; throwing a net of control which has him in over all attempts at escape; for he was weaned of the machine and tasted of its artificial milk (or is it natural – or both?), its processed nutriment. And thus he grew invested with a certain character antenatally. Born to serve and to die in harness, for the summum bonum – or maybe for a select few? In any case he served and ostensibly he was, eo ipso, taken care of. But this was all a surface appearance and artificial reality, a dissimulated presence; the happy advocate, of grant corporations and power entities (what are their boneless, their dimensions really?) gave the faceless a face, but one so wholly commercialized that reality was no longer as it had been, a modest looking soul. Now it had been given a facelift: to make it more 'appealing', to induce people to 'buy into it' and to spread the seeds of this falsehood; a dissemination of dissimulation and consequent dullness of mind, a jaded apathy more akin to a living death than genuine life.

Flight from Fancy

An idyllic scene conjured by the weather and sounds of birds: an autumnal pastoral mist wafting from the water at the signs of a cold morning. Bullrushes and brown reeds making themselves stakes in the ground of nature's presence, markers or signs which indicate its territory to the exclusion of all else. – And yet we are here, we humans who have come in this early fall morning to hunt the birds which give voice to their instinctive motivations, calling to one another across the pond, from nests concealed in the reeds and from upon high on the leaf-bereft trees, watching in alertness as a defensive militia. – And we, the intruders, invaders, are here. We have not chosen peace

for to do so would have meant leaving our guns on their perches, in the cabinets, storehouses of our arms. Rather it is a gesture of hostility we bring forth and the birds, unbeknownst to them and their military technics of flying and bombardment, are to be made helpless sacrifices to our own primordial instincts which, with the aid of our technical apparatus – our shell belts, powder horns, and guns; binoculars and camouflage – will be a satiety for the moment of the insatiable. But eventually we will have had enough and pronounced our contentment in returning to our office buildings and alienated selves. But out here, amidst the mist and reeds with the dawning sun yet low on the horizon, we are once again men in a feral mode. And who would say with any justice that this feral mode, this primordiality which we take as defining our masculinity, is a fabrication of society. We have been divested of voluntary action; voluntarism has been occluded in placing absolute control and power in ideology, the substrate of the sciences in their thralldom to the state.

Are we not men defined in this classical mode? Do we not seek out the destruction of another in our will to power? Or perhaps we simply enjoy the outdoors and desire to go out for a stroll? And do not have any legitimation for doing so and so must appeal to the masculine models for a passcode to enjoy pleasantries in the outdoors. Who knows – perhaps all we wanted was a tea party for two and pleasant conversation. But even if this should arise – is it not the springboard of feral antagonism? Are we not bulls in a china shop when it comes to pleasantries? And to include women in the endeavour as delightful picnic companions – would that not result, gradually and imperceptibly, in the gradual and imperceptible closeness (closer and closer) of the sexes towards the sex act – and a consequent spoilage of this tea party? If the consequent adduced is a necessity based upon an irreducible motivation (and perhaps here we perceive ideological conditioning, the model usurping the reality, hemming it in) then perhaps all hopes for a tea party over a hunter party are lost in the scatter of buckshot and falling corpses, splashing down into the water to the baying of dogs.

And are not men rather like dogs than bulls in the china shop? Are we not rather silly and happy-go-lucky libidinal characters; rather simple and content in our simplicity? - For the modality of men – if one is to essentialize from me to ‘man’ and extrapolate abstract characteristics on concrete, perceptible bodies – is libidinal, and we may exist along any wavelength of aggression and passion, and synthesis of these same. At least we may say that our lives are not linearly structured, that we are the victims of causality; for we are not the victims of emotional responsiveness at all – we are, simply, not victims. Rather we are beings whose morality is, and always will be, subject to interpretation depending upon the judge and the judged.

But most importantly, if we are to situate men, it is a question of liberation from repressive models of masculinity (whether they be the tea or hunting party model) and the carrying of ourselves with natural affect and instigation; to do in accordance with

nature what the situation dictates – and this is precisely the problem: a loss of human agency in the face of normative prescriptions; prescribed in the whole configuration of this world to the eclipse of natural being. Ideology has filtered everywhere, the better to engineer an effect, a product, a product – and we are it. Ideological engineering has created many ‘natural products’ throughout its course, and they are invariably aberrative despite their semblance of being.

And yet I like hunting, have always wanted to go and involve myself in an activity such as that – still do - . But I also like tea parties (harkening back to Alice in Wonderland) and would engage in pleasantries therein with my hat (1/10) and bowtie, and Alice sitting next to me. Perhaps this is an inchoate, naïve, sexuality still incubating within me and this is what pervades my thoughts and conceptions – am I diminished in my intrinsic value in such a would-be existence (one which I would, preferentially, rather not have ascribed to myself)? But I feel pleasantness towards the presence of this girl; is this expression of a sexual drive? – Or maybe it is just (exclusively) a feeling. And in exchanging conversation with Alice would I not, imperceptibly and gradually, attempt (or be compelled to attempt) against some sort of subconscious motivation or subconscious will-affect?

And then during this thinking I look back towards the hunting incident and the excitement of they who have cancelled out a life, just as they terminate the occupation of another with a pink-slip, or the voice of another on the phone through hanging up on the presence of another through turning away. Have they, these hunters, these feral beings, identified with the hunting act, the bloodshed and revelry of Thanatos? And what is it that instigates their revelry? And what prevents their beginning a dance not in fields of blood, but in that of flowers at a tea party? Is it the model of ideology through which they have been produced as products, tools to be utilized and turned to effect and advantage as cogs in the Grand machine of bureaucracy, as the apparatus of the globalizing influence which outstrips all parochial realities?

But I want to war and to have peace, to hunt and to parlay with friends and against enemies, unite for a cause and the overthrow of other, foreign causes. Am I, therefore, caught up in this very model, as a participant in a life no longer his own? Should I not escape? Is not a will to escape the reiteration of the model’s cadence? Should I fight? And throw myself apart on the gears of the impossibly assailable in a maelstrom of fragmented body, a disempowered power, the negation of agency in the form of this body? What else can I do; like the reckless hunter or conversationalist I commit myself to being a victim of my own incaution – I shoot myself in the foot or run off at the mouth – and thereby I can no longer hunt, to stand and shoot at game birds; and thereby my reputation ruins the ears of an audience so that my corrupt form precedes me everywhere I would go. Is this not better than being preceded by an alien force in the

person of the model; an artificial person who never possessed any genuine existence all their own?

Kandinsky's Message

Kandinsky's painting initiated into my thoughts a reality that struggled with itself to be real, struggled against an artificially reproduced reality in the form of a sequence of contiguous images radiating from a finite mechanism. Television assumed the role of the producer or reproduced of a reality that had been mediated a thousand times through its processing, its homogenization. No longer did reality stand out with vividness as a railroad entering a tunnel with the sun beaming overhead and power-lines accompanying its path. Rather, like the painting of all these objects, as an actual ensemble of objects which were placed in this given configuration for a utilitarian purpose and which nevertheless could be perceived as a presence and natural background, civilization extrapolated unto nature in its purposive beauty. Maybe the rails, like in Kandinsky's painting, were beautiful in a natural light, as in 'true' beauty, when they were shown to have a being without purpose; more beautiful their actual counterpart whose reflex reference to the purposive in life rendered nature an analytic commodity to be investigated causally and packaged in scientific theory. Perhaps the abrupt cessation of the railroad, pictured in a bird's-eye – a warped perspective of the 'real' – signified the abrupt cessation of the rationalizing influence of the real, and was, consequently, more 'real' than real in the most positive sense. Thus art affirmed itself in the face of the ugliness of the rational, which was only beauty for the most narrow of minds, appealing to shopkeepers and housemaids, mathematicians and engineers, in short the unimaginative.

The painting thus was a dispersion of rationality from its pristine form to a random and nonsensical scattering of non-contiguous forms, themselves warped in their extraction from the real from which they were derived. The opacity of colours which, as a halo of the real's engulfing the false, nature's engulfing its machine-like counterpart, were also the signification of this dispersion as if it were the objects themselves which, through their displacement, were incapable of holding together thus belying their pretensions to an absolute reality.

And yet purpose still seemed to reach out towards one despite the presence of nonsensical unreality – the real as it was known to the audience stretched out towards them, soliciting their adherence and defying their mock compliance. Rationality reined in their forceful interpretation of this colourful scheme, one which held appeal in equivocal ways and to different people was many different things. But the audience here was far too ingrained in the very fibres of their ideology as adherents whose uniqueness was eclipsed by the vibrancy of their participation within convention, within the

fabricated norm of democracy and its subtle caress, instilling them with the comfort and contentment of the shopkeeper upon a sale of dry goods, the mathematician upon completion of a proof whose vigour wound itself around him like a snake and, worm-like, squirmed into the recesses of his being the better to pour the poison into his ear. And thus Kandinsky's attempt to illustrate the real as a boundless, incomprehensible flux was corrupted through the self-contentment of the peasant wisdom bestowed upon it by its viewers who were necessarily its critics, bringing with them pre-conceived judgments and values enclosed in a cynical frame of mind that pronounced its contempt on all which could not be assimilated into its regulative idea, its norm, of the ~~rational~~. For the real would forever remain in its inert and absolute pretention and masquerade for these people, and Kandinsky's message would go unattended through the very blindness bestowed upon that which presented itself in the obviousness of the visual. But eyes were needed to see, and they were plucked out of individuals' heads by the hand of omniscient ideology whose vision and judgment echoed throughout their minds like a cadence.

And then, after the crowd had dispersed, the painting was left to affirm its message to the openness of the space surrounding, and I, the janitor, perceived the message and sought the woods.

"The Nouveau Child" – Incidents of Pater

The traditional paternalist in relation to the nouveau child

Ay! – What's up boy? How ya been? Wanna go out and throw the ol' ball around? No. Maybe... yeah, maybe yah wanna go 'n' climb up bluff's butte, huh? Yeah you wanna climb it, eh? No. Well... perhaps... yeah I know! We could play cops 'n' robbers eh, yeah eh, yeah? No. You say you wanna stay inside and study your math homework? Well... if that's the way it's gotta be – so be it. You... yeah you better go while there's still time before bed. After all you have a fun day tomorrow of... er... uh... of – say boy? Whatcha do for fun anyway? Math? Well... uh... er – I guess it could be kinda fun in a sense. Alright... I'll... uh... see you later on

then. Children just don't understand

Now son I would like you to sit down adjacent to me on the divan... yes... yes I know you have homework – but it's not due for another week son, so I would like us to have some quality time in the manner of father/son tradition circa 1950s – you know the sort. But... you are to enter into a mathematics contest and so require study throughout, such that you will be sufficiently prepared. Well... very well son... I just thought that an atavism wouldn't hurt. Alright I'll speak to you next week sometime...

Thoughts of the child: Oh father, why don't you realize that society is based upon math as the foundation of bureaucratic thought and that without this necessary fundament of survival, survival itself is occluded – it's a simple logic really! - And competition? - If I don't compete I'll likely be trampled underfoot in the job market. I gotta get the edge dad and 'football' just ain't the way to go nowadays. See ya pops, I'm off to study.

(Amplification) Gosh this mathematics sure sends one on quite a psychedelic trip – it's as if I'm transported back into that time of flower power and free love. But nothing's free anymore, not even love. Now you have to buy it, in whatever form; hell, the family itself is based upon economy and all facets of life have been commoditized to the point at which love has become an exchange value, not so much in the giving as in the selling (how much can one profit?) and the buying (how much does it cost me in terms of labour hours and in terms of energy reserves – all quantified).

Yeah dad you sure neglect the obvious don't you: that everything valuable is based upon quantity and, consequently, it becomes commoditized, sellable and exchanged at the level of abstract quanta, namely money. Mathematics here redounds immediately to money dad and you can make the equation if you want to go that deep in the structural relations of the social and economic. Hell dad – the latter has, parasitically, ingrained itself into the former to the total alienation of all formerly independent values. Now they are as so many variables (depending on one's focus) in relation to the constant which is quantity in its most abstract form and, when appended to value (as an operator) renders all variables bound to its logic namely abstractly valued in terms of quantity; quantified in terms of the economic unit, in short dad, valued in relation to the value of currency, given a price, up for sale and investment. And so I want an edge dad – and math is my edge, see; that way they'll never get me, I'll be the one to get them and reverse the roles in the power dynamic. Such is competition dad and, when survival's on the line, this is the way you gotta go, even if, in the process, love's gotta go with it.

Progressive Dad Part 1

Gee wilikers son I just bought a new PC – look at the features, just look at all the operations it can perform, all of the...what's that? You don't 'go in for computers'? – How can that be, we're in the technological revolution!?! Well, to each their own... (Now just wait till I download all-a that porno. This is better than sex!)

(Child) Yeah right dad! Why would I waste my time on such a temporal phenomenon as computers and technology – it is a constant progression of obsolete models, a continual amorphous change of standards. – What could I hope to derive from these but sterility and a headache, not to mention a waste of time? These serve laziness and convenience which renders intelligible their popularity with the bourgeoisie.

(Amplification) Dad wants me hooked into a machine as if I'm to be the servant of a servant – how absurd. Ostensibly providing human agency with greater efficiency they dull the mind and distract it, inculcate in the young a natural dependence upon that which gives them assistance in their pursuit of enjoyment. Now they are bound to the machine rather than playing outside in the great outdoors, experiencing artificial as opposed to natural phenomena – for clearly the natural has been transformed into its opposite. Now we perceive what once was called natural phenomena through the eyes of cybernetics in the machine-like sense: if it doesn't correspond to our representation in the mode of screen visuals and interfaces then it is looked upon as a secondary (and morally and hierarchically secondary – very bourgeois) phenomenon. But I won't allow this scourge of human nature to corrupt me or exercise anything but a negative influence. To perpetuate a cybernation is to me the proportional increase of our alienation from control over our lives, which then become snatched away from us, lose their lustre and vivacity. No longer do we play; and no longer do we have an outdoors to play in, lest this concrete jungle be considered a playground, considered ground in anything but a metaphysical sense (ground = bottom).

And, via those mass media, gravity itself has been disturbed so that we can no longer locate or strategically position ourselves within a forgotten world. And this is the new 'cyberspace' you want me to exist within dad; as a warming (radiation) confine that protects (polices) me with its concerned (suspicious) eye? No dad, I'd rather leave what has truly become, to use a classic phrase, a 'vale of tears', and my eyes burn with the great lack of concrete values, spiritual values invested in human agents. I will go to mourn this time, a premature apocalypse, in the woods furthest away from human endeavour in its form of isolation from the human, in its lust for profit so that the whole supporting network of this endeavour (of logging, of tearing the earth to shreds) is what ends up as its driving force – and the network is impenetrably thick, both blind and deaf to the sorrows of humanity. – See ya dad...

Progressive Dad Part 2

Now son I want you to listen to me – not that I'm forcing you but I hope that you will just listen to what I have to say, umkay, as I believe it would assist you in learning valuable life skills. Democracy, liberal, leftist, peace, freedom, liberty, non-exploitative (can you say 'non-exploitative?'), and libertarianism – do you understand? You don't care? Now, son, that kind of apathy is what keeps us where we are, umkay...hey, are you listening?

(Child) O.K. dad, whatever! What do politics have to do with me, a youth caught up in the system, forced to do things I never want and under constant surveillance and

supervision by the authorities, ambassadors of government. And this is what purports to save me, this 'politics'? Yeah right – I'm outta here, to the hills baby!

(Amplification) It's not that I don't appreciate your sentiments dad. But think – the conditions in which we live, with these contemporary political values; are they really what we want as a locus that fosters our own values, not merely the echo of a majority (statistically-based) which doesn't exist? I think not dad, after all – what do equality and participation mean to me, a child after all? Why should I do this and, to even articulate a moral imperative such as this indicates the stifling of my own values (which might or might not, or only partially, be a 'system'); and what 'benefits' do I stand to gain dad? After all, growing up in the system I've had this mentality pounded into my skull despite your noble efforts of trying to educate me through all of this anti-education (an education for the worse, with the telos of ignorance not knowledge or a certain type of knowing).

So what does politics matter to me when it eclipses my own values? – A simple question. I'm not a collectivist (and, paradoxically, there are many more like me but through the binding nature of our logic we aren't going to form any political party of sorts) and as such I make demands which affirm my own individuality, from out of a history that has been (perhaps) the product of this very politicking on behalf of multi-national corporations and their collusion with governments, and their combined propagandistic efforts. – But I still make these demands dad and the fact that politics and governments don't sate them drives me elsewhere if not to the woods then to the job market, and if not there then to the streets or the grave.

But maybe you're right dad...maybe I can find value in being a participant, what I call a 'collectivist'. But, to really consider it, do not my own values lack affirmation and does not the spectrum of my hopes become clouded and over-shadowed by the strong-armed presence of government and its hegemony? I'm asking dad: what way out is there? I'm facing a blank; all I can foresee is my facing a computer screen for all my days or the barrel of a gun for a brief moment or – the boundless sky. Later dad! I'm off!

Perpetual Destruction

The world in its totality is eclipsed by its particularity. It is raining. Now it is a toxic rain and nature has merged with its opposite; human ingenuity has descended upon its author in the form of a reproach, a poisonous substance that mocks the hopes of civilization. And this is what globalization brings: the spread of disease, windswept streets after a holocaust of contagion has swept through the bodies of humanity and laid it flat as an attrition manoeuvre, a last chance flurry of power to win the battle of human

struggle and competition, the war in which the phrase 'homo homini lupus' is the rally cry.

Buildings collapsing – almost delicately when perceived from a distance – into the earth to add to its rubble, strewn about with wantonness, so unintended and undesirable to the ideology of democracy, the regulative idea of human voraciousness. Consumed; and with the buildings so too are consumed all of the values bound up with them that went into their construction and into their destruction. We would have built a universal paradise through providing equal access to the easily accessible (and easily accessible for that reason) and to allocating to each and all like powers and capacities to achieve a well-being. And the absurdity is that we had allowed the flood gates of production and consumption – the churning waters of pollution – to be opened through this charity of bequeathing the pass card of entrance to the city beneath saw the whole of humanity drowned in the violence of the waters it had created. And the water was a murky colour – a mixture of blood and toxins, and it was unknown whether the one or the other issued from the bodies of the beaten and broken, for the support that they were given is the form of fast foods (recipe for disease) and of radiation from their convenience machines collapsed under them through their excessive reliance upon this same. – But not only the incessant rain and the continual rise of the water level could be seen as so many witnesses to humanity's suicide but the obliteration of woods and earth had left ravaged and harrowed the ground upon which we walked and the oxygen sources necessary for life were quickly depleting, snuffing out the lives of so many as so many candles revealing a darkness growing even darker.

But all was awash in imagery so much so that one's self became lost amidst the endless swirl of colour, shape and form, all an amorphous and startling spectacle in which one disappeared for however long and reappeared at will, with each emergence finding it more difficult to recapture that which had fallen into the churning abyss of sense data. – But that was the past. Now one could not in the least recover any sense of equilibrium amidst this illusory world of spinning and mobile, even animate, visuals and audible and olfactory, themselves combining into a morass of confusion. And awaiting change through incessant change was perceived as fruitless and vain so one became a cynic and a charlatan and apathetic in relation to a real which no longer presented itself nor could be represented; authenticity submerged itself in saturation and was drowned in its opposite, asphyxiating as a poison the hope for individual salvation. One had lost himself (who ever he was in the first place – an anonymous person, an 'individual') in his status of the unique and was himself simulacral, a reproduced form among countless others though statistics told him the contrary. But his belief in statistics waned in his decreasing faith in the object of statistics, founding his beliefs on the unreality of the abstract category this statistical operation had generated through quantitative methods. He was not a quantity nor was he a quality – he was neither nor, nor an empirical subject in all but name and hence he was an abstraction. Thus his exaltation of the

empty formalism of mathematics which he held up to himself as a mirror reflective of certain attributes of his own; and through this means quality was generated, always with the category of quantity as its basis and it fell into this same as a black hole without anything but a surface reality, and yet a strange depth to it at the same time.

But such a unit – really just an economic unit for the perpetuation of the apparatus of control, a functional subject or ‘individual’ – was himself a fabricated reality and thus could not represent to himself a reality which would give him substance and tangible form. His dress, his activities – all were precisely integrated into the system of wants and consumption as pre-determined data based upon probability; math thus revealed itself in its thralldom to utility as the abstract catalyst of utilitarian production, which, in its operation designed a life for the unit, clothed and fed it and invested it with powers for their exercise in a certain capacity. The economic unit – the ‘subject’ – existed as pure use and this was the limit and boundary of its value.

And perhaps this why the world suffered through (for how long?) this Armageddon; the economic unit’s power was directed towards self-destruction and its knowledge was hardwired in its genetic development (it learned as it grew and was designed to grow) with the end of all thoughts being perpetuation of the status quo and perpetuity as a regulative idea, an ideology, of immanent production. Reason, rationality, democracy – they were a triumvirate of ideological force that lent the unit hope for its continual operations.

The New and the Old

My sojourn into the outdoors has left me with many impressions testifying to the inherent aesthetic dimension of the world and to its converse, the rationalizing influence upon each and all.

The pastel blue sky outlined an old building that I walked by, in the industrial zone of the city, old metal and bricks outliving their purpose or hanging on with a vengeance. And this tenacity testifies to the character of the old which, at least in this sector of the city, acts as the backdrop of the new which infiltrates a formerly purposive, unaesthetic place with its brightening sheen. And yet such sheen is as a game-show host’s bright teeth, the teeth of a charlatan which simply plays the role of a reality really existent. A billboard and fast-food joint, signs with fashionable graphics that witness the beau monde as it would present itself; these are the new world order, a superficial façade of meaning, an amorphousness of propaganda standing out against the background of metal and bricks which appear in their stark reality as they really are, the truth which has been concealed by the surface reality of popular appearances, popular as common to the second power and thus the substrates of popularity be it as the image (idealized) of a

car, a couple, or a company logo. All graphics here attempt to exercise their tyranny over the industrial but cannot, for the simple reason that the latter's sprawl outsprawls its competitor and leaves it in the dust.

And here I am walking along the streets of broken pavement around these businesses with their flashy logos which adorn decrepit buildings and am thankful that such a world exists as a hope and a salvation from the oppressive omnipresence of the new, a cul-de-sac that becomes beautiful through its liberating quality; for the two must be taken in conjunction, the new and old – for they are blended as one and history speaks from out of the old situating one in the present, and, who knows, lends them a direction for the future, for their eyes, aesthetically, are directed towards the history of this scenario. And truly are views such buildings, old vehicles and machines fenced in between buildings with rusty chain-link fences and barbed wire, as a hope for an escape from reason and rationality. For it all appears without meaning and hence without purpose, without the necessity of logic. For who would desire to steal vehicles which were they decrepit but from behind fences rusting away into nothingness? The buildings simply appear as the domiciles of a storybook village and one engages with them with a will to their manipulation, entrance, exit, vandalism – or whatever else. They are merely aesthetic phenomena through their having shed the pristine quality of precision and completeness, through having assumed a character of flaws and hence designated, almost with a pitying tone, 'old buildings', for their life is jeopardized with the flawed existence they must live in, with cracks and rust, and with the encroachment of the new with its initial precision and perceptible corruption and replacement with an endless sequence of like forms. The old clings on to life with its tenacity, its durability perceptible to all while its gradual corruption remains hidden from the eyes - even amidst its rust and cracks – for these are more character marks than anything; and no tears appear in the sides of these buildings like the billboards. There is a gradation of durable forms and their appeal is correlated proportionately with aesthetic appeal - for the more durable will always connote the tenacity of the will to live amidst the dying forms of the superficial, hastily born and with equal haste meeting with death. And it is all controlled by the market: what can be sold. And if old historic buildings could be sold they would be, but their appeal with people is especially limited as these same have no patience for antiquity and the voices of age, of wisdom; they wish to hear, rather, what screams of them in the most boisterous tones and hence are as fleeting as the pervasiveness of signs which bombard the landscape with the shots of marketing, directed towards target audiences who are themselves fabricated. Another absurdity, another game of artifice and yet perhaps the epitome of realism: the false appeals to the false and perpetuates itself.

...So long as they know where you are

As I was walking along thinking pleasant thoughts, 'just thinking' amidst the bright sunshine, I was assaulted. No, this wasn't your average-everyday rape artist or your typical mugging – rather it was a symbolic assault and an assault in mediated form. The medium was the camera and the assault was an unpermitted photo of me as I walked by – I saw the flash, turned around and swore. The man in the vehicle (a pervert, a government agent more likely, a member of the police force likeliest of all – although he looked more like a pervert) jumped back in shock and I continued on my way. I felt hunted the remainder of my sojourn along that deserted sidewalk, by his eyes and the preservation of my image, of use perhaps for cataloguing and surveying the world with watchful eyes. – And did I really appear so subversive? I, a perfectly respectful-looking person, and yet strangely out of place in this industrial zone with my leather shoes and healthy features, with not a shred of this zone's ethos manifesting itself from my form. – Was I a subversive? And if so would that not make all who looked like me the same? And the world is subversive, filled with transgressors of the 'code', the social mores and unwritten (though actually enforced) laws which bind people to a set schema of activity. The reason why my photo is taken is that I had transgressed this code; there is no 'incidental' reason. Nothing any longer remains incidental in a world governed by purpose and logistics, the logic of engineering the social, industrial and other spheres which redound to enhancing control. For that is what logistics is: a means to control which is the end of society in its present form, the entelechy of bourgeois and capitalist tyranny.

And this was the beginning of my sojourn into the light of day. Better to experience the darkness, night, away from the public so long as one preserves his autonomy. For one cannot any longer have a cul-de-sac in the social sphere in which aesthetics governs things; for he is watched just as he watches and feels himself the aesthetic object – objectified through omnipresence and presumptuous omniscience of the state which would know (i.e. have power over) everyone at all times and places – even in the private sphere. So long as they know where you are you are impotent.

Why I am non-political (and I don't say a-political): because when one pronounces 'I' he doesn't pronounce 'We' and when he pronounces 'We, he is not pronouncing it at all – it is the group which pronounces things, which group, regardless of his position within itself, governs him even if he attempts to govern it.

There is an ideology called '*Demos-cratia*' (democracy) and this means: 'the dissolution of all individuality'. Why? Politically, individuality is mythological and vice versa: pluralism is an absurdity and its attempt to reconcile the pluralism of heterogeneous distincts ('politics' and 'individuality') is a failed project a priori. It affronts itself: to be

pluralistic is to achieve unity; to achieve unity one must achieve fragmentation; identity and non-identity tear one another apart like a paradox of Chinese mysticism.

But here we consider things *in abstracto* and this defies things both politically and individually, for both descend from their abstract form into *empiria* and refuse to have anything to do with their foster parent (abstraction) now that they have discovered anew their blood relation (concrete existence).

Ideology, on the other hand, is abstract through and through – it is what is mythical and deserving of the torch instead of the straw-garbed reality of politics, vilified by the incendiary criticism above. I had mistaken the reality before and now return to it for closer investigation and analysis.

Ideology and all of its socio-psychological underpinnings is merely the grease of the wheels of politics, this latter being nothing but, in my opinion (to define it ideologically, by which is meant ‘abstractly’): ‘to argue for one’s self-interests as part of a group’. Thusly it makes its descent onto the empirical plane – but it still remains ideology. It becomes *alebens philosophie* (lived philosophy), an abstract and yet concretized system of adherence, ‘something to believe in’.

But belief arises, en masse, out of the rabble and its opaque conception, regardless of the intellectual quality – or its absence – of the group. It is a hystero-genesis of beliefs that results in, for example, the passing of the Manifesto around the Proletarian camp. Do these people have any ability to assimilate the Thought which not only purports to govern their action but which outstrips them at the same time? At most slogans (which are the case with youth and its incessant surging of emotions, heightened to intolerable degrees) are bandied about and the belief-foundation of the actions of these people is contingent upon their ability to preserve this loyalty to the system and, being political, their loyalty is in constant flux, rotted as it is in their self-interests.

Self-interests change and are changed by ideology which latter change inheres therein. Thus no ideology is lasting, not pluralism, not anything; a lasting effect is merely tendered by ideology and invariably rejected by the political actuality faced by those individuals who so mistakenly fall into their own abstraction, the death of their individuality – the group.

Thus politics, qua ideology, is not possible, and it is merely a futile gambit on the part of the inflated egos of those who would make themselves leaders of men (who would become ‘hedgemen’) or those who are by nature subservient and quest for a master to bark in their faces. The former would be advised, by myself, to pursue the Icarian heights and fall by their own incessancy, the latter to become housewives, cuckold husbands, or soldiers in the military (in its bureaucratic or traditional form).

In any case, these proselytes of ideology pursue merely ephemeral golden dreams as their concrete lives unfurl before them – but they don't even notice; their eyes are gazing up into utopian virtual reality, the smiling eyes of children in third world countries on the T.V. inspiring them with hope and confidence that 'there'll be a better tomorrow'. But someday never comes.

I should hope that there is someone out there not apathetic enough to criticize me...

ANONYMOUS

P.S. Why am I not 'a-political'? Because I'm too apathetic myself, refusing as I do to believe in golden dreams of change through politics. I'm neither against politics nor am I for them – I'm indifferent. Some may say with contempt: 'it's been done buddy!' – But I'm not an ideologue and don't follow trends, I merely repudiate critically. I invite repudiation of this pamphlet on the part of my 'readers', should I have any.

Brotherhood of Men

Humanity – is there such a thing outside of an abstract and formally considered being? - By no means. Humanity is conceived of as an ensemble of people, a unity amidst diversity, unification of disparate elements – and yet what of this? What does it mean to be unified having once been diverse? - Diverse how? Why unity, why solidarity, why diversity?

All of this ethic of unification is simply a political gambit of hegemony.

The brotherhood is a militia, a political beast which commands in mellifluous ^{words} ~~discourse~~, which coerces through persuasion, which dictates in the name of that which is not itself – an individual invoking the voice of the people as that of god – and I am expected to bow my head and worship a form such as this? What am I worshipping however, but a mediocre and homogenized form – milkshops and dutiful dogs, pigs lazing in their sty, farmers lordling over it all with narrow-minded managerialism.

I have said it before (perhaps as an echo of a more eloquent spokesman of another ethic, a name assimilated and forgotten as it outlived its purpose) that the popular man is popular by – and in proportion to – his differentiating qualities. The less different – the more similar and vice versa – the more similar the greater the cohesion, for: like attracts like, a surely as the lode stone attracts iron! All of the relations amongst people are political – as all of them are offered up to the body politic as the standard of their legitimation. Individuals, apropos of this contemporary ethic, don't exist any longer. Marriage is no sanctified bond maintained with devotion to some ideal, for its sake and in the name of... (God, the superman, man, human nature, love, etc.). That explains the divorce precedent in this day and age: if it's broken, don't fix it but throw it away like the rest of this throw-away generation. The notion of caprice as liberty, wherein everyone can satisfy every whim they have given the means – and the absurdity of the social code which prohibits and permits actions based upon the means of the average, which elevates and reduces individuals by way of this standards ^{of} concrete operations as a regulative ideal of mediocrity – 'aura' it is not – this notion of caprice is the foundation of society and of its own spreading fissures.

So what does it really matter? This is the conclusion here. What does it matter, if no one has any desire to involve themselves in the 'brotherhood of men' in humanity – when the same is nothing but a mirror of the norm contemporaneous with he who compares himself to it. The moral law is like the common law: historically revisionist and aleatory – it is nothing absolute and nothing to be adhered to. So why not pick your own ethic like a raffie-wheel?

Well – is that not utterly piggish? What standards are these but those which will simply fall apart and merely, as loose change, serve momentary purchases, capricious and without much thought.

Standards are warped and perverted in abandon. Should they not be solidified and maintained by those worthy enough to do so – the law-givers who give their own law as autonomous, and to others depending upon the scope of their power, maximizing its extent and influence? What are the standards of worth, qualifications of the law-givers? Set by themselves as masters; only slaves have to ask, masters merely issue proclamations without considering the possibility of question.

Pre-sentiment of a 'something' that exists beyond reach – the sublime; that existing outside of and without conceptual limits.

Moral Types

The man who is forever lusting after pleasure, after excitement of a purely animal and momentary nature – the lowest of animals - like a dog whining for scraps and when he can't get it, growling. - A lick spittle, contemptible and resentful of those who are his masters as if by divine right. They don't need anyone to legitimate their authority – they take it and as such become king – the king is a usurper and a tyrant, he rules over the weak and takes fear in the form of respect as his due when he looks into the eyes of others.

People are truly like beasts: they stare at one another and attempt to be the subjugator powerful enough to realize the defeat of the Other at whom they stare. They want him to obey to be a puppet on a string they manipulate. Their goal is control and power. Too bad there can be no harmony and concord, no peace and happiness of this form. Happiness appears in the guise of perversion: he enjoys watching another suffer, wriggle on the strings that he jerks around at his own caprice – or more ruthlessly perhaps, in colder blood – deliberative, upon a course of action which either entails or culminates in manipulation – the in-itself of modern-day social relations.

Homo homini lupus! Where is the love? It does not exist and never did, else why would evil enter Eden? It pre-existed it or was born simultaneous to the creation of paradise. It is only reflection and understanding which bring it about. Only the crude and thoughtless tolerate life – or the strong. They are strong who can turn a blind eye to the utter vice exhibited by these slovenly majorities. 'I hate men but I love man,' said a mystical religious. But what is man but an imaginative figure, an exercise of the nobler self's highest aspirations? And thus the noble itself,

that quality which has attained tangible form in the mind of one possessed of greater potentialities. I don't want to be known by my history, embodied as it is in my name. The meaning of my name is my history and I don't want to cling to a history which I would rather vitiate in its entirety. So long as I have my present and all that it means – all that has been accomplished by me up to this moment – that much will always remain.

But, it will be said, one can never escape his past, not in a thousand-fold interpretive tapestry, an endless scroll which unwinds itself to the beginnings of consciousness and memory and all that he has endowed with meaning. But 'I' will change – a free-floating distinct yet-to-be-determined, an empty container which is yet extremely selective of its contents – and whose walls are thick and hard.

Concerning my situation, the situation of NAME, at this point in time – it is simply a matter of time before it all disappears and once again I begin anew. - Once again? Have I dreamt myself into reality already, have I entered into my own paradisiac dream? Soon things will change, within a determinable amount of time – and then, not Lazarus but the New God will rise up and achieve the worlds of his envisioning.

Simulation: usurper of representation

Neither the in-itself, nor the for-itself, but only the structure 'for-others' is the governing logic of those whose happiness is derived from the models which regulate their action. They are empty hells living derivative lives not of their own making. The in-itself, the for-itself, all become the reality of the Other, all implode into the 'O' of the other, into that empty and barren reality.

'They' these simulacra, say 'we' like this or that – as they've been taught to say 'we', by the models and codes which pervade their lives, by the dialectic and practices of the social sphere in which they spring forth in their worldliness. But 'worldliness' is completely limited, fit only to be called parochialism, when predicated of the narrow spheres of being – like the suburbs, themselves situated in a certain city at a certain time and crowd certain people – always, however, absolute.

This is the contradiction in being for others: that there simply aren't others outside of the conception of them – an abstract become universal, that the other is merely a generalization issued as a proclamation by the state or governing power, that the 'Other' does not exist – because its infinitely specifiable. Nihilism ensues. Identity is lost amidst the infinite reducibility of existents – or the total explosion and amplification of same in existence as a totality, an ontological hegemon.

To say 'we' is instantly to invoke the simulated reality of a certain norm based upon the constant considered: 'we' the people – people in general, the absolute qua people, people as absolute; 'we' the feminists – the feminists as absolute as an impregnable fortress of ideological strength which is mobilized against the 'Other'. Parochialism exists only relatively, in relation to fame which outstrip it and which limit it as absolute – which is why the Other, in political discourse, usually isn't spoken of – it is only the identifiable group – the absolute without relation, what 'we' the group need. But who are you 'group'? As you begin to discuss the contents of your political program you simultaneously run against the cliffs of the absurd when you sought a valid passage through them to political acceptance – acceptance by the 'Other'. By limiting – yourself – I am a 'feminist', which is to say my concern is for women and thus my concern, at least of a political ilk, excludes or simply doesn't include, men – you immediately negate the other. And absurdly enough power is derived therefrom – because that's the logic of the system – to grant power as political reality, the means to initiate change for a group which doesn't exist (because merely an empty general) to a simulacral norm. But politics must do this because that is its inner consistency – the absurdity of guaranteeing life for that which doesn't exist, an attempt

to play god, and in this contemporary age, to utter: 'vox populi vox dei' as if the people qua genera were anything but shadows in the cave of simulated being, appearance.

But the children are starving! They' need food. Then the children qua genera, derive their being from a being which is like god dispensing characters: politics reifying abstraction formal characters. Thus people are controlled and are most certainly not able to give divine decrees but must simply follow the precedents of the privileged, the governing powers (middle classes, etc.) - it is not a question of representation but of simulation.

The pragmatic function of identity

Everyone's a salesman and a pauper. Does this have to be the way of the world, human existence bound to the Other and negative freedom being the only form? In my thoughts I can't escape the Other which exists as desire and absence, namely that of the social, of individual faces and forms possessed of value. Am I therefore bound to them, to their images which lead me away from a self which could otherwise (-could it?-) exist substantively and in absolute freedom and peace.

The world seems Hobbesian, if I can remember Hobbes right: people associate one with another purely for utility and felt satisfaction. To feel a lack in relation to another is to feel the reverberating, correspondingly, lack within oneself. The outer need espouses an inner need. The blind drives and forces of the will require a suitable exteriority in which to realize themselves, a forum for display (to whom if anyone?) and combat.

But am I bound to people? When they don't exist as concrete presences I feel their lack only in my own inertia, only when I don't have placed under my vision particular figures, the shape of paper, of books and letters - various gestalten. But even throughout the work and effort expended I feel the desire for the other -- to involve myself and to be recognized in its Eye as panoptic vision which infiltrates every place and if reflected, interiorized, in the eye of individual minds. The people's gaze is omniscient so long as I accept the principle of man as a social animal. Social but in a qualified way, as in: purely to fulfill the ends of the self - utilities - not as filling a lack and rendering one full as a satiated stomach, but rather as the in-itself of human striving. No, not the in-itself but the for-the-sake-of-which-thing, which thing being the goals that emanate from a human as his own goals.

But still I have doubts of whether or not 'his own goals' can be spoken of, for, is it not true that the collective conditions one absolutely, and that pantheism is the apotheosis of men qua man and man qua Deus? That the pantheistic incarnation of god is the people and that the people are a force which no absolute ego, isolated therefrom (per impossible perhaps?) can cut loose itself and transcend the Other qua society, qua other individuals.

As soon as I have images floating before my mind's eye (imagination - faculty of imagery as most meaningful acts of thinking, its source and continuation) I can refer and associate these to/with people as forces and influences which take me away from myself and embed me within the gaze of the other. Therein I am bound and cannot escape unless - what? Upon what condition(s) can the self (granting that it exists at all) emancipate itself from the others? This question would bring about another? On what conditions is the self bound to others? For to

know how freedom might be attained (at least in this case), one should know how he is transformed in his praxis into the opposite, namely as constrained and imprisoned within the other.

One's being is constituted by the Other insofar as he believes that it is a force and not merely a motley ensemble of anarchic forms, governed by simulated meanings. People qua man, qua humanity, don't exist. And yet why do I feel bound to them? Belief in the simulacrum of humanity, that which parades itself as archetype.

One is doxically conditioned to accept men qua man – the logical faculty seeks identity: it is easy and doesn't put up any resistance to adhere to sameness, to inertia and lack of change. Change frightens and jeopardizes life whereas inert being engenders itself and leads one towards a euthanized life – more death than life. The great zero, the negative, that which denies life and human existence is a product of identity – converted into its opposite.

Non-being, non-identity, the restless search of becoming – this is life, and yes non-identity is life. But this should not mean that identity can't be adopted in a pragmatic aspect and serve a use – value, a function, which function is to involve oneself in his own praxis and not merely to pursue the way of apathetic, of indifferent inertia. This adoption of identity as a pragmatic use – value, a functional characterization of a character which doesn't exist (like determining the indeterminate – it always enters into non-being), is the only means towards the realization of individualism, in its positive consequences, and of anti-collectivism, the eschewing and repudiation of the collective, in its negative.

And I always tell myself to find a concrete means of activity outside of philosophy yet philosophy is a concrete means of activity. The thing to do is simply follow it to its depths and yet keep one's head above water. *Felo de se* loomed in youthful naiveté – now youth has departed and in its place arrives mature understanding, a way that (taoistically) sets all problems and impedimenta aside through not always taking everything as absolute – through a broadening of one's knowledge.

Trieb

When things have a feeling of being forced, an aspect of coercion, one is unwilling to do them regardless of the prior enjoyment he received in the act. This is the consequence of forever embedding things within formal systems of rationality, the empirically conditioned logics of function. To make it a rule, a mandate for myself to do it and perhaps further to do it in a specific manner and apply/embed it in all sorts of abstract categories (modality, temporality, efficiency, etc.) is to initiate the coercive nature of the system. Systemics, rational logics, formal schemata, architectonics, rules, laws – all of these are the same, namely an attempt to engineer a free-flowing thing bound to immanence, even if they purport to have merely a descriptive function, an unbiased objective revelation of the truth and essence of the thing under the microscope. And yet there is a microscope, and this same is the coercive medium of the otherwise sublime.

That humans must always employ these coercive means of arriving at meaning – apprehension not as a purist endeavour but as a constructive and pragmatic one – is indicative of their condition, namely, as antagonistic beings who make the world obey.

And what ~~is~~ is it to question otherwise, to wander off into the unquestionable hypostasizing of If I were a bat, etc. - can't be done, our condition is our conditioning ourselves, ours is to be who we are and never venture out of our own fallibility: in knowledge, perception, action, etc. God alone was absolute but with his death so too absolutism entered the sepulchre of impossible being.

We are antagonists – but even the notion of antagonistic is utterly human. It could be conceived of – our upshot in the world – as a friendly gesture towards beings not ourselves as I'm sure many animal lovers and Christian altruists like to believe. In any case these concepts are far from absolute as emanating from beings themselves not absolute merely contingent, conditioned, etc. Which is not to say that anything 'external' or 'internal' conditions them, as if one had priority over the other. No. It is merely conditioning itself from out of itself and this in turn, this alleged process, being a giant tautology leading to nothingness and the old dichotomy: Being – non-being. But must even that dichotomy, which claims absolutism, be admitted when it becomes meaningless in its very absolute nature – and it espouses meaning in its conveyance?

The problem lies with conveyance, with discourse and the discursive acts of the system or subjects, interlocutors of any moral ilk, friendly or antagonistic. The inevitable conclusion, thinking along this slippery slope, is that which is attempted (and always merely attempted) to

be spoken of as one thing and one thing only: ineffable. The monistic conception of reality, as reality total and absolute – of all absolutes – leads to ineffability.

Pluralism leads to fruitfulness, leads to perhaps the same consequences.

What does it mean to be fruitful and pluralist? Fruitful as discovery of the real – or pragmatic fruits, those which satiate but are somewhat lacking in flavour – or vice versa and so with realism.

Fruitful is purposive, achieving the purposes consistent with the system from out of which such purposes emanate. Pluralism is a myriad of principles which form a cohesive totality but are not necessarily (although they may be in some systems) finite as a system – forever including new elements which perhaps undergo a ranking and filing, a hierarchization in terms of (what?) value, use, uselessness.

This of course leads to a typical bourgeois character of 'sampling' – eclectic this and that, artistic tastes, cultural proclivities, political inclinations, etc. The consequence – perhaps, of not having a 'monistic' theory, are which is branded in a disparaging way 'meta-narrative', 'hegemonic discourse'. But meta-narrative does not necessarily lead to hegemony does it?

Identity may be absolute – but what if it is in the relative sense, such as in the case of the libidinal machine, of a potential being, an ego, and 'I'. Why shouldn't the 'I' be trumpeted and taken as a stable thing, all descriptions of it aside (as floating signifiers, etc.)?

The self is a source of eclecticism, a pluralistic being. Does it for this reason lose its self-ness and enter into a fragmentary character, like a being pulverized by a sawed-off shotgun – a bit here (on the wall looking as if it were at the picture of the sailboat) a bit there, mixed with the spaghetti? No. It totalizes itself, just as we, individuals, are individuals insofar as we totalize ourselves continually – so does the subject of language and discourse. It remains a stable signifier, a being, whether or not it is affected by the aleatory nature of its surroundings. The subject is saved!

Personal identity need not be sacrificed for a social one, a bundle of drives, etc. – Because these are the drives of the self, of this being. So if it's conceded to be a bundle of drives then, does it not (and if not why – can't it?) itself determine, administer, and organize these same drives through itself?

Why can't the subject reign supreme and all of its elements, contingent and aleatory or no, constitute it but yet remain manageable by themselves. Effort is born through always in any human endeavour – effort, power, is the self itself – one cannot laze around and expect nothing to be achieved, he must rather devote himself, through himself as power, as desire, to this or that situation which situates him as him. And who is 'he'? – Trieb, desire, power, Hyle, – nothing more. It is Trieb et al. – which incorporates into itself all of Trieb, the disparate and separate – it flows through and in and amidst the flow of Trieb – of Hyle, et al.

The world is ineffable – language is heterogeneous to it, and thus cannot explicate the inexplicable. One can only know as 'Trieb', as self-conditioned by himself and conditioning. There is no time only power and its incessant internal movement. There is no external, no outer sphere, nor any inner. Words, words, words – they pronounce futility always and always.

Pronounce 'ommm' or growl like a beast and you will be most happy. – An ethical prescription for the sick animal.

The inner contradiction of altruism

"Not for me...not all for me"

So spoke the old passive-aggressive, raised as she had been under the constraining atmosphere of perpetually overcast clouds – call it the Christian mentality of self-righteousness. The silver lining was the surging illuminations of an elated will, made proud and self-important by its own idealized conception of self.

The grocery list contained more than items which were geared towards the satiety of pleasure-seeking maws; it contained the inner contradiction of altruism. They, the groceries on the list, were spoken of as being for another, for the Other, by this wizened fool of a hunchbacked old whore. But their implicit meaning was 'not all for me' which meant that self-interest stood at the basis of the motivation, the drafting up of the list.

Why then should the groceries be spoken of as 'not for me' initially, then retracted and qualified? The answer lay in the truth manifesting itself to the lying falsehood of the mouth which could not help but utter it. But why did it utter it? Because it was too transparent, too revealed, to be concealed – and so, to save a semblance of integrity the statement had to be qualified.

But the underlying thought had already revealed itself – thought and motivation, namely that it was 'for-me' that the grocery list was drafted up and this revealed through the bold character of the lie. Why couldn't such a person simply state the facts: 'I want some groceries', will you 'get them for me' – or some such thing? Answer: fear of appearing without the veil of altruism, fear of appearing as a demand as a coercive force: fear of appearing selfish. Selflessness was the mask which attempted to please the beholder – but the crack which ran down its face was too shameful to continue the masquerade – for shame lay within the revelation of the simulated character of the truth and thus the admittance of what was egregiously false. The sinner had to atone because of a nagging guilt: a guilt that the desire for something should be a desire for 'me'. Self-abnegation was the result, a grand gesture 'for the Other', self-sacrifice, devotion.

Perhaps all of this because the self was too weak to make demands itself, could only make demands in an implicit way, the way of all weak-willed people: under the cover of circumspicuous words and practical legerdemain. – The groceries were a source of guilt because they were something wanted, desired, and couldn't be achieved autonomously, merely through the agency of others. In fact they could but... using others is so much easier! - Which is why it was done.

The conception that such a person is an altruist is a justification for usury – self-debasing and specious reasoning. This is the meaning of one's devotion to another, namely that the other is the end and not oneself. This is the specious nature of devotion to be sure the true conception lies in self-interest. – Just admit it: you wanted groceries for yourself and wanted to economize effort by usury, by using another as agent of their procurement. For yourself! Atone sinner, atone!

The giving trap: the chain of altruism

I give to you and you must do me favour because I have given you something you want. Even if you don't want it, a refusal is an insult to me, and I will nevertheless give. Insofar as I do this I forge a chain that binds you to me and makes you my slave until you satisfy the law of exchange. – That is justice, that is what must be. I don't make demands, the system of my logic of exchange-based relations makes demands.

I offer you a gift – a good or service – so that I may enslave you or coerce you – by virtue of this universal logic – to do for me what satisfies in terms of consideration. You must complete your end of the bargain and finalize your transaction – it is more than your right, it is your duty!

Oblivion machines, memory, and consciousness

The danger of the oblivion machines which surround one in apparently all human (and what other kind is there?) endeavours is saddening. The loss of one's mind is the consequence, especially when he is an extremist, someone who constitutes his every waking situation and moment as 'of necessity' intentional, directed towards a goal. If the form of this goal is to be manifested within the sphere of these oblivion machines, then they will prove his corruption, as serving as an inverted means-end relation; they become the end itself even if used for other purposes such as research in the case of computers and the internet, such as an attempt to experience an imagined reality within the television. - And likewise with music, when it is listened to with the purpose of attaining some higher benefit - the higher is subordinated to the lower. This can be attributed (likely) to the immediacy of the images issuing from these media - they strike one as a brick to the head, rendering all the senses but the feeling of pain (which is to be passively experienced as impossible to overcome in its strength) present. In the case of the oblivion machines it is the pleasure, expectation and hope (the pleasure had in these latter two psychical states), the sheer eternity of the novel, the new, as manifested in the apparently endless array of images, that carries one away from himself and towards... oblivion.

I can hardly, after having lost myself in this virtual oblivion of the internet, recognize what it was that was lost. But, reflecting, searching historically for that which was lost, one becomes reflexive, in checking the bank of memory for a cheque not cashed - a privation undergone - and thereby, at least in this cash, he understands what it is that has been lost - and it is: consciousness. To know is to know that one knows.

For memory to arise of any particular thing, consciousness must pave the ground with the materials suited to fixing memories in given historical (human historical) dimensions. Consciousness is the window through which lost memories enter - the condition of memory and its simultaneous co-presence, without which it is nothing. - And yet more: it is that receiver of the given, whether passive or active. It receives into itself the plenitude of reality as this latter remains mutely where it is. Consciousness is that artist, always intentional and with an eye towards form and distinction) which captures reality in its own canvas, its selection of colours, their pattern and hue necessitated by the inclinations of prior artistry.

I have lost focus. I need to collect thoughts and attempt to focus them upon a given object, to stultify that which exists outside of myself and to escape the chaotic flurry of images and half-thoughts which beset me long ago. Even now my writing is a re-presentation of past melancholia and dissatisfaction with the present state. And it can change in an instant, simply through my

focusing, imposing upon myself ethical standards that I have done nothing but invariably waiver from for the past few years, apropos of this same dissatisfied desire to pursue the Other, in the form of novel circumstances, people (!) and everything which exists outside of my present. And yet I desire (perhaps absurdly) to retain my present as it is? It is simply a question of sublation, of concentrating strength through a simple enjoyment - jouissance not strife and war - of those activities which define me.

I find it amusing that people can tolerate the propaganda which besets them everywhere.

Propaganda in its bad form, in that which manifests a morality that solidifies and concentrates the orthodox and attempts to crush its enemies.

I hear a book written (the form of the propaganda) by a Jew (the agenda is obvious immediately - Zionist advocacy) against (and it must be 'against' for otherwise the person wouldn't have that referential character of 'Jew') the enemies as they are being attacked by a Jew, and the Jew becomes an advocate of the cause of Zionism (even if he/she doesn't know it or advocate it at any conscious level) because he/she is on the radio and this posits the Jew as an advocate for democracy and liberalism (as the catalyst for his/her views is this state/capital funded program - a program which uses her, even more than she/he uses it, as a catalyst for its own views, i.e.: capitalism, capitalist hegemony and domination of all rebelling nations and figures of sedition running 'counter to' capital).

She/he is the most effective propagandist as she/he doesn't even recognize the fact - and so belief in 'the cause' (of uniting people within the happy-go-lucky global village) is an advocacy of 'the cause' of the underlying thing (capitalism and the Jews as the figures or the power of its commercial vessels, the star of David as the insignia of capital).

Those who are duped by its resentment morality - the morality of the victim, of the 'oppressed masses', and necessarily masses or else the cause of Zionism wouldn't stand against the liberal-capitalist forces which exist apart therefrom. Why lend it support? The ideology of self-interest sees self-interest not only in the support of rich Jews but in that of a global ideological expansion which the Jews foster through their innate money-making abilities. It is the fertile cresecent character which engenders this procurative and avaricious penchant. Perhaps the further south the country the greater the inclination (brought on by physiological factors perhaps) to pursue the dregs of practicality?

Nevertheless, despite the amazing way in which these people can ingratiate themselves and amass material gain, enter into the political arena and move about its hierarchy - they have qualities that are meritorious - else how would they ingratiate themselves with those who can

confer power upon them and eventually become powerful themselves? The fertile crescent appetite, perhaps, drives them to seek out these social ~~lands~~ and to broaden themselves in this light – to seek the light of the political scene, etc.

But, now that this is known, what does it matter so long as such knowledge is preserved to the avoidance of Zionism and all of its subtly propagandistic tactics.

Petulance is not a virtue. Impatience is

Petulance is, to begin this little extract with a definition along classical and thus appropriate lines, a wavering back and forth between determinations of judgment – a hesitance in the judgement, and yet it is more; it is a dissatisfaction with things as they are (which is a good thing) and yet an incapacity to do anything with regards to the ambiguous and ill-delimited goals posed by the petulant person. ~~This~~ one wavers between 'A' and 'B', between an infinite number of apparent possibilities and yet cannot – through lack of reflection, patience perhaps – determine anything or will anything, as the concrete content of the will is absent. It is, is petulance, a will without content which has form merely; or perhaps better expressed, a will whose content is not discernible or graspable in any manner, an amorphous play of non-identity.

The petulant man will hover around the loci, the concrete areas, of possible projects while constituting them as 'possibly mine own' – yet he can never pronounce the others negated, merely existing, ad aeternum perhaps, as future possibilities.

It is a lack of that killer instinct which pronounces the negative, which states its willingness to be saddled with limitation and to commit to a certain, ever more clearly defined project. It is this process of determination in its increasing clarity that is the means, idealistically conditioned, of one's achievement within practical scenarios.

Impatience is the unsettled nature of mind necessary to embark upon these projects to their fructification, a means to an end, whereas petulance is a corrupting element of consciousness, for it asserts everything and thus nothing realizable. Thus pragmatically considered impatience is a virtue.

But idealism cannot conjure up phantom existents to build anything but castles in the air not castles of crude, cold stone and mortar, those which take shape under the ingenuity of men.

Thus a means, a practical situation, must be had in which the cultivation of these goals can be attained and impatience, which is a dissatisfaction with the moment and an intentional movement towards the realization of a conceived-of goal, is insufficient by itself to realize anything; like rocket engine without fuel, that is to say the means, one can do nothing. To have the will and the situation in which one wills provide him with the practical formula of action.

The situation, means, must first be grasped in all forcefulness, from the wavering movement of petulance and from the insufficiency of the present be worked upon and cultivated to herald the dawn of ends, themselves means in the never-ending praxis of human endeavour.

Impatience is a virtue because it is that engine which drives one, at least in potential. Knowledge of its workings conduce to its utilization and effective employment, and so too the which is desired one is brought ever closer.

'Right' and 'Left': an investigation

Why/leftism (defined or characterized later) is such a worthwhile political cause is beyond me. It is worthwhile in my judgment solely from the negative standpoint: namely contra right wing totalitarianism (a.k.a. ideological hegemony, etc.). I hope that here I don't draw a conclusion that I expect I will: namely the repudiation of politics in the face of individualism.

But 'left' and 'right' are merely referential terms which have a historical reference to that country symbolized by, made animate in, an image: that of the eagle, American whatever-the-historical-references it is no consequence, what matters is that the terms are better defined which seems at best a difficult task. Ayn Rand is referred to as 'right-wing' but she writes a book called 'The New Left'. Who am I to believe? How can I understand the terms in use here?

I will take them in their popular construction - and immediately falsify my project of arriving at an answer as to why leftism is so wonderful. It will legitimate itself in the position of the morally right, the good, simply by accepting its premises and involving myself in its logic. That route is barred then. 'Left' is associated with freedom, with liberty - always from an oppressive force labelled 'the right'. So the 'right' is oppressive, and leftism states that: if you don't subscribe to leftism then you're an oppressive force, part of the problem of capitalism (which is generally associated with accidental 'rightism' also). You're either with us or against us! But is it so disjunctive and absolute? And by stating this, does not leftism tyrannize as they allege their opponent does?

Why is leftism worthwhile? Will I ever know without knowing its tenets?

But now they come back to me: equality, pluralism (which is to say eclecticism, a capricious choosing of this or that), etc.

Is not leftism even more capitalistic than the right? Equality: a reduction of everyone to identity - identity indifference. Metaphysics enters the political forum and formal abstract rights leave concrete individuals hollow shells (or set them up as this apriori) of what they potentially are or had been. In consequence, especially from the viewpoint of political economy, we are all reduced to economic units. Pluralism is the guarantee (always in abstracto) that difference thrived if not merely subsists within identity - and the conclusion remains the same: sameness ubiquitous.

The left also forsakes self-consideration at the expense of the crowd; engenders altruism and a devotion to the 'collective'. But what is worthwhile here for me, a concrete individual bent upon projects (political or otherwise) that require certain possessions (money, position, practical structures) for their realization. And if I give these up, then am I really free to do anything that

the hegemonic body of the mass would prevent me from being. One becomes a civil servant with very limited powers when he is a collectivist, and the latter as a leftist.

The right harbours the opposite: enlightened self-interest (the only reason I was ever capable of decrying this doctrine was because it made me ashamed – through political propaganda and pressures from without, and a refusal of the notion of the 'self' as a valid principle of existence).

I now don't see at all why it should not be solicited and built up. The danger is not solipsism and a rejection of the other, but the utilization of oneself as means, and recognition of what he has at his avail to achieve. The right engenders this – ideologically. But as do consumer sovereignty and all of the possessive and procurative nature of that, it is now (in this state that I have cultivated) easily repudiated. Leftism and its tenets are decidedly oppressive in relation to my own arms and goals.

Reflecting upon Sartre's Being and Nothingness I perceive value only in the concept which is squeezed out of it that provides an interesting jumping off point for praxis: authenticity, being what one is. All of the rest, which is admittedly a supportive means although to all appearances a detraction from the end, is superfluous as anything but an occupation of time. No real work, in light of an overarching 'human project' emanates from the act of reading works such as these. That should be the sole goal of reading philosophy: that it redound to practical action, in the most paradoxically disassociated sense. One is reading it and, rather than bustling about like a fool over physical exertions, rather than forever inclining his gaze towards his coffers and their endless necessity of replenishment, he instead sits removed from it all and involved in a happy state of affairs, his own mind and thoughts.

Such is the function of philosophy: mental exercise, disassociation from the immanent scene. And yet, is this really true, for do I not select, of all things which constitute mental exercise, philosophy? Does it exist purely as 'form' or does it not possess contents which are the source of its selection over and above all other genres of discourse? And it is a distinct genre, insofar as distinction can be admitted at all. It considers things qua things, in themselves, in their relations; in short, in a remove from the present situation and concrete context.

Dependence upon the Other

One can never truly say that 'I am' when he requires the assistance of others to be. And yet no man, it is claimed, is an island. If he is stranded, then he becomes a solipsist, disconnected from the means which further his existence. So it is claimed anyway.

To recognize the Other, in the form of a loved one or the body politic or something else entirely, as one's support, as in the case of love, renders one, insofar as they maintain this ethos, a slave, bound to the Other. Collectivism is the natural consequence of this dependency – I must (so the imperative, necessary condition of my being would have it) be a part of some group, must constitute myself as part of a collective and derive a being which is welded to this apart from which I don't exist. To achieve independence is to achieve individuality; to look away and feel no necessity in recognizing another's recognition, when you are involved – through circumstances or inclination – with them in ~~the~~ ^{an} affair renders you autonomous – you feel no pressure which dictates that you must be beholden to the other, that you wait with bated breath for his conferring upon you being and existence.

The Dissolution of Individuality: Collectivism

And to say, philosophically, that man is necessarily bound to the judgment of the Other and that he must, as a wage slave or a welfare bum, await a handout of recognition, esteem, gratitude – a gift of some kind – this ideology of collectivism leads one straight to the heights of pedantry, a limitation (limited by the collective) of his creative originality, a loss of freedom – when freedom is conceived of as a gift granted one with an interest rate subject to vacillation by the other's judgment and assessment – this is tyranny and serfdom.

An ideology of mongrelism, which is to say of those who are so contaminated with weaker, miasmatic elements, which they cannot preserve any of the purity which defines them as individuals – and it is purity, as an essence which does define them.

Post-modernism, rather than being a support of capitalism, is a support of that globalizing influence of it; capitalism qua dissolution of difference, a meltdown of differentiating qualities in the milieu of identity. But post-modernism, by making everything fragmentary, fragmenting it to infinity (all conceptual identity that is) makes such fragments float in the boundless night of space, in other words, become an identity.

It makes everything subservient to the overarching structure, like the state, like communism – renders everything bound to a concrete living god, namely, the linguistic system, the totality of the history of ideas to concrete history; etc. All of that is just a ruse to achieve the dissolution of individuality, to solicit the belief of concrete individuals.

Collectivism is supported by post-modernism, just as it is, ideologically, supported by modernism. I am, here, I suppose, positing the notion of individual as the bastion of security, health, worth – security from that hegemon, 'the collective' and an in-itself source of creative, womb of ideas and actions. To throw oneself on the bier of the collective for one's personality, one's identity, is to face inevitable incineration at the hands of those who have it within their power to do with you what they will.

Thus to be Other-regarding – to be, in a Christian manner, in the manner of the down-trodden, an altruist and to go out of your way to concern yourself with that which 'It' concerns itself with, this crude beast – that is the way towards the ruination of the self. - Because one becomes dependent upon 'It' for the acceptance of that which he says and therefore the truth and validity of that which he says.

One doesn't 'of necessity' have to have the legitimation, the permission (perhaps even the obligation) of the group to do anything he doesn't want; rather he must possess the freedom

within himself to do it – he merely appropriates people as tools for his goals. Not to say those same lose their total subjectivity, merely that he acquires and utilizes their objective character – for his employment in such a capacity renders them such.

Determining Principles

I stumbled upon an interesting conception in Rand: that one individual has a determining principle within themselves, a wellspring of action – to which all actions can be traced. - The great principle of the character, the explanatory answer to all questions concerning their being. Simply reduce everything to its simplest element – and the person lies before you, naked, disclosed and without the masks they wear.

On the other hand this principle is not revealed purely as an in-itself pre-given fact – it is the result of a confrontation with others. Our interpretive reactions of other beings, arising as they do in immediacy, lay bare our character.

But this is purely a determining principle and must be accepted by the individual doesn't it? But such acceptance presupposes, not a tabula rasa, but a being – of a certain (?) character (this is what is in question) – who accepts. I am myself, I. But who said so? Was it myself or an outside source which spoke to 'me' and determined me to be this or that. But who am I if not a determinate character? It appears to be very question begging, but the answer of course lies in the non-inertial, the dynamic, character of 'character'. It is forever replete with being and always being molded again and again.

But without a regulative principle determining our acts – what results? We simply drift, beholden to immediacy, to the moment, as dust in the winds blown by fate.

Character, it is admitted with sadness here, is nothing but a pragmatic device – something to be accepted and believed in. But it always, this whole issue of determinacy and its converse, begs the question – who – what – accepts and believes what is accepted and believed in? Thinking thusly we are referred to identity, an identifiable, is still not a non-entity – but a being immersed in the wake of the sublime, the non-conceptualizable.

If we – hypothetical speakers – aren't referred to a character, identity, personhood – then to whom or what are we referred? It might be said: to belief, to thinking, to some sort of physio-chemical operation – and in its wake the demise of personhood – so that all of that which describes and believes is nothing but description and belief itself – pure presence, a giant tautology. There would then be no command center which decrees that 'A' or 'B' will be adhered to, or that 'person' will do the adhering.

But this seems extremely empty to say that there is neither organizing power nor purpose in the identity, the being, we call 'human'. For why this and not otherwise? To pose such a question is to demand explanation – and does not peace of mind demand – demands of this sort? Surely I

can attain to being by having this organizing penchant? By being that which 'causes' it as a force which overcomes all forces of an opposing ilk (and the world, cosmically considered, is a result of the play of forces – their concentration into identities being the constitution of new forms, individuals) – this is the birth of beings and what guarantees them a place in this world is their being the end result of a process of struggle, and an incessance which is their life – an incessant struggle against opposing forces. The bellum omnium contra omnes is at a particle level – the very microbes which crawl on one's skin – which are one's skin to the eye of a being more complex than themselves – are the soldiers on the battlefield of life and death.

So can one ever really say: I, insofar as I am a distinct being – distinct from the rest – to the eye of himself and thus for human reality – can have – can be – a determining principle which determines himself as himself – which gives himself life? But then what precisely is the determining principle but oneself – and is this then not a tautology – to say 'self' is to say the ensemble of forces which concentrates itself into one – a magnetic reaction of energies, not thrown together from 'without', but coming together as energies, minerals, chemicals – and then a retention within the skull and skin. But even these latter all always being superseded – by forces greater than themselves – like grafting limbs on an organic being – now it can do more, has the ability to ceaselessly develop itself. – And what better way – as most susceptible of development – as those organs which are most complex? The characteristic examples is the brain – but why not the eyes or the heart? All of this is an ethic of pure passivity, this incessant development of the self as its own determining principle – always growing beyond itself towards distant yearnings; at the level of the physio-chemical, the absolutely foundational, towards an attractive force – forces – which pull one towards them – or which are generated through one's own being as goals and ends.

To know others through acquaintance with their manifest characteristics – is that the most superficial or most profound knowledge? For conceptual and verbal acquaintance perhaps always obscures the immediately apprehensible – and the immediate is always apprehensible and apprehended within given situations. But the confrontation with another being that one has is a result of a two-fold process – two beings clash and both give battle. That is to say, both have an emotional (for lack of a better term) commitment towards one another and the outcome is an expression of that underlying – and paradoxically too apparent – reality. But to whom does it express itself? Hardly to pure beings who apprehend something in their cleanliness – rather what is apprehended, in the process of being apprehended is a tainted being which is always tainted – for it is apprehension which does this.

It is always construed as judgement: it is judgement which defeats us. It is mediation – the necessary process of consciousness as it confronts that outside – other than – itself, that destroys that other. Maybe it destroys itself too? Self-judgement defeats us. But in what respect – can qualification go on to infinity? It destroys as it builds – it limits the unlimited. But the limited only exists and not so defined. Questions of limit and lack thereof belong to metaphysics (and are thus merely limitative notions themselves, capstones for thought). 'Limited' is: pure presence, being in-itself – that is all. This is constructed always and always. But limit also exists, dwells within particulars and these same are destroyed as they cease to be what they are. But this is the most creative destruction. One always creates and always destroys. The world is ruled by Ormuzd and Ahriman.

Labour, Thought, and Art

To be strong without object is to consume oneself – for one must work upon something being an absence he consumes the consumer.

This is the agitated state of mind which people who exist under the gun of the threat of *fole de se* experience – theirs is an experience of self-destruction, for destruction is, implicitly, a creative act. When one pulls things apart, reduces things, makes things disappear – modifies the landscape – he creates ~~whether~~ ^{the} creations even if it be his own grave.

Better, with the end of the creation of great things as mental products, to simply sit and experience the thoughts conjured up in inertia, than running around and involving oneself in baseness and degrading acts (TV, etc.). Puritanism! But no – it is the affirmative itself, not waiting on god as a harbinger of newness, but waiting for thoughts which have to come – the material circumstances have been engineered to make them; as if god was called down from the heavens by a being whose slave he was and whose call he was forced to answer.

Labour, as defined as brute physical expenditure of energy about a task that is valueless in-itself and from which one desires no pleasure, no affirmation of strength, is conceived of as miasma, as something which taints he who is in thrall to it. But labour as defined along these lines is separated from its true conception – for physical labour can be, and often is, more affirmative and subjectively valuable than many other intellectual occupations – though these latter are, I would say, higher as more complex and requiring no physical dependency (outside of the operation of the mind) – no external operations so that one can – and must if there is true difficulty implicit in the task – remain stationary and forsake all kinetic movements as these detract from this goal which is, *eo ipso*, made nobler – everything must be devoted to it for its highest efficiency.

But the bland and the banal can nevertheless reside within the heights of inevitable operations – for these latter are not necessarily the heights of thought. The repetition used – as a necessary means to an end – that of production which demands efficiency – in a simple physical operation such as sawing a board and pounding a nail – so that it becomes (does the practical structures) sawing board(s) and pounding nail(s) is analogous to that unreflective and thoughtless occupation of the mind which is undergone in an accounting office or in any other bureaucratic domain – which itself demands, as the only mode of employ, efficacy, getting 'lean' – trimming the fat of eccentricity and narrowing upon goals equally narrow.

So which labour, *ceteris paribus*, is best – mental or physical? If the neutral, in its nobler form, is conceived of as the end to be pursued, then the physical form of repetitious labour is perhaps desired – for at least in making prestigious movements one can be removed from thinking repetitiously – for he is not compelled to think at all. But he does – because that is his *modus vivendi*, his guiding star and determining principle. The banality of mental epaulepsis will quickly stultify the spark of creative action; one must remove himself from such action and provided the task of building isn't so difficult as in detracting from thought, and is in itself creative he will have a worthwhile time in working under conditions which provide a support to his sole goal, namely – the transcendence of immanence.

But we shouldn't even refer to transcendence here – for everything is contained within immediacy, that is to say immanence. – Transcendence means not to be bound to the present perceptual sphere but to involve oneself without those thoughts which define him as existing outside of it and within the sphere of thought.

Thus I forsake my previous conception of labour as base *per se* and as the vitiation of thought. In itself it is labour – expenditure of energy through physical employment of the self qua machine. One doesn't so much become alienated (at an individual level) by labour as he alienates labour through his own individual operations. It is purely a question of calories and energy reserves. The more energy, the greater thought maybe, the more it may thrive – for the cerebral organ is a parasite and sucks all of the energy into itself. But then so is the body, so is the totality of one's organs, etc. so it doesn't matter.

The difficulty is simply in the repetition. When one must undergo great physical taxation – regardless of energy stores – he becomes exhausted and his mind is shaken by the noise and vibrations of his surrounding territory, and with the repetitive nature of the task he does ~~time~~ to fall into the mode of simplicity – for that is the condition of his tolerance for that which he can't help but acknowledge as a presence – simplicity.

Transcendence is superseded by immanence, and taken down to earth, its wings clipped and uselessly flapping against the brute force of the impossibly ignored: labour. Repetition is the enemy of creation which has in its heart novelty. To act once and then to forget, and then to act again in the same manner – it is not constituted as 'the same' but as 'novel' as a precedent perhaps, if one envisions that sinister acts will follow.

And if a precedent then surely it already has lost its novelty – like a flagrant insult to the state which becomes embedded in law, as a legal norm, a precedent. To construct norms is to dissolve the novelty, ingenuity, of creation. Creativity is a spontaneity otherwise it lacks the

instantaneous nature of its conception. But only genius, it should be added, can harness creativity – organize it and present it in some concrete whole so that it becomes totalized and the mere particulars are lost as they were in themselves. A creative product is the ensemble of instants and the result of a process of shaping and the guidance of the thing (created product) which emanates from its creator. If I hammer a nail into this board in such a manner that it is always that act of hammering, that board and that nail then the purity of the instant finds itself preserved in that act; that act attains to pure form. But art, is it not merely rendering inert what was once dynamic – even if the dynamic is represented in the inert. A museum, after all, is not a house of amusement to be filled with roller coasters and music – save that for the carnival or make of higher culture – mere amusement?

So even the memory one has of a nail is art – a nail 'being-pounded', receiving this act and operation? Would it not be the movements which are the art, as in dance? But art here is representational. Non-representational art does not rely upon realism but upon flights of fancy which are not tied down to references. 'Guernica' is referential. Yet if the horse were pink does that make the reference change? What different forms were used? And to what degree must things be altered to alter the reference of the work? Or is it merely aesthetic in-itself-ness? And if in-itself, does an act such as pounding a nail qualify as in-itself? If so, then the world is a canvas – without a painter. It paints itself.

Now, to get back to the story... That than – which – nothing worse – can – exist. I hear silence – is it the mode of this being to suck up into itself all attention, all worship, all devotion? To suck the life blood from each and all so that each and all must serve it as servant slaves away for master? Is this the mode of such a being? It would appear so!

The Allegory of the Beast-Man

I myself am very shocked that I have grown up amidst these beast-men and have yet only been formed slightly in, at a far remove from, their own image. I take these images as the negative and through dirt upon them attempting to bury them all. But then I realize that to leave this veritable scar on the face of the world of human reality is the best thing that can befall my own understanding of history as it is lived through myself. The beastmen stand apart and away from me as the living mockery of that which I could have been had I not, sui generis, chosen my own path and fought against those internal drives that so distinguish me from my forbearers.

The first beast man exists as *utter leich* – too weak to resist he must have it all: wine, women, pleasures that delight the taste buds and senses – throwing moderation to the winds and imbibing like a Sardanapalus the totality of pleasure and excitement. That is his goal and he moves towards it unflinchingly while Rome burns, while the totality of his hopes (which always remain the most distant and apart as they are corrupted by the complete excess which he courts) fall away into nothingness. – So much for this beast, who laments the fact that he can't achieve this or that goal and blames the world for his own ill-preparedness for flight. In this state he is fed in the next the whole of his life, dependent upon the others to feed him and when all others disappear, dies.

The second beast-man is a similar character to this one while being a stark contrast in terms of pleasure-seeking. He is that worm who despises himself so much – and yet blames the world for his ugliness – that he has withdrawn from it and forsaken the land of milk and honey (which he interprets it to be) for a hell of his own self-pity and outward-regarding blame. He has forsaken Mount Olympus so that he might stand out as different and thereby he doesn't leave the nest, and thereby he dies.

As I had said, however, I myself am a quasi-beastman and perhaps should place myself within the class of true beast-men: I also withdraw from the world, I also am tempted by the land of milk and honey – or perhaps Valhalla, the land of heroism. My heroism is borne of the shadows; rather that it be borne of the day – but the shadows are merely for me a cool corner in which to perform Herculean labours and the day from out of this is borne. I am evolving and shirking my beast skin, soon to look upon it shed and lying upon the cold stone ground.

Now I have almost shed it, and the moment when I stand above it naked in purity is fast approaching. – Cast off the skin which has suffocated you too long and stand forth with hardened youthful flesh, the great figure *Dynamis* the active, the conqueror.

Greyhound memories.

Trees of dewy green went past in whiplash / and I with my pocket-book, a 70's-style voyeur book couldn't read it had to put it – down – for it was of no account / So read Nietzsche instead /

always a delight to frequent with / think thinker whose might (whose *macht*) I empathize with. Here policeman – shaved head; 'fascist' as some call him, with investigative dutiful, narrowness – comes about to the surprise of bus drivers – amazing! – source of talk constant – until / we reach Ear Falls Ontario / Go in - / use the ladies' restroom / Advt blip on the map in 'Smitty's' gas station, with its tackle displays and car fresher odours – hey! / We're on the road... again.

/ Back to Nietzsche once again / reacquainted with a thinker / whose thoughts have seeped into / my own / poison or ambrosial fluid? / Who knew I'd be able to disagree with him / in some event? / Young woman picked up / in Ear Falls / listening to some music of sorts – a shame that / youth must fall to – the / banishment of thought / interesting though / But drivers continue to talk – to discuss – to blab their banalities / what do I care? / I have to overhear / it all / and face the music.

Red lights by the windows / reminiscent of prison bus / prohibitions / anticipate eases / are we not – caged in / and are not our anticipations / true? / Here does it matter since we have already committed / the crime / of original sin / that is? / - That is being born / into a society which has / as its modus / prohibition / permission / obligation. We have found through subvertive music / cultures and rebellious / in foreign lands / another moose / with which to hang ourselves. But could it be any other way? / Could it? / that we were born into slavery / the moment we / become acquainted with / gravitational pull of / society and its mores / its necessity and possible possibility / its mathematical / underpinnings. / That foster a / capitalism that spells / servitude / and the mythos of freedom?

I remember the Greyhound bus ride, through the mountains. How I was disappointed by / my vanquished future which / had shone out so brightly / I didn't expect / the denouement / instigated by my brother / and his resentful hatred. No more sunny mountain valley / no more fresh rain-soaked tamaracks / I question: / why could it not have been him - / who left? / I don't care about the answer / and my question falls to pieces / for I have experienced nights of cold winter / prairie land with its dull epianalepsis / How much longer must I endure / its presence? / Bus driver stops again inexplicably / in the middle of highway / people busying themselves about nothing / staring wide-eyed passengers / heads towards the source / which has become the unifying / object of the group. It is theirs / we are together / and all are unawares / about its import – what matter? / Nothing. / It is over / 'woman driver – let's go! / Shouts from around /

hardness / - to cut apart the soft bleakness / with glancing carresses / bring forth from the mists / the hard edges / of intelligible forms.

What are the dangers - of becoming too strong? / One severs / with ruthlessness / all desiring flows / before they reach home / beyond to their object of intent / they are heaven-sent / into nothingness. / What manner of life for man / when he must / languish, in the / indolence / in the leisure / of bodily desires. / The sublimated life is most hard - hardest of all / and none who can achieve it / have not pitted themselves for it / but for a moment / a fleeting moment / reawakened afterwards / by encouraging spiritual words / - of strength.

Posed to me as divine pronouncement / here perceiving four walls / then suddenly against they come / noble words, hope's commencement. / But clearly unconcerned with cherishing / - life's value through this un-willful commencement.

Greyhound depot: Kenora. / Here I listen to the avant garde the conformist / melodious, notes of / contemporaneity. / I am all but alone / Gumball machine / pink, red, orange, and green / random fate discharged / a parable of life. / Who could procure from the utterly / banal landscape / of a Greyhound bus depot / the meanings / of the Sphinx? / Am I up for the task / wanderer along life's path following? / Answers indefinite / here I sit / unconcerned with the day. / It is almost ludicrously framed / this environment / chairs plastic, pre-fab / stand erect / testament / to regularity. / And the son working / behind the counter / feels ill he tells his / mother. / 'Trying to do some math', etc. / a conversation one-sided / ensues. / Amusing - / 'amuse? / Non. I harken unto / the life of others / and balk at my / own emptiness. / Is it not infuriating? - I ask / that merit / must go unrecognized / and a nobleman set adrift / upon a shallow sea. / of judgment? / the wait - if that be his proper name / comes in / ignorant / eyes half-closed / words guttural / unintelligible / - poor pronunciation - / only these small towns / or rather / big cities also / can inhabit / the minds of the populace / these commonplace / fools. / In the bathroom / for refuge / had in mind concepts / great concepts / precepts of my edifice / ethical architecture. / Now gone, dissipated - no time for / reflection. / Anticipating a novel / experience.

And how the world stands outward / so hatefully, so / contemptibly / in its viciousness / and I / in my innocence / must endure this / whirlwind of strife / importunate / obdurate / endless - seemingly. / The hope lies in the semblance / despair in the finality / pronounced by / the Other / of the social / and I, alone stand / apart / separated from / this my heart. / A plebeian concept / perhaps / perhaps not / the body is my / philosophy and the what / -ness of the world / I give up to it / as a lover to his bearer / bearer of his essence / myself blessed / cursed / either/or.

apparently this matters. / Young teenage girl with agreeable nature / attracting older boys, perhaps my age / this to me is unfortunate / that at this age / they are so quick ~~to~~ speak out / But not at mine / this is the fate of the shy: / that they must forever / escape and avoid / the curious questions / of women.

Discussion so long absent / - I should have known it / should have revelled in its presence / now I disown it / - the flight of the / - dare I say it? / - weak? / But even the weak / must find strength / even apart from all conversations / all discussions. / He can at least discuss it with / himself.

The inanity! / The inanity of their discussions / the other / what unspeakable contempt I have / cultivated towards it / the Other. / Force me to place my ear plugs / to plug up my sense of / reality / so that I may / cope with what is left / me, / my desperate conscious. / There is no better place / absurdly / where I may cultivate myself. / Call it a testing ground / a bikini atoll / reverberate with sound this place / and grace / -lessly I walk a pace / apart the pack.

Double white line of demarcation / split / into one converging / separates / the road traffic as it navigates / country and destination. / I saw an expanse / several / glacial / reference points to a former time / looming immediate / through narrow viewpoint / of window / tear-stained gritty rock face / tears of joy befallen / all sadness dissipates / with the vital rain's / supra-terrestrial / call. / Tattooed-arm compulsion / of vision / dare not look through / moral prohibition / muscled and with health affirms / - youth, o' life blossoming / Have as endless vision of cup of life overflowing / frothing.

I feel and sense this: / Delphic prophesy: / woman will end us / Woman driver will ruin us / will be harbingers in flight / carrying upon her wings / doom. / At least I'll go down laughing / call it phallic prophesy / echoing jealous women's need / desire transformed into enmity / for inconsumable / desire. / I burn / I burn like fire / deep within / my spiritual conscience / underpinned / by sexual, substantial wind. / Feeling that incessance / beautiful incessance / of emotional furnaces / heat / of joyous inexplicability / - it must be felt / must be inwardly perceived.

When words become echoes - / this when one knows / he has employed the right ones. / When words become echoes / they carry out the corporeal / valence towards / the real. / This is called truth.

To experience this reality / one must go wide-eyed to see / and if he should walk amongst the blind / pluck out his eye / so that at least / in the very least / he can be justified / in viewing the world / in easy / carefree / indolence. / I want to view the world in crystal sharpness / diamond

Strange the source of beauty in everything. / The tiles reflecting lights of artifice / human beauty / human inventiveness / human beauty? / Can thereby any other / author / of beauty / than the human? / And yet so much / excessive / ugliness / so much crudity / in beauty / so much / inner - contradiction.

Nietzsche's ethic / alerts me to the moral imperative / of slaving for my art / of declaring a possession / of this noble outpouring / of talent / incubating / within myself / the wealth / of possibility. / Silent Greyhound depot / whispers in the back room / between youth an unknown. / The time is / a crystalline datum / of eternity / has solidified / hardened / into non-being. / Whispers enjoyed in company / mommy has come to / restrict / to teach / teenage tabula rasa / how to inscribe upon itself / the cryptic / mythic / answers / to formalistic questions. / Such complex / emptiness / discussed in poverty / in articulated banality / conveyance of / its emptiness. / I am trying to think / within the world of / triangles and hypotenuses / and wind up / puzzled / at how this / this emptiness / can be the guarantor / of success / in the modern world.

Night-time passes like the / Greyhound / here writing / on films / course calendar / - no more / solid again on board / - the Greyhound tips / rocks / creaks / - people try to sleep at / 2:30ish / but I stay / awake / owlsh / pouring out / all / my wisdom / on tabula rasa.

One must backtrack / so that / he may better / document the goings on / of the insipid. / Came through / Winnipeg / old prairie town accustomed to. / Sat next strange man / who read Ouspensky / crazy prairie / mystic / scientific / type / whose enthusiasm / was drought-destroyer / of social poverty. / Talked heatedly / thought-provoking / then excused himself / lamely / - could've been pie: / unpractised in the arts / of conversation / either/or. / Before strange psycho / ~~restless~~ ^{settles} down woman / rubs my leg constantly / as I am forced / to watch alien / us.

Predator on TV / the screens they pulsate and I / allow their undulating waves / to engulf me / I kiss her - why? / I request fellatio / she doesn't address / the question. This is all before 'Ouspensky' (as I call him) / after thoughts regained / in some sort of harmonious / charade / through floating / floating on the conversation / imbibing it / starved as I was / allowing myself ignobly to stoop / - dependant on / another's prerogative. / Try to rest in mobile un-fun ride / try to oust yourself from this / - Ouspensky! / Try to disassociate / or - what was the word / he used? / Try to 'oust' I say / yourself from here / -No. / Nothing but a quarter pound of / sunflower seeds in my belly / a calorically deprived / headache / a thinking of the muscles / and hours to go. / I had also / confronted students my age / found them / as always / to be

intolerable / to be arrogant / snobby / accusative / - as if I had something / that deserved a beating / by insecure kids? / And this leads me / not like Ouspensky / to my fundamental problem: / will I even / have friends / with whom to really / I mean really / be as one with? / Youth had already departed / and young adulthood fast / away speeds / now I am lost in the heartland / of Canada / on a Greyhound / without anything but / an infinite need / an infinite longing / desire to / ~~convict~~ ^{convict} my limitation / my barren disassociation / into something concrete / and something new. / I like the stillness of the night / - stille nacht / and here I feel like / what Goebels said / about Hitler / and his work ethic / - unsurpassable macht. / Macht in der nacht / - think about it. / Think about stillness / and mental power / think about the illness / cured by Edgar / case, mentioned by / Ouspensky. / I desire puritanism / desire ~~calmness~~ ^{calmness} / and yet undergirding all / is a taint / or a colouring - / depending upon your viewpoint / of Protestantism. / The fundamental dualism / I experience / namely to lead the bourgeois life though eccentrically / - the common route, clearly / isn't for me - / or to live as a wolf / did / as cited in / Steppenwolf. / I now prefer to live like all the rest / so that I may / simply / rest / my head / on a lover's / breast. / Who is she? / Who? / - calling out in der nacht. / Who is she? / Who? / I have no answer, no macht / impotent I stare / outwards / out into space. / Restless in der nacht. / I saw a Korean girl / heard mention of her before / - by one of my enemies. / She looked at me and I recalled / these same. / Why must human cruelty / not preserve / the blessed potentiality / of intersubjective / relations? / Those are trampled underfoot / trampled through the hatred / of ignorance / and a complacency / in the face of / understanding. / Strange. / We twist and turn / but nowhere / do we / seemingly / go. / The night / blackest lover / friend / has swept away / vision / with coal dust / and yet we / breathe it in. / 'Martin's Pharmacy' - / town of Virden / unknown tourist trap / we're in. / What do they have to offer? / - question / but commercial shops and / the same old / same old. / Would it matter / if a bomb exploded / in a whirlwind / of flame / and Virden was no more? / Would it matter that such a question was posed? / - a recipe for / apathy. / Home Hardware proud and tall / stands commercialism's / infestation / into the bowels / of the heartland. / The sign breaks stillest night / beacon of light / of capitalistic glory / of incessant industry / - the new god / the new world order / behold its power / - can't you see? / or are you merely / busy / buying tools / and jars / with which to / stock your larders? / Must I again address / the repugnance / of the coughing / effeminate protesting / of weak ignorance?

Sometimes one grows weary / of being a receptacle / of his art. / And sleep-deprived / candles burn / despite the light's / ennoblement / of the world. / Alien hands / puppet-like / move him / he is given no respite / as he becomes a nexus point / - and the world moves through him.

Glorious skylines / around Regina / purity of blue / flat / fabricated land / well-cultivated soil / admonishes me / for my concern / over / the Frenchies / as they babble / in tongues / next to me. / And now past oasis in the desert / - past slowed down activity / into prairie / dreary / -ness / once again / the only enlivening thing / is the nuisance - making / of Frenchies singing / and idiots coughing / in contempt. / My positive / feelings / concerning / this trip / in the here and now / are that / I am alone once again / and that I needn't bother to keep up appearances / around others. / Alone on a seat / listening to the Frenchies - / it could be / better / but I am simply awaiting / the novel experience / and benefits / which await me there / in B.C. / I come across a strange pool / cultivated out of nothingness / with ducks swimming / sitting in it / a Nero / Romanesque / pond. / in the middle of / nothing / oasis. / Fonds intermittent / squared testaments / to man's natural inclination. / to imitate nature / Roman ideals / still pervade the west. / A rusty / old baby blue car / sky above on car in this form / How long have you rusted away for o' sky? / How long has it been since one has / -driven you / like a chariot / upon high? / Was it in youth / that now old age has rusted away? / The high point / of someone's life / might / have been lived out / in this car / at the wheel / on the trunk / gazing at the stars. / Now it lies forgotten / like so many / memories / within a sky of / infinite vastness.

Do farmers / work? / I see no one / only empty fields / of purpose / solidified into an eternal moment / by the lack of purpose apparent / until the birds / and the cars / flew by.

The wilds of this painted doldrum / the flat hues / of green / straw-yellow / blue / all are so over-the-top / with their pastel attempts / to paint beauty's portrait. / The wilds of giant trees / the misty rivers / the mountain highs / and low valleys / - all are lacking here - / this is not B.C. / this is not a place of / consequence to me. / And to think I had idyllic dreams / of such places / to live a simple life / wife, child and house and homestead / all such things now / are as foreign as red / -ness of / Chinese lanterns. / In such circumstances as this one must simply indwell / he cannot exist / in such a platitude. / His mood transfers the future / through itself / and this is anticipation / based on experience. / Calgary presents itself far and away / at 5:00 p.m. that say? / Such a trip really stretched time / out of all proportion. / And as we enter the darkling clouds of the future / - I can see them darken / my vision - and I see Calgary as a blip / on the map / of a life I wouldn't / want to live. / I suddenly wish / -brought about by thunderheads / perhaps. / I were in Iceland. / But I won't describe it / for a dream defies / comprehension / is an idealization / without realization / a vision / without the power / to become what it is. / I like this land in passing. / Any other way I would not have it / it would grow wearisome / like a light that's been left on / too long / - and that's what makes it / wearisome / this time determination / this meaning conformance. / Muddy fields / fertile soil. / How I wish / just for a moment / I

could be toiling / in those fields like a peasant. / That I could wield a hoe and lift it up in dizzying arch / allowing its own kinetic / movement / carry it up to poised balance / and then falling down with coercion / upon the earth. Such is a dream / and it brings a smile / to my face. / - But only for a moment / - if I took it longer / it might last forever / and thus convert / happiness / into its opposite.

The relativity / the dialectic / of man and nature. / trains lumber at an inexorable pace / purpose to the last / of their gears' rust. / Birds squabble at one another under the bridge / with hostile instinctually / it is as if the two are paying each other / compliments / nature and man / framed by the same picture window / in which life glowered / will to power / two birds in the hand.

"The laurels of mere willing are dry leaves which have never been green. / The above quote is Hegel / I copied it down weeks ago / who knew that I would / look upon it / from this perspective? / The meaning of it is profound to a degree / though changed also / - preserved through its history / changed through its contingency / its displacement / in another context. / But what it means / to me (necessarily) / is that one must not merely conceive / of abstract generality / but can notice these same / and bear the spots hence of willing. / The storm clouds / rather grey-skied cloud / have precipitated rain / and the rickety road / has lent action / to the doldrums of the plain. / I am greasy / unsanitary / every minute observations / recording is / mandatory / or this trip / across an expanse whose end / continues ad infinitum / is prolonged without cessation. / we have stopped at a gas station / and the curled flag of Saskatchewan / still heralds the dullness of the plains. / I had seen salt pools / - or the like - / I know not which / and this land is to be / - proverbially stated - / taken with a salty grain or two / for its tedium amazes me / so strangely / accustomed to / solitude. Have you ever encountered / the reproach of a woman / in gesture? / I tell you my friend / nothing is more annoying that this / this subtlety / this rudeness / as if of all people / deserved this? / Blanket-like the fields / with checkerboard patterns / cover the rolling hills / an allusion / to the quaintness of this / scenario.

Iceland is recalled again / a lonely house occupying field / like age-old / war-torn / grey beard victorious / weathered boards stand out to match / the sky of grey above / and that is my ideal / this philosophical existence / communion with being / decay herein the meaning of life / apart from all / shackled up in the mountains / it could hardly be prairies - / but if not mountains / then at least / rolling hills / stretching out to the sea.

Black cows dot the landscape of green / like shit splats they seem / and what more apt / designate / than that? / For a cow is an animal / that does nothing but that. / Born for service

and nothing more. The bales of hay stand out like worms / crawling upon the hills / their dominion / connected / segmented / battle machines / storing up munitions / and soldiers / of farm equipment / red, yellow, green / for battle / who will win amongst the worms? / Anyone / or is it merely a human spectacle?

Lazy cow existence / staring out at nothingness / - I stare back / another confrontation between / - man and machine / who sees who? / The question of agency / of empowerment / of faculty. / The answer afforded / is the placing of Prometheus' fire in the hands / of a new god.

It has perhaps / been said too many times / as the Coca-Cola truck drives by: / the farmland and the slogan! / The world's commodification / at the hands of profiteers / tearing the countryside to ruins! / But I've heard that one before / its meaning has grown grey / I articulate it in poetics / and transvaluate it / and hey! - / colour washes the scene again. / The presence of the grain silo / the vases / the wire - defaced contraptions / - incongruity reigns! / Upon the plains / and in servitude the earth / subject to the tearing forth / the coerced / tearing forth / of its offerings. / There is a Taco Time / or equivalent / on every street corner. / There is a fast-food restaurant dominant / which upon the earth creates / - godlike - / order. / Such is rationality / systems theory / functional catastrophe. Like giant robot mosquitoes / draining the earth of its blood / - the oil pumps. / In and out with casual satiety / lethargic animal / the long-drinkers / of vital essence / of the earth, / quenching their parched throats. / These profiteers / on the quantitatively / limited.

One is floating in numbness / now. The German song of jollity / - I know not the name - / plays throughout the mists / across cloud-covered plain. / And the steady shaking / that steadying jiggling / that one is coerced / to get accustomed to / is a suitable / backdrop to / the numbness of the brain. / How many hours have I been awake for? How many moments / heaped one upon the other / have constituted / this weight? / This cerebrum mashing / heaviness / so that I can neither sleep / nor engage in artistic wakefulness.

These screams / of played out movie / to the end played / attempted to be ignored / but failing that / they flicker onwards / as a memento / of the harrowing / sojourn into / hyper-realism / into a false field of vision. / I hear the ground shake / move my pen / in unintended / revolutions. / To cut through the difficulty of this mediation - impossible / all products are construed as / tainted / poisoned / unactualizable.

Examine the ticker / determine if / the ride may end / sooner than this / but no. / Straight through. / Straight through like an arrow towards a long forgotten / goal. / - I take aim / draw back my bow / and release / the means / towards this goal. / Questioning I corner myself. / will

it strike home? / Is the heart / - that propulsive force - / sufficient to make it so? What it is to live in this place: / filth, slovenliness / brain-numbing beat / torturous boundedness? / The woman sitting in front of me / blackens the ends / of her fingertips / what religious / - presumptive - / meaning / is this? / This heated / tepid / feral goddess / from the deserts / of the south / - not Arabic - / but proximate / and thus sufficiently / categorizable. / I recognize now that I haven't a choice / haven't a selection to make / - I'm going places / literally / whether I like it / - or not. / And to think that choice triumphs / in conception. / How can this be so / if all reality meets with neither yes nor no? / but experiences a fetter / a ball and chain attachment / called circumstantial involvement / the situation / the means towards the goal / and the proverb rings true: you must begin / where you are! / - for that is the origin / that is the start.

I focused my will on a raindrop / on the window sill / intervention in seemingly disparate / substantial configuration. / It was collected by another / on the path I chose for it - / its destiny. / It was I who did it / - can't you see? / This is clairvoyance / this is madness / qua commonality. / But I willed it just the same and along the thread of necessity / it led, straight to me. / Again I tried to prove this typo- / thesis / but it was / falsified / provisionally anyway. / This argues for cosmic unity / not individual will influencing thus / but a cosmic will / influencing itself.

Picture have turned against you / the forces of democracy / and the call of normativity / as a brick wall / confronting you. / This it is with the majoritarian tyrants! / They clamour for merits on buses / - they are provided. / They clamour, always in the name of themselves / their own cause / for whatever they bargain for / - and they acquire it / through their own most pettiness / petty rancour. / What of the minority? / - and I don't mean those advocated / by their / moral superiors. / What about those who do not beat the drum / of weakness / those who do not wave the banner / of like colours / those whose very shading / colours them / as different. / - What of them? / What is their fate? / They are handed / the scorn / and upbraiding / of judgment - ropes / which dig into their flesh. / This is why I can't possess a relationship with them / these majoritarians. / This why I always seek an escape, a loophole, a / - way out. The drum beats sound too loudly / the voices cry too boorishly / for my taste. / And travelling / on this bus / with these same / - confronting virtually no one new / of interest / I confess / that my encounter with / the majoritarians / never does impress. / They against him / they strive to suppress his / presence / with petty coughs / but they are ineffectual / in doing anything / but annoying him / - perhaps their intention / in the first place. / And I grow so tired / - so much so that I could scream out in pain! - / of the hostility / of the baseness / that is my daily confrontation. / They would have the free spirit corralled / with a pen of their own making / would play at being / master when / their slavish nature presents / a contradiction. When I am uprooted / I am

generally uplifted / not when thrown / though / into a slump of / hatred and contempt / then I find extricating myself / a challenge.

Youth with face of disgust / cellphone chattering / spying eyes all around / leaving / one no peace. / Feel that pressure / so characteristically / Albertan / wafting through the air / - call it: / hostility. / The body corrupts within / such an environment / mind included therein / it too falls from view / and descends / into nothingness.

What day is it? / One hardly knows. / All he's acquainted with / in a motion which / flows / at a jiggling, jarring / speed / what need / have I of this state / - restless - / of being. / And still so much time to go / such an uneventful / epanalepsis / the rational schema / of my life / passes without movement / inert / absurd. / The shadow wicked past my head / phantom-like / I saw its / harbinger - affect / felt - it / and beheld / memories of / passing under bridges. / Staring at the bleary rain-soaked / window / tendrils of raindrop / residue / soaking vision through. / The world is a bleary abyss / all possible outcomes / become vanquished / through the absolute negation / of the scene / through my window. / And the tiredness continues / one begins to almost / accept the background / of foolish / laughter / of contemptuous / smiles / as an / inevitability. / All over oneself / sprawls a soreness / a throbbing wound. / It is the influence upon me / of the world / Hesse's mark of Cain. / Difficult it is / to tolerate / this pain / this painful ennui / which disrupts / the normalcy / of a life uneventful / inconsequential bliss. / But the tiredness one / battles through / victorious one! - exclaim / is this the key to / mind and body / mastery / who - me? / A stoic / invested in whom / all control is harnessed. / To live in harness for a principle; / can one not imagine / the delirium / of epanalepsis? / The oneself to earth / Promethean-like / make of oneself a birth / fertile - and - / crying throughout the night.

One feels as if / in stasis / for the sake / of cautious / deliberations. / What cause / offer / is there one? / The old proverbial / terrestrial sun / - woman. / Nervous maker / making quaker / bones and fear / abound / bleaching in this sun. / They discuss sundry things / always / never-ending / unrelenting. / Dampen your ear with / plugs of foam / no sound / one dwells / in his proper home. / Calgary - / reflect upon / nothing of merit / a utilitarian thing / a hope and a prayer / for money - speculators / for middle-finger gestulators / - Calgary - / cowtown to the end. / Just passin' through you say? / How else could it be - with me being me / and they - being they?

Make a grimace face / upon the taste / of warmed / sour / water. / Who could stand living / in a place / where freshness / goes forsaken / through bacon-makin' / - creed of modernity / a late / capitalistic fate. / - No thanks democracy! / Iron citadel / stationed upon the hill / there with

orgasmic / power. / Such is the hour / of fate / for those whose lives / gravitate / in vassalage / to their maker / bourgeois god / thunder god / life-giver / - taker / knell-toll of the spellbound. / Bound to what? / Rather - / bound by what? / By the tower / watchtower / over / subversive dreams / even those which reminisce / about normalcy / for what is it - / but a dream captured in a false presentation / a reality convoluted / by the taint of nature freshness polluted?

I pass a high school / question: / does my destiny lie hence? / Am I to become / a slave / to emotionally-charged / adolescents? / How can I conceive myself / as their saviour? / When they reject / in utter apathy / nihilism / all saviours / when their will-to-power / strips them / - absurdly - / of their very means to power / of their potentiality / - their power? / Impotent - how can I resurrect this? / Should I? - better question. / And yet there are / - are there not? / children crying out for just such a messiah? / Was I not one? / But am I so / - common, as all that? / That I should be influenced / by such a decision? / The dialectic tears me / into fragments / volences / attractions / repulsions / leads me away / from the world / into inner violence. / No - I am not ready yet / have not prepared myself sufficiently for the task. / Can you imagine me / adjudicator? / Overseer of a small group of minions / amorphous changing / year after year / as worldly revolutions / eclipse them? / transform them into age / into maturity?

Fawn's eyes looking / timidly / why do we all / fall / for such things? / Answer: / natural inclination / sexual pre-destination. / And with that answer / so compact, perfect / I hear once more the song / in my mind / playing / trumpeting forth. / German song to which / I forget the lyrics / if I'd ever known them / and the name perfectly encapsulates / such a liminal moment.

And yet it is all too / simple, really. / Too simple to be / geometrically / portioned off / this look / this smile / - wistful. / Conceptual vigour / cannot endure / this aesthetic. / But no more / why torment / oneself / over things unattainable / to him who does not / will it. / And I look upon all of my companies here / if indeed they can be called that. / the ease which words / - articulable words - / come to such a one / has / enthralled me. / And to him / the victor of willing / go the women. / Another - lost youth / who doesn't even / know it yet / paints his face / Paggiacci-like / into an expression / an artistic representation / of inner experience. / Do we not all so

bedecked stand / and face the world / - this our armour / magical protection / from its venom. / But he might say: / - I say 'might' not would / for we know the testiness of youth / when it knows 'the good' / he might say: 'it defines me / ascribes to me / a character / a something to hold onto / amidst the storm'. / And you can't neglect that it / exists / this tempestuous youth / - for I have lived it too.

After a few moments of reflection I am prepared to write. – And yet in difficult enterprise it appears to be.

The mountains in the morning / and my leave-taking - / all one / valleys and rivers isolated / from their visual presentation / and to think that I am content now / that I have forgotten / my warrior's spirit. / Am I returning - / home? / Alone once again. / Am I going back to possess it - / once again, my spirit? / But I have grown stronger through it / through this story / and today I return / again to ersatz homeland.

The railway / a way along rails / buried in the grass of life / cold iron potentiality / for the traveller / to actualize. Wet pavement / reflects / misty mountains / full of life / and to that I depart into the prairies / the doldrums of geographic life. / But to an oasis / within the prairies I go / back to my provisional home. / Still it is more home / than anything / and I harken unto its call / its offering. / Marysville comes and goes amidst the mist and rain. / I have travelled these roads before in another time / - who knows if I'll ever see them again.

I overhear that the drivers on these buses make a good wage, and I wonder if they'll ever use it – in exchange for and at the expense of, their lives?

Kimberly now / at the Overwaitea grocery / anything that is viewed / as incongruous is proffered up to / the police by us. / I see a police sign and gaze upon it as / the bus driver makes well-timed decisions / unknown to me / - a familiar path / he himself has tread. / That is bourgeois thinking: / protective / secluded / and yet perversely / troublesome.

Already my brain begins to ache / to the sound of the idling engine / but I must persist in this activity / a catalyst of my writing.

Now I am in Kimberley / as stated previously / and herein I recollect my past / long dead / never to be recovered again / -with a lurch we're off again.

It's strange that I still refer to people, potential friends, as 'kids' – I have been left in the past – time to wake up and live in the present.

The name 'Hanne' used to be synonymous with 'mother' – that was before the universal form of 'mother' appeared. Is there such a term or does it explode into a thousand, infinite plurality of fragments in this modern day.

There are no original thoughts as no origins. All things are structural and systematically constituted through the given conjuncture or 'system' of the world or the infinite totality of its aspects.

The way to live in the world of indifference is wholly in the mind – therein one can have a place and understanding of his place when the world, the 'exterior' rejects him. But what if there is no exterior at all? Then he merely rejects himself as participating within the world. And if there is no interior he rejects himself.

Railway sweeping off behind trees / disappearing / into inferential reality / we can only conjecture / where the end and beginning are. / And if there is none it is a / Mobius strip of epimalepsis / and we can never follow it to the end. / - A parable of life: / that there is no end that we / can know of. / We know only of the continuance / steady heartbeat / of life and then - ? / Blackness? / - or a light / with which to see in the never-occurring / blackness?

Cattle pen like a wrestling ring / strong wrestlers they / who battle over slops / as their reward / amidst steel blue-painted / ropes and intermittent white buckles.

With all this B.C. mountainside semi-wilderness, semi-civilization (and now we know the distinction between the two) I yearn for the Northern Ontarian homeland in which I was raised – truly one can never leave his home of birth. Let us expatriate upon the distinction between

civilization and nature: civilization what: man-made things, nature worked upon by man and to what degree determines the degree of civilization, to what degree it is not worked upon determines that of nature. But nature is not to be defined (if it can be) negatively, rather positively: pre-giveness. Thus the distinction implodes into one or the other depending on one's 'shirt' for we live in a pre-given world of industry and post-industry, production, and reproduction of our uniforms of commerce to which we are all slaves.

Trees on the mountainside standing against the background of the sun rising into the mist. They are like warriors journeying over the mountains casting silhouettes into my eyes, memories of their archaic forms.

Flowers sprinkled in the grass – purest white on purest green – like a carpet of absolute purity sprinkled upon the earth by divine hands.

I wish that I had a preacher to discuss things with, a holy reverend who lived a nonvean ascetic life of earnest devotion. He would be the utmost of inner calm, acknowledging his own worthlessness. It is not power – over oneself, over others – which drives the truly devout; it is their inner yearning for nothing but yearning itself, it is yearning itself and absolute coalescence with the totality of existence. One does not consider others in such a state, nor is such a state the expression of physiological sickness. It is a state of merging with the All, and it is called worship.

Proud spires of a proud house upon a hill – and what does it lord over? – Cattle. No longer so proud. This is the way of the bourgeois, whatever garners them money is labelled 'noble' and 'good' – thus they worship money as 'the good' and the cattle mediatory – ignoble stopping, but suitable, as they were never noble in the first place.
Standing upright skeletally / strange fortress of unknown friend or enemy / - the 'hoodoos' so called / not as interesting / as advertised.

And I thought there would be conceptual material to write about. But no, merely another gas station, nothing more; the hoodoos fade into a memory, fleetingly. I wish that I had a woman my age to talk to here – it would be the best place, a modern age romance: on the Greyhound. - Our own personal limousine trekking through the mountains, then over the prairies back towards the oasis therein.

It is quite explicable to me that the older woman who has just sat on the bust did not sit near to me: a youthful insecurity, my shaved head, unattractive features perhaps; this beauty requires adjustment or prior knowledge from afar, and only then will I not receive the hatred of superficiality.

The human body is an amazing – and amazingly fallible – thing. The case in point in my opinion is the consumption of food: 'you are what you eat' an apt peasant phrase.

And even here, in this fairly isolated region, one can see a Home Hardware – box store proletarian, a testament to globalization, the mediocrization of the world under capital influence.

The mountains shine brightly in the distance / awash in misty clouds which give / a hiding place for the shame / of civilization. / Nothing can touch / distant mountain peaks / their sparkling white permanence / of snow. / How permanent is it / I question / when the warming of the globe prevents / eternity / through human agency / the fallible / and self-destructive.

The Germans have an odd sense of quaintness / all things are miniaturized / - and yet they live in the mountains / - how to explain this? / Very similar / once again / to the Japanese / it is knowing one's place / in certain distinction / to the vastness / of the world. / To me they are / like dogs / these Germans / - big and loud / glad and happy / clumsy dogs. / They diverge from / the Eastern / serpentine slippiness / though they have a canine / cunning / reminiscent of their / Eastern allies and enemies. / But I generalize / and feel more at home with these people / than with most others / I've encountered. / But I still feel distant / the distance / between I and though / between two seemingly / ambivalent terms.

No matter how parochial the culture of the present it retains and acquires, in spite of itself, global elements. This Germanic-cultural locus in the mountains yet still has an 'Esso' gas station, a McDonald's and a thousand similar things. This is the implosion of culture into the global village culture: all of them sell their wares and do so by means of the same system but utilize the vestiges of their history to propound difference to give the alibi to difference which doesn't exist.

I notice a sign which reads: 'The mountains shall bring peace to the people' – a ridiculous slogan. We are in the mountains now. To such an extent that at times the bus grows dark. We go into a tunnel in the side of a mountain – where two mountains join one another to be precise – the earth has had bored into it a cavity by human hands; such it is with human civilization as defined above, cavities in the teeth of the earth, a metaphor too grotesque to continue.

That the story never ends but always continues – that is the causal logic of life: there is no cause, effect, series, and terminus – we are floating on a dream cloud over the fluxual crust of the earth, its protean, imperceptible variation.

Travelling through the mists of the mountains – time warp. We are here and eternity, remain fixed in place inertially as if we are somehow driving in the heavens. Maybe this is the fate of bus drivers and their passengers when they get in an accident? I hope not. Out of the mists and into a given 'temporal context', a lived time, within then we are living without time and perhaps that would be best. A year would then seem like an eternity and our lives multiplied a thousand-fold, replete with experience.

Miles of burnt trees ascending the mountains and populating the valleys – an unaesthetically pleasing sight and bizarre contradiction to the lush green of other trees.

My tired body can hardly scrawl words on the page and when I acknowledge this reality I exacerbate it, make it come true.

A practice exercise for the coming weeks of female pursuit: how can I market myself with appeal so that, like an apple on the tree of youthful vitality, I may be plucked. This, I'm sure, is how women think and it is a strangely incongruous mode of thought for a man – nevertheless I think it with the pragmatic aspect of a 'causalist' a causality proselyte, who recognizes the value and use of causal thought.

One has curious senses, they seek to find things out – what? I know not. That is the way of things when one 'smells out' an unusual scent, or even meets someone he doesn't know – it is a mode of understanding another and sight is spoken of too much.

I gaze up into the mountains and I am now in Jotunheim, mythical land of unknown ancestors. In my mind I speak now to women – they have captured my referentiality and directed it towards themselves as absolute reference. This is youth, vehement intensity of sexual striving.

I keep imagining that I am speaking to the blind girl I was attempting to contact on the chat line some time ago. I tell her that her children's senses will be heightened owing to her blindness, a genetic transmission of awareness, of mental lucidity across the generations. Thus her children will be more aware. She did not know this but now is confident in my paternal intentions – a question mark and a hope are raised in her mind.

I am growing irritable, though I preserve my sense of humour, in the situation of being stared at, at being hurried by the foolish people of this world, those inferior types who are borne of resentment. I never used to think this way – to believe in hierarchy. Admittedly, it is a human creation, nothing objectively 'the cat's' but how can this be – clearly it is based upon something?

Answer: cultural anthropology, its culturally relative value – judgements. I must here become like women and place my faith (of myself) in the hands of the social for a yield of ranking. All around me I see inferior types and need only peer behind the veils of surface appearances to get at the culturally relative 'truth' of the matter. Thus my beliefs in hierarchy are developed, but I retain my sense of humour knowing they are only fictitious.

BLOOD

I wrote this 4 or 5 days ago and I had no idea what its intent or reference was. It was an idle exercise to while away the time during a point of human exhaustion before sleep, the provisional death of man. I died that night and awoke to life once more, awoke to the history of the world 'blood', from red to brown its history had a tangible quality to it and I reflexively referred to its act of writing the night before – and I the writer, what does this mean which is so significant that I must write about it? Perhaps an attempt to affirm life in the act of death, perhaps an attempt to confer upon myself life in acknowledging my seeming permanence?

History: it is being trumpeted as the way towards knowledge, as the be-all and end-all of knowledge. No longer is essentialism the guiding star of modernity, now it is its history. The logic goes as follows: that facts of history are couched to this level through interpretation means that of the competing interpretations of the facts there must be – through a homogenization and 'check-and-balance' of these same – some truth lying around somewhere – and thus we should seek out those interpretations as exegetical gospel, become their proselytes. This is why the liberal ideologues of government trumpet history: for it bears the ring and approximation of truth and if not that then a plenitude of interpretations which render all meaning absurd.

Disorienting feeling like some astrological flight: being on the cross of highways (if that's what the cause is'). Cars and trucks zoom towards and away from one with simultaneity, collide with one's future position but he knows not how in the moment, though after, owing to the curvature of the road – he or the oncoming car or both whisked away from one another and all things are as they were – bizarre experience of an advanced stage of technological development.

The soft, quiet emotions of leave-taking ensconce me. I feel myself embarking upon a new mode of life and to articulate this fact enhances the softness; a smile plays across my features underlying them evoking the certainty that life will change 'on the other side' of this trip. One need only undergo privation and he can achieve worlds through that; and the world he achieves corresponds to the manner of privation.

Still there are problems to surround but these dwindle with age and understanding so have a will to understand things: yourself the world and all the relations you fabricate apropos of these entities (in itself, reflexion, for-itself, confrontation between self and world).

I wrote the above prose in a semi-lucid daze of effeminacy. It is amusing, the timidity of the bourgeois representative. They see another who, perhaps, is of interest and they preserve the negative distance which obviates, which wholly negates, any contact.

Calgary appears to me an artificial town, city of fabricated dreams – and the fabricated people flock to it as their own realization. Nothing here appears old – why? Everything ~~is~~ says undergoes development; it is the end of history manifest, a post-modern universe in a nutshell. Winnipeg provides, or did until recently, a striking contrast – it is thoroughly historical, a city with interest in its own origins. But even this is becoming a farce, history is becoming the canded outlook of a box store, the hyper-realization of itself as proselyte of the model of universality, i.e. capitalism. But it had a history and this is now a cadaver in the form of archaeological archaisms, of 'historic sites' dotting the landscape.

A media conglomerate manifest on a single wall of HQ building – manifestation of monopoly. Where are we? I could swear we have disappeared into Anytown U.S.A., i.e. box store haven, i.e. corporate takeoverville. Gated communities confront one but does anyone who isn't as false and pre-fabricated as these gated communities want to confront them? They all have a blueprint: people and suburbs. It is called system-planning, designed to stockpile as many people as possible into the smallest possible region for the most money – such is the allocating function of government qua geography.

Like the prairies it is a 'spread out' city (as they say) but what is the real, the arriere pense – reason for this? Commuting. Have suburbia flanked by phalanxes of box stores (which have 'everything one needs', in the most convenient form – immediately almost, at least proximally). This is why they 'spread people out' – so that major corporations can thrive. Keep the residential areas concentrated and a surrounding satellite concentration of commercial zoning – and all as far away from the workplace as possible. Thus people have to buy a car and there are more and more McDonald's around; consequence: swelling of profit for the corporations.

Feudalism has returned – this time in cartoonish fashion. Walled-in communities give people a belief in protection and status, but what they really achieve is a petty competition between members. No nobleman of yore had a castle without serfs – there are no serfs here only ignoble men, only noble aspirants but not for that reason noble. They have rather a whole community of pseudo-nobles, a herd not a solitary beast.

How like a feed-trough is a buffet restaurant – a disgusting image for a disgusting place.

The way of speaking throughout life: childhood: material possessions, simple likes and dislikes; adolescence: more refined likes and dislikes, partying and all that's social, young adulthood: mystical things spoken of facetiously, or immediately into – adulthood: money and praxis. Then: old age: aches and pains, then: death.

One feels on assignment with secretive looking green folder with all of the utilities enabling him to document the conjectured reality of this landscape. Is this what makes the real divulged: to discourse about it, noting on the premise that the real is truth and both are in the logos? As real as one can get, let us qualify the term.

But let us leave prairie Canada behind – of what value is it to me? Now I am uprooted, have no home to go to for the first time in my life. This is a bizarre situation, one injecting one with a serum of displacement. My life is about to undergo drastic change and yet paradoxically I retain the vertigos which governed my previous life – but now they are not – so I anticipate – primary meanings but those of a secondary kind, which float on the horizon of my life.

We are somewhere on the prairies and again the same horizon indicates that the world has become unified under the banner of global culture. Only the skies (sky – can it be pluralized?) retains a natural quality; someday it may be coloured like the rainbow and all for the purposes of advertising; then again maybe all for the purpose of a beautiful sky-scrape. I anticipate a change in the course of life, a life become dull in its known-ness and one need only follow anticipation here, pursue it ~~willfully~~ – how else? – and change will arrive.

I keep thinking practically, concerning myself with all the typical things thought by typical types – how typical! A case in point, something which has been on my mind for a long while: moving to Yellowknife. For security and stability, my main reasons, but underlying this – as always – the romantic idea of living in the actual and not merely the exaggerated 'Frozen North' – truly one cannot infer that population will increase drastically and also he can infer that it would be a place enabling him to live in greater isolation – how can one not desire that? And surely the insects won't be around for long as warmer air won't be either. Security and stability pervade any conceptions of the place and one could truly call himself 'northern' in living there. Escape the industriousness of city life and the dullness of that of a prairie oasis. Sure – Winnipeg is advantageous but the North has an appeal which escapes articulation, which is ineffable in its esoter^{ic}. I would feel a sense of belonging here. Why? – The smallness of it, the almost elitist character of living there. This necessarily has an appeal.

I will always think of Josee, my first girlfriend, when I think of Yellowknife – and I've never really wrote about her before, only 'about' her as in circuitously not with direct referentiality; and I miss her, not as another person, the Other of my life who is valuable insofar, but as an itself, bound up with distinct personality. I'm sure things could have achieved worlds, our relations that is. But now I feel, really feel, what she meant and how I transgressed to me the unknown rules of relationships – rules which I never knew except in transgression. The fact that

the denouement of my relationship was (and it is past now – but still I am so confused about the 'whether or not') to me ineffable and inexplicable, 'flabbergasting' in the worst sense, maintains its dead form as one retains a belief in the life of a cadaver he has shaken in attempts to wake it.

The person in the seat next to me fidgets almost uncontrollably – is this a testament to their nervousness, their absolute mindlessness, or both? Take the latter as true. A fat boor in the seat ahead yammers on his cell phone – the epitome of the stupid Canadian, even physiognomically speaking, behold: the closeness of the eyes, the narrowness of the brow, the compulsion of the body. Who says phrenology is out? Who says one can't judge a book by its cover – maybe there's something to superficiality after all, maybe the most profound quality. Does this argue for a 'deep structure' – who cares? But in case anyone does I would answer that it lies within genetics and environment and the environment establishes a genetic code, nothing else, and that a genetic code perpetuates itself with constant variation – a superficial idea nevertheless profound.

I dream of a world in which comfort reigns and I am at peace with this. Such a world is available to the bourgeois, but not to he who not yet gone over to the other side, to this very comfort – I haven't, not yet anyway. The man of conscious is preventative means to the realization of peace insofar as he is conscious of the pervasive hatred of the world, its endless warring. – And how can he not be insofar as he is conscious? This is the syllogism which proves the man of conscious' lack of inner peace. Another, counter-proof so to speak: he is conscious only of that which surrounds him – thus war is contingent – and may not be a presence at all.

I discuss practical matters in an agreeable tone with a stranger – why? To while away the hours or for amusement, the latter being entailed by the former, or something else? It seems that such people can discuss nothing more than the immediacy of life, skimp alone the surface of appearances as one who bears no heavy burden. How appeals amusement, diversion – but that is the very substance of such talk, namely, the insubstantial.

To consider things practically – again – I wonder where I will go and what I will do in my life. The answer is the ineffable infinite, the non-response of uncertainty, indeterminacy. And all of these considerations (to lament and beat the drum of the past) would have been facilitated through staying with Josee, the necessary content of a fading dream and my former hope and wish. To think of her is to recover this wish – but it is better not to wish for the unattainable, which we (me, myself, and I) have made such. A few days, a few weeks, and the memory would have faded – is this not a sad testament to the transience of life.

The inane movie which is being played is another testament to the hyper-realization of existence and its nostalgic longing for a dead past. A cartoon ('Garfield') is rendered in the latest digital animation for an audience perhaps unfamiliar with the comic strip – and yet the comic strip, so the intent of the movie goes, appeals to the adults who have children young enough not to know of it – and thus the children, so the cunning argument of the profiteers goes, will clamour for the movie and the adults will acquiesce because they (though they can't really remember) have experienced 'the same' as children, though with the cartoon, with an earlier stage of technological development.

It is thus with all cultural offerings of the present: something (history) is promised and only a simulacrum of that history is gained.

A youth climbs a telephone pole in the middle of nowhere encouraged by his friends – a homely scene indeed, and a testament to the meaninglessness of the teenage years in the present age; they resort to climbing telephone poles for lack of anything else – and whose fault is that but the education system's!

With the light a certain quaintness, almost like a fireside togetherness / Only the bus drives / across an infinite / plane, the end of which / is to distant / for imagination light of nature, ambivalent from that of the artificial fireplaces glow / of bus' artifice / reflects off the surface / of a pool / in the middle / of the prairies / oasis of meaning / in flat dullness / of novelty.

Creepybates' motel / flashing sign / indicating a reference / the real is indicated by / derives from / the hyper-real / the movies eclipse / concrete reality.

Grain elevator / bizarre citadel / connoting evil / wherein / an evil genius / dwells / The darkening sky / pricked by / the lights of a mystery / - who can tell / what it means / outside of / its imaginary?

Silhouetted trees on / sun-setting background / - a painted tapestry / it seems. / Once again the surreal eclipses / the reality. / Truly it is like a puppet show / where nature plays / the divine figure / orchestrator / of a dance / signature trance / calligraphic artistry.

The majoritarians make me angry with their petty resentment, their reproachful couches and other such stupidities. Here is a case in point of petty stupidity: an ugly old woman fidgets uncontrollably with fastidious finickiness for at least five minutes without stopping. These people have no brains! Leave them then to their pathetic lives.

We approach the skyline of lights, beacon of civilization in the midst of the night. We are plunging into it, becoming steadily engulfed in its influence, its gravitational necessity in this day and age.

I feel like I'm going to have a heart attack just breathing in the greasy aroma of the food this corrupted 'Indian Warrior' is packing down his throat – disgusting! So much so that I had to write about it. It is a travesty that the Indians, through introduction to a diet which keeps them 'where they are', that is to say, poor, have become fallen warriors in a classic and yet contemporaneously twisted, sense. This is a new mode of attrition on behalf of government and its utter falsehood: allegedly seek to help them out and invite the corporations in to do the mercenary damage. I doubt if the C.F.G. recommends slugging down two Pepsi's and fried chicken along with a 'side order of potato chips. They claim one thing the food companies another, and what the people (who are uneducated) get is what they are fed – like slaves!

'Up once more 'fore the crack o' dawn'. That would be how the quaint old Canadiana-writer journal scribbler would write their memoirs. I, on the other hand, write not about the vast expanses of 'God's country' but about the vastly tedious expanses of a stolen people's country, of a country which fosters capitalism through – in the case of the prairie region – growing crops of wheat et. al for the races' consumption of the chaff of society.

Nevertheless there is something about the early-morning hours that really endears one to them. Yet to view from a vantage point wherein each and all are crude and disgusting people this great natural expanse is its own ruination. The world sleeps at times such as these, the natural world, only human reality can transcend the bounds of darkness and affirm life in the face of provisional death. Such is the productivity of youth and answers the question as to why they, these youth, 'revel' so in the night. 'Why do they revel so?' – Answer: they are the most affirmative creatures and all old age merely waits for death while youth pursues life ceaselessly.

This present moment could be anywhere, anytime, any geographical region. The Greyhound bus travels always like a star along its elliptical path travels to eternity. And youth rests its tired head against the uncomfortable, unergonomic seat in hopes of finding a respite from the ennui of a world foreign to itself; foreign and vast both qualities represented in the passengers of the bus.

And for the most part throughout the trip movies, the artificial scene, were being indulged in – one couldn't help but, at least on occasion, be captivated by the plenitude of television images and so go over to the artificial in a poor exchange for the natural world.

I think I desire grand landscapes, regions of great magnitude evocative of the sublime. Only within such regions do I feel at home; the flat banality of prairie lands is too unappealing – the momentous is forsaken for the inconsequential. And this, perhaps, is the appeal to me of Winnipeg; that it exists on the oldrums of the prairies as an oasis of life, however artificial, and that one enters a place of moment almost immediately out of the mists of dullness.

I was thinking about criticizing sports, their absurd meaning and inconsequence – but I changed my mind; the subject is too trivial for that.

There are not too many of these 'Greyhounds', these passengers I like: they are all so basic and dirty in their desiring and their lifestyle as it is reflected on this bus that I feel absolutely no empathy with/towards them. I view this as good, for who would want to lower himself to that level of piggish existence, to that of the lazy herd animals that they are?

More proof that we see what we want to see: an S-Shape in a tree which is formed from out of a perspective, nothing more. There is thus no 'objective' reality, only a perspectivalism, an

idealism of the body where it is the self qua unity which makes reality what it is. How can something have dimensions when these same are taken from a finite (and necessarily finite) perspective? All quantity and quantitative measure must be dispensed with according to this premise if realism is to be upheld. But it isn't dispensed with (modus tollens argument) so it isn't - can't possibly be in truth, the contradiction of realism - upheld. Keep quantity but qualify it, i.e. qua useful fiction, qua necessary lie (and lie about necessity).

All of these fields, so I would have it, must be turned into football fields or soccer fields. That would convert the dullness of utilitarianism into a happy occasion for living.

'Lest we forget' - let that be the motto of all Greyhound trips the world over: 'lest we forget'. What is the meaning of this? It means to no longer go on a gruelling physical trek such as this, amidst the utter filth and poverty of those who surround you, amidst the slovenliness and lack of sleep - and truly I am now sleep deprived. This is my sermon, my wish, my hope: that I do not forget my experiences on the Greyhound, the awful (and awfully rude) coughing of people, the stench and filth of all the majoritarians; that, in short, I remain cognizant of the whole affair. This is a testament 'lest I forget'. Say it softly once more - 'lest I forget'.

I see the juvenile writing on the wall: 'crips' and 'bloods', names of infamous (or famous) depending on your perspective) gangs - in southern California; but this is Portage la Prairie - how absurd! Feed the naïve minds of youth anything which appears subversive of the authorities culture and they will swallow it down whole.

Soon - that is all I can say. And then - how long? How long will I be able to remain where I am and achieve something therein? I need only arrive to answer my questions, for answers arise out of situations not a priori.

A sign for the ages bearing a terse message, one which cannot have a more terse message: 'Don't Dig & Die' placed next to a hydro plant. Its purpose: immediate presentation to consciousness.

Signs of this nature connote the logic of the sign (see above), as purport. They are beyond good and evil, Manichean, yet all too often based towards the latter.

I encountered an experience which might evidence Husserlian phenomenology: a pair of pants (ala Dr. Seuss) with 'nobody inside them'. But I seemed to infer a ghostly shape within them, giving them buoyancy and movement - to the extent that they came alive - the phenomenological 'construction' not reduction.

These professors - how they profess! - To know...to know - what? - Knowledge? But that is a tautology and more as well. Does this knowledge help them plant crops in the spring and reap what they've sown? It has a comforting character, does this knowledge.

Duties. Duties to self, duties to others – the world is entangled in obligations and prohibitions. If only one could simply – get away! At all cost from the enrolment of duties, duties. This is the style of life I've lived for quite some time and in itself is far more of a constraint than the many nexus of duties. Is that so? To be adrift in the sea of the social, to have nothing, no anchoring purpose, to be one down – to duties, to prohibitions – is this not a life of absolute disconnection.

It is better than the doldrum life of the humdrum however, but again I have to question its worth. For to stare out from this little vessel at the sea of the social, a vessel of reclusion and drifting along that forbids one to drink the water – perhaps also through the water's innate difference, its indigestibility – one is apart and parched of thirst, experiencing a vital lack whose torment is his own inner hell. So much does he long for fresh, crystalline waters, mountain springs, that he would dive into the sea of the social – a sea which should be viewed cum grano salis – under the illusion of its being this freshness, of his own magical powers to transfer the assimilable property to waters inassimilabile.

But is this really an apt description of the social – is it actually such a torment and a horror that they who participate within must be drowned through its strong undertows, its beasties, its salty brine that chokes as it is attempted to be imbibed – delusively – as a vital drink? Or does one become one of these beasties himself – or a salty piece of sour seaweed (if this is understood)?

But perhaps all of this is exaggerated and the sea is actually a fresh expanse, pure of itself and unto itself? Or perhaps, and most likely (if I can get my thoughts in order so that they cease continually to drift) it is a patchy, blotchy quilt that each knits l'accordance with his own characteristics and valences, building off the social's colour scheme his own and mimicking or standing out – for the purity of such a thing is questionable indeed.

But duties – they are imperative of the social and thus anyone desiring (and, if the Aristotelian definition of man as a social animal, as rational even, is to be accepted one would think the imperative stands) to be such a participant must be a proselyte of duty for and to himself, and to others so that – circumspectly – he may reap the rewards of being such a dutiful soul.

I wish now to investigate the 'satanic explosion' of Rilke, to understand philosophically the act of masturbation, not in analytic fashion but in consequentialist fashion so that it may be of service, this understanding, to future endeavours and ways of life. One feels ill, depressed, blackened in thought to the extremes – and the alleviatory means he perceives to be the masturbatory. Why? The 'natural' relief of tension, the production of newness within the corpse: new chemicals, new emotional states – euphoric – that immediately quench the drive to – death, to a sexual storing up of energy that pronounces one's inability to live – wrong! It is the release, satanic, which

quells the affirmation of life, meaning thus that life is an affirmation and a purely sexual one – as sexual machines, perfectly running and efficient (health) or deficient in parts, rotting away, corrupt (un-health). But paradoxically – perhaps the paradox of life – with the negation of this pent up energy through its release one finds that life, insofar as health the efficient machine is running adequately, is enhanced all the more – through the productivity that is initiated as a process restorative of the funds one has as the sexual underpinnings of life.

But cannot the machine run adequately at all within ~~rest~~ ^{sed} this act – perhaps more efficiently, in the sublimated manner so often lauded by penitents and ascetics? Surely sublimation is a valid construct? But to consider it empirically, to have nothing at all to do with the sex drive and simply to attempt a transubstantiation of it into creation, into mental occurrences and thoughts, elevated and sublime – is this not simply to undergo a gradual transition towards death? For to cease the cyclicism of the machine to allow one of its parts to rust while the others are greased well/lubricated through their operation. Is this not to allow the machine to corrupt and to plunge towards devolution, towards the insane death drive? And man is by nature a creature for the death-drive, a fatalist, an Icarian, and for that reason he has recourse to a life of thinking so very often; he creates and thinks beyond himself because that is his very nature – to externalize himself, to think beyond himself, or in himself in a mimicry of sexual repression. But it is still an oiling of the machine, and one constantly oils it as he acts, even though he rusts off the procreative part through a lack of oil. And here, in this allegory oil is food, sustenance, that which sustains the exercise of the body through affording it energy. Thus everything redounding to progenerativeness hinges upon the 'mighty calorie'.

But that is not all of course, merely the basis and even that is questionable for people can sustain themselves without, and can affirm themselves without and (as it depends also, and perhaps more so, upon the machine and its structure) those who often imbibe the 'mighty calorie' in sufficient amount are complete wastrels as regards creation. But enough! I feel that with my 'can't I'm merely spinning my wheels and that creation is thoroughly lacking.

The body as harbinger of soul – is that not a questionable proposition entailing presuppositions that there is either (both) that they are conjoined – and perhaps separable? This last is to be inquired about. Doesn't one, through some innate 'structure' exist as body/soul complex, as unity this being the structure? And when his organs, his body, degenerates, so too does the soul – as one? - And vice versa? The only counterexample I can conceive of would be near death experiences and this I would doubt sufficiently vouches for the separation and separability of body and soul.

The effect of the bourgeois lifestyle and masculine ethics

Bourgeois comfort – a warm atmosphere, physical – comfort, warmth. All things take on a smooth quality, a softness of sensuality which relaxes one, puts one at ease and induces a pleased mood state. The mover, soporific of enlightened thought and yet the same inducement of happiness is met with; one grows old and dies apropos of this physical comfort – sure, there is toil, there is toil as a supportive means of comfort, of pleasure, and life is determined in the moment – by pleasure predominating pain. Such is the bourgeois ideology with its cleanliness, its inherent sanitation, inherent whiteness. And one receives all of life's moments within this comforting niche; comfortable as predictable; comfortable as lacking intensity and strain on the mind. One is awash in the sea of comfort, the pastel beaches, waves and sky his environment of beatitude – the bourgeois attainment of happiness consists in the possession of this same convenient availability. I can avail myself of the sensual pleasures of textures, tastes, smells, sounds, sights. All is 'a having, a possession'. One has given up nothing and it, in the case of a lack, he feels it all the more intensely as not accustomed to any lack whatsoever – he has become effeminized. And to think that I would parody this lifestyle. But these elements (above) smack of woman and her innate frivolity – it is the woman's aspect of man which beckons him towards this ease and comfort; the outrage of masculinity, its denouement, its satanic explosion with a lilac puff of fragrance. Here we are as women- have forgotten, or are in process of forgetting, that as men we are not to feel such comforts, such pleasures; that as men we must remain strong, have within us the tiger and when others would attempt to stroke the soft pelt of our bodies – mistaking a softness, a mere part, for the whole – we must rebel. Such is the ethical imperative. And it is the bourgeois lifestyle which strokes our fur, shampooing and oiling our coat with a pampering operation. We go to sleep in the arms of pamperers – we men? And yet we would lay claim to that designate, even through the mouth of our internal woman. Thereby we encounter an absurdity and it is ourselves in the arms of women, in our own self-embrace.

One must learn – he must learn! For the ethic of masculinity dictates a self-abasement, a strengthening through it; a broadening of strength, a heightening of intensity. The feminine dictates nothing – it persuades! It persuades so effectively that the effect is its own waning – the waning of feeling, of effect, of intensity and strength. I tell you: only men can feel, contrary to popular opinion; only they can feel in the very depths and heights and extremes of their being. Woman is capable only of mediocre feelings, of the quantity of feelings, that is to say their frequency – as a stone, small and light, skips upon the surface of the water, along the surface of the superficial, of the emotion. Men can feel – and not feel. And thus are we alone masters of the universe. For we have control – and yet go towards our own destruction – we fatalists – through

our own feeling, through our potentiality to feel the effects of worldly existence at all levels – all and sundry. But it is the frequency that we escape through our strength; frequency as we become more easily hardened in relation to the moment – for we, paradoxical creatures, are creatures of the moment and yet this very moment we can eschew and look past blindly if it is not an appeal to our intense disposition.

The unknown and implicit meaning of Socratic wisdom: that we can never have knowledge of any external reality because it is conferred – and created – by ourselves and through ourselves. Because, moreover, externality doesn't exist and it is we who are not we; to speak less mystically – the world is ineffable as one (the world qua 'cosmos', qua 'Being'). Knowledge is anthropocentric and we are the center of our own universe, a nexus of substantialism, a quilting point of the totality of existence.

The smell of the Staedtler pencils I used to draw with has returned – and so has their purpose. I judge my life to be art and make an equation between the two, no longer running parallel and with reducible space between, but coalesced in relativity of being. This is the mark of the nobleman, of the independent being: that he exists merely as a catalyst for creation – he is a creator and defines himself as one.

But, to comment on the above paragraph after a hiatus of some hours – 18 approximately – is not life to be known in its affects – and thereby one is capacitated to externalize his knowledge; this affect predominates and this is experiential and therein one sees, views, lives and breathes his surrounding influences, for without this it is necessarily a failure that he could live, let alone create (whether the two be identical or no). And how can he be independent when he is a slave to his creation? Independent of all other things, all extraneity, so that he may serve creative ends all the more. But I seem to be writing more about creativity than creativity and thus it becomes rather dull. One cannot live a life on the page and in the logos – nor should he desire to – and life demands a broader horizon than the visionless four walls, ceiling, floor, and furniture. So experiencing be affected by all things and with open eyes, even in the most closed of places.

Humanity's Icarian quest for power provides the template for the movie *Laputa: Castle in the Sky*, a Japanese anime video with typical emotional catharsis, with melancholy, with a great vision beyond the contemporary western video targeted to young audiences; the appeal of this video surges across all audience profiles and is thus one of greater value for the standard of all artistic production is its emotional appeal, its affect, and if all – fool and wise man, rich and poor – can be affected then the movie or artwork occupies a higher place on the hierarchy of aesthetics and their meaning.

This, I assume, will take the form of a review, a gestaltist manner of review however, and those points deemed most affecting and worthwhile will be detailed, described and illuminated discursively as to their points of reference and meaningful value.

The castle in the sky represents power – a power of panoptic proportions which poses an alleged threat to the people below who have achieved emancipation from it. It represents man's potentiality for Good and Bad, to realize things coincident with their essence or otherwise, not to in the least. Reason: its inherent energy/power which one, provided he be the proper figure, may control and rule over the earth; such being the option borne out in the movie. It has been left unmolested, this natural power, for a long time – so that humans have been wiped from it as vanished traces, preserved only in the sepulchral structure of the castle and more deliberately in the gravesite thereon, guarded by organs of power, robots, who are the tools utilized by humans in the exercise and pursuit of power, of good and bad. Power is the irreducible dyad capable of bringing about a supra-terrestrial paradise, the good, or a holocaust of sky flames in which the humans of potentiality destroy themselves through their own war-like disposition.

It is the little man, here represented as the innocent altruist – the messiah, who eventually liberates the natural paradise from all, after the advent of its destruction, who was himself pure throughout the dialectic of good and bad most of the other characters manifested. One couldn't tell with any certainty whether any but the altruist, the blindly innocent not possessed of self-interest, but existing as a mover, a negation of negative forces through his own good and a positive force generating the good in consequence.

Egotism is manifested in the pirates, a monadological players in the game of struggle, through their overt self-interest has in it the innocent quality of play, for they gladly invite others to join, with the condition that these others benefit them. And is this not the best way to live? To overtly admit that self-interest is one's mover, to dispel the myth of altruism, and to thereby open up all the possibilities one closes off through the alleged aura of purity he surrounds oneself with, leads to a life of greater relaxation, of greater trust – or at least extroversion with mistrust

present – and a laugh at the very mistrust. It is egotism, in the end, which is conquered (perhaps through itself) and this should be the message gleaned from the movie: as opposed to altruism (though it said the opposite) and in favour of egotism.

Have we all the potentiality for good and evil, a force and power which instigates either pole, or one of its gradations? Clearly this is the libidinal thrownness, the drive of death/life of existence which runs through us with a torturous and ecstatic flow of emotionality, so that it must be released like a flood after a certain time, or trickling out of the orifice of one's activity at a steady pace, matching his heartbeat and rhythmic vital force.

Treatise on bourgeoisdom

I went on a trip and this opened my eyes to the world as it exists today. It was epiphanical, it was a distillation of emotions throughout, their concentration into this short and yet fruitful timeframe; one might say that on this trip I was saved from the bourgeois once and for all, so that now I, wanderer along life's path, have solidified my principles to such a degree of hardness – diamond hardness – that I have become unassailable and have sublated all of my childhood moments, have purified them of all of the foolish negative content that constitutes the life of the antipode, of the antipodal character.

When I set off I was in a depressed mood, for I had been undergoing and experiencing the privation of my loneliness for some time – so that solitude became converted into loneliness. The teenagers I saw – as if in a romantic idyll – walking through the grass in the mountains sent torturous emotional pangs through my being. But what should be noted principally here, and which I didn't perceive with any clarity there, was that they were situated – these abstract forms of 'the lovers' – in the bourgeois context of a bordered reality where the population of signs outweighs that of the people and the latter's subordination to the former reduced them to obedience – automata. But that's just I perceived a hill upon which a walkway, leading up to a castle-like house, is placed – a vision of aristocracy which heightened my sadness as I know that I could never attain it. Was it worth attaining it?

Such a question I posed when we travelled suburbia, where everyone is a proselyte – and a slave – to the code of the social, and where all lead comfortable lives of plaisir (of course it must be said en Français, the language of levity).

These are the castles in the sky, the dreamscapes, which everyone devotes their life to, following a similar pattern as wildly painting horses running around a track, though none of them ever broke out of the race, but merely finished at a certain rank. And I then ask myself if such a sky-castle is worth the quantified expression of work hours that it has imputed to it (i.e. the wage, and the price of sale)? But each, so the ideological farce goes, must have their place in the sun of proverb and here as anywhere the many-too-many (the bourgeois) have anchored themselves to operate in accordance with 'the code': lawns mowed on Sundays, dishes washed daily, etc. – all of the granted activities constitutive of the granted life – by which I mean, the 'normative' life, the concretization of the model: everyone wants to be the family dad and family mom – even the kids subscribe to it! 'Well, everybody else has one' – such ad populum arguments are what propagates the system, the system's reliance upon itself for legitimization, the circular logic of degeneracy, downward spiral into mediocrity. The bourgeois here utilizes tautologous logic: 'it

is because it is' – and constructs moral imperatives upon this holographic grounding which it itself generates. Truly it is a cultural holograph machine, is this class.

More: houses such as this are the symbols of status, and one is invested with like status apropos his symbols, which circulate around him like body guards, rendering him unassailable or vulnerable by and to the code's attacks and judgements, invoked in particular instances by one against another as the vehicular justification of the attack (both vehicle and justification – and propulsive force whose intent is to strike home).

And yet, since I should probably consider this dialectically and posit thesis as well as antithesis (for the bourgeois has been claimed to be my antithesis) I have a penchant for a life of constant, y also – if only, I lament, it could be an eccentric lifestyle and one wouldn't get sucked into the social hurricane that he would live so close by to. Is it an unrealistic expectation not to be absorbed by the inky blackness one is surrounded by, a humble star faintly glowing in the treacherous night? I answer: one will be changed insofar as he participates and he must participate insofar as he lives proximally to bourgeoisdom. Cannot people simply drop the act? No – because they are all simulacral figures.

Teenage workers in fast food restaurants – now that we had moved on we came upon – through hedonistic valences – an ice cream 'fast food joint' – the old middle-American cliché that stands out crudely upon the horizon of bourgeois leisure-places: the Dairy Queen (nestled as it was within McDonald's and Arby's and countless other kinfolk of fast food – we were in 'the strip', the Las Vegas skyline of capitalistic paradise; and we called this 'home').

What motivates teenage workers but 'the model' – materialism, frenetic competition, status, belonging; as part of a group one is valuable – outside – of little worth. I am glad, now that I have reflected upon the matter, that I have not grown up – totally – in accordance with the model – and I have a timeframe of reference that I may cling to, if in dire straits, to pull me from the mire of mediocrity. This serves any model. But therein lies danger: as well, of course, and it is the danger of reminiscence – of placing one's 'true' (modular) being into a past form and leaving one's present open to attack. The past must have an active role in the present so that one may do battle into the future and forever escape the model of the bourgeoisies.

Pleasure-seeking, hedonism: all supports the feral drive the procurement, the satiety of the moment forever sought – in the moment.

A physiologically based ethic: that one exposes himself to a certain something at the last waking moment of the day (depending upon his level of concentration) and represents this object as a leitmotif of his dreams – is significant. How so? Because, presumably, one has a causality, he possesses it as a tool through knowledge of this fact, and thereby he can control the content of his dreams to some degree. But can he deceive himself, deceive a deceiver, to place within his dreams content which is the attainment of his desires? Being his desires would not this content filter into the dream world anyway? I would answer no, or if yes to a degree less of that than that which is attained through deliberate striving. I engage in an activity before bed and the physiological aspects of it alter my physiology (to speak broadly if indistinctly). Such an affect reverberates through my metamorphosing states and appears eo ipso in my dreams; in fact, it never disappeared merely carried through as a ship upon a wave.

And one would seek to 'engineer' this affect, through an act of placing before the self this object of desire, through constructing the situation which is to, so he would have it, arise during his stay in the 'land of Nod'. But what places this placing, i.e. what instigates or causes my engineering of the cause – for the concrete world does not admit of gaps – even its alleged gaps are causal, or so the theory goes. But causality does not reign, doesn't even exist, for there is no prior or posterior except in abstracto, as mere inference-based conjecture, apodicticity included. The moment stands before me irreducible, as the fluxual point of all reality and immersed in it we are and forever – so the conjecture goes – will be. Science is mere utilitarian tool whose causality and engineering based upon it is real.

But granted that if somehow has efficacy in the world, in prediction and explanation (inferring future and past states, describing and obtaining knowledge about them) then clearly it is our memory and our memory-based inferential capacity that enables us to make judgments: causality is an abstraction which resides wholly in the memory and if memory was lost so too would causality be. All laws are empirico-generalizations, all causes a memory of what came before, all effects on memory of what came after – at one point, i.e. before, i.e. that experience which is stored up in the memory as it sails along the Heraclean flux of reality, which I shall rechristen (re-denominate) the place in which reality is known and made known, the encounterable flow of reality, like the tide and its ebb, washing over all that once was and revealing all that will be as it recedes into the distance. – A way of conceptualizing things and nothing more, no less acceptable (with the end or goal of comprehension in mind) than the scientific. Where the scientific predominates is where people attempt to have the barest conceptual bones with which to build the skeleton of their form, their ideas, the understanding

of the world; its blueprint so to speak, which may be filled in with whatever content their imaginations present them with.

But of the physiological ethic one can utilize, in the scientific and poetic manner of understanding, causality as a measure, based upon quantity and quality, and a device of explanation (which is causality judged in accordance with the proteron) and prediction (in accordance with the husteron). Thus can he concentrate or diminish the energy of the cosmos (to speak broadly and indistinctly once more) within and around himself and thereby he may swell with power or deplete and deflate in impotence – and then, perhaps, lose all control he might otherwise have had.

'If the middle term in life'

It is interesting that the old say that: 'if they were young...' what does this mean but the expression of a desire never to be consummated? And does not the young say: 'if I were old, or older...' Such conditional statements are oft-times specious equivoques. One persuades himself thereby that he could do it, that he would have the power to do it – if only....

The 'if' therefore doesn't exist, it has merely 'contingent being' so-to-speak, and thus we can explain (for once!) the statement in the movie Apocalypse Now that 'if is a middle term in life'; neither a yes nor a no, but an equivoque, and a specious one at that.

'If I were young...' – but you were and you have developed throughout your life from this origin (considered abstractly) of youth, have changed and thus the origin is merely a source for explanation, but the future cannot be thrown back upon the past as the past is dead, the present alone lives, and the future is non-existent (a parable of life and death). Thus also the youth could say with flight of fancy only: 'if I were old...' and attempt to infer his achievements, to achieve things as it were through a temporal transference into the past (his present) of future merit (his inference of old age). Such things are merely the expressions of desires and hopes and one seeks out hope and the consummation of itself and his desires through the 'if' which is hypothetical reasoning in its most linguistically concentrated form.

The 'if' initiates a whole logical mechanism of deliberations. A follows B and so forth, so if B then A, etc. Logical reasoning as a utilitarian device based upon, in its correct and only form, conditionality.

Stoicism and Procurativeness

Procuration – I travel by commercial centers, 'shops', 'pawn shops' and am disgusted by the mentality engendered therein; procurativeness speaks out from the entryways of these places, with their inherent temptations.

How can one exist in a society which is throughout commoditized, which commercialized in all of its interstices so that no pure veins of free existence remain after having been infiltrated by capitalism. But to live in such a world is not so much to question how this nature, this new nature aptopos of capitalism is to be avoided, but rather how the individual is to avoid it – not *existence en masse*, for it is too far gone, but the individual and those within his sphere of existence, whom he may convert unto proselytes of this very avoidance of commercialism.

But let's examine, psychologize, the character of the procurative type whose character is instilled in him by capitalism and who represents the cycle of commercialism as a buyer in his position to the seller, the self-interested salesman. I would point the finger at a lack of reflection on his part first and foremost – which is why the ruling class (implicitly acknowledged by all) is beyond the appeals of salesmen, insofar as they are reflective, for reflection has its seat in self-awareness, in education as the source of self-awareness, and thus it is a privilege to be in this state, those who are not being crushed under the wheel of production. It is a dirty subject to discuss, and one becomes enmeshed in the logic of capitalism, of procuration, simply through talking about it.

The procurative character: unreflectingly perceives or smells or senses in general (often on myriad levels of sound and sight) the object of desire and is consequently dominated by it through it becoming a 'need' as procuration is a need, a faculty of lack, of desire ever needing satiety. The instantiated form, becomes the content of the universal 'need' and one thereby seeks its procuration 'of necessity', for 'need' is 'necessary', the object – that is – necessary. So when one is outside, swallowed up in countless forms of commodities, in countless objects of procuration with their inherent necessity, their almost vital offerings, he is placed as it were in the pit of the lions, in the lion's den and must have faith in the converse doctrine of stoicism, that which views all objects of procuration – and procuration itself – as necessarily not to be pursued, to be avoided necessarily, and it is this imperative which is man's salvation.

The landscape appears bleak, populated as it is with a forest of signs exclaiming their procurative imperatives, and one must simply shut his eyes to it, so he, *prima facie*, thinks. – But no! – He must force himself to look, to undergo the taunt as a test of procuration, to expose himself to the objects of procuration and face their imperative command unmoved knowing that the only command to be followed is that internal to himself, is that of self-mastery, of allegiance

to nature and civilization in its most rudimentary form not in its advanced capitalist form. The latter he can easily forgo under the auspices of stoicism.

How else, really, to 'procure' control? Should one be buffeted about by the winds of fate or struggle against them, walking into the wind and away from procurator towards his golden ideal – self-mastery. One could be specious and say that self-mastery is susceptible of fostering capitalism, as he could, could the 'self-master' say: 'I will to procure this object, this need, and as master I make the commands and must obey as slave; therefore –'. But the counter-balancing question would be 'does one live in accordance with nature – or does he transgress with specious argument and acting on these arguments?'

It is this two-fold stoical ethic which ensures its successful implementation and adoption, the only one who could be fallible here would be the transgressor, the weak (who invariably concedes the fact insofar as he is at least honest – but what a price to pay for honesty).

Apocalypse Now

I don't know if I've ever discussed Apocalypse Now in treatise form, but it is deserving of such treatment and the following intends to do just that, and to do justice to the film which has instilled in me an ethic of intensity and strength that all the books of Nietzsche never could. It must be the visual representation which, combined with the frenzied music of 'The Doors' and surreality of the theme music has been most instrumental in actualizing this ethic. Be that as it may it has impressed me more than any other movie of its kind (if there be such) and no other, not Zardoz, not Sword of Doom, has come close to the inspirational affects I had discovered in the movie.

When I had first seen it – and I mean 'seen it' with reflection, with reason – I had deplored it as affected; now I exult it as affecting for I am more ready, more prepared to learn from it and have cast off the straitjacket of my own cynicism. – That was in the same year, I believe, and it helped me to struggle through the problem of anorexia as a reservoir of strength upon which to draw in this time of need. I was instilled with that stoical self-mastery and at the same time a wifful striving that the film's characters (Kurtz and Willard) as well as its ambience, established for me as an ethic, a doctrine with which to refine myself, a tool with which to cultivate myself as plant, to grow and broaden my conceptual horizon at the same time, under the auspices of this doctrine.

The memorable scene at the start of the movie, where Willard reflects upon his life (I won't go into more detail than what still stands out in memory as elements of my doctrine) and the music, that testosterone, that asexual frenzy in tone of 'The Doors' – 'The End' capturing me and transubstantiating myself in Willard's form: now I am a soldier, now I feel the tortured effects of Vietnam, smash the mirror and tumble over my bed in despairing delirium as the music attains climax, the cymbal beats echoes of the self-destruction of the higher man who alone can feel the irreplaceability of his ethical state: self-mastery, wifful externalization, blind and unreflective, of what one harbours in his mind as goal; the means are the situation, they are the matter which is to be formed and shaped in the goal's image.

It is this ethic which strikes me most, as the film's affective ^{at best} perch – the political commentary is a backdrop to the Nietzschean presence; I, from my own vantage point as audience, invert the underlying theme of Nietzschean higher man, noble warrior ethics and place the real reason for the film (if there was one, which is questionable) in the background as a formal excuse, an alibi, for the psychology of the film: Nietzschean ethics. But why allow a single man to reign over an ethic which goes beyond him (and it clearly does)? Why not go beyond him with this ethic and

re-christen it as the name of the movie: the ethic of Apocalypse Now, or something to that effect? But is it all one, and the movie stands apart in my mind, without these references - so I would have it.

Willard's colleagues, the soldiers he is simply 'alongside', a cinematographic way of making the higher man stand higher in image and visibility, are the typical representatives of democracy of the mediocre, fun-loving men who have forsaken strength and its cultivation for the miserable ease of hedonism and drifting. He is, is Willard, necessarily Captain over them. The chief, ancient warrior representative, dutiful and order-bound, is the obedient dog of government, of authority, whose being is not his own; only he is still strong, and his strength is the runway upon which air attacks are launched. For the others, their naiveté and weakness leads them towards death in conditions which do not foster the fun-loving. Here is a comment upon different ethics and different worlds, why 'our side', the Americans, lost and why the Viet Cong, 'them', won; we tried to indenture in a swamp a circus of Americana and found that it sunk in the mire, unable to stay above the surface, too weak to swim. And yet, here is the irony of the film, the sad humour, no one was corrupted who, in all innocence went through it, such as the character of Lance. His innocence, striking contrast to the others, was his aegis, and is displayed in his concern over the life of the puppy, symbol of other innocent beings perhaps, those slaughtered by 'clean' the Bronx youth in his inability to control himself in the pressurized container of war.

Thus it is only the innocent, the naïve who merely flit across the churning waters of life, and those creatures capable of swimming through them, who can 'make it to Kurtz', as the goal, as the beginning of the metamorphosis into the higher man. Perhaps the innocent, the foolish whose life is lived in a smile, a puppy-dog life, cannot attain this state but he can, as Lance did at the end, recognize through his love of other creatures (of Kurtz's children) that there is a higher, harder state of being, perhaps not even for him to attain, which was surely the knowledge Lance escaped with, following the one man who could, Willard, after having killed the king and become king in ~~the~~ James Frazier style; he had achieved the golden boyhood that was becoming who he was, a stark contrast from his despairing exegency of gesture and emotion in the hotel room, in civilization. There Willard was the sick animal, the ape of civilization and out there, 'back in the jungle', he regained all of his more natural faculties, became himself. That is the higher man, and Lance, creature of innocence, in recognizing this fact, became necessarily obedient though nonetheless spared the difficulties of war, a wave upon which he surfed with a casual ease. Such is the character of the people, the mass when self-interest doesn't govern their thoughts, and they are the more easily controlled.

Theoretical - practical

If I may invoke the old ~~Kantian~~ distinction, I will also lay claim to it as my life's dualistic, antagonism and I am forever dwelling with myself as expressed in the following poem entitled: 'Theoretical - practical'.

Theoretical -

practical

torn asunder with no wherewithal

I am here.

And there.

Here without mind

there without will, without bodily

employment, the spiritual

torn apart with this confusion

of indeterminate willing

with this hatred inside

killing me

as agent

as ecstasy

in withdrawal

in meaning-

ful happiness.

Will it

will I -

relent?

Can escape be achieved

rather release

for those fated

to die

in harness

unto death

without

happiness

torn between

theoretical and / practical / self-hatred.

Confusion

Confusion leads one to enter into a fantasy world.
Bodily exertion, physiological distortion
sets one's world, one's mind in a swirl

The loss of equilibrium, the black rapidness
the swarming images, thieves of happiness
all of this – all
amounts to a private hell
to confusion

My eyes cannot see clearly
they fade and blindness sets in
I seek the moment in activity
and life is awash with the salt sea
of my swimming to escape it, this
confusion

All areas of my body run awry
run apart, fighting, storming
raging against one another –
against one another they rage
and I am an enslave of
confusion

How can I brighten the darkness
how crystallize the softened flesh
of my horizon, of my mission
so weak now, racked with pain now, with
confusion

Back aches with soreness
stomach with bloat
heart with racing, irregularly goes
and I, blinded, my vision dulled
from its former sharpness dulled – to sleep

Life has been taken so seriously
lived so uneventfully, regularly
that I feel I have relinquished all
that constitutes 'me', my being.
Call it falling
call it failure
to see.

It has been a blind race with egg and spoon
and I have cracked egg after egg and soon
I will myself crack through all the ruins
of my life cracked, splintered – over with
too soon.

One can achieve everything, some things – no things?

Without the knowledge –
and I would learn it all
but there is always a 'but'
always an excuse, a loophole – a noose?
the lived-in rut of existence
is that within which
I place my neck and fall
to earth choked, mauled –
death knell tolled?
I don't know.
I don't know.
All I'm speaking out is:
relinquish me, let me go
and into greener pastures roam.

Cain

Out of the shadows came Cain, marked for life by the god of the social. Downcast his head tilted towards the earth, for the sky above had forsaken him; and all its righteous minions joined in the fanfare, the scornful laughter which they heaped upon his head as a load of bricks.

Those who felt pity for him called him cynical, called him uptight – and it was this vicious attitude which possessed him and struck him from the lists of the respectable. But he knew that these were merely interpretations, that it was they who erected this knowledge, conferred on it apodictic status and consequently imputed it to him without further reflection. Thus he bore the traits of he who was outcast, of the man besmirched with the mud of ignorant judgments, besmirching his purity. Thus he walked downcast, away from his haters – he would not play the self-righteous martyr – not in their sight anyway, not close to them in the least.

Cain, the leper of the social, the distanced, walked at his customary distance, for removed from these people he could not help but be, it was in his blood, and insofar as he was Cain it had to be.

Treatise on 'din-din'

Is it not strange and also pathetic that people rely upon the environment of 'table' with its 'accoutrements' such as foodstuffs, alcohol, and candlelight – in short, all things libidinal – to socialize, to 'have a good time'? Clearly this is a very basic endeavour indeed, the more basic the more centered around the basics, and so by association (to speak generally). Let us talk about your life, about my life, around the dinner table – such fun, indeed...or perhaps such simplicity. But I can understand it, this crudity of placing in one's mouth food and this acting as the modus of socialization, a bizarre causality indeed. But the social is always a socio-sexual, or rather a socio-libidinal, and one facilitates libidinal affects (conversation, human intersubjectivity) with libidinal affects (food, sensual 'delights', etc.).

Poems of Disconsolation

"Parental Love in Early Manhood"

They throw financial support at me and call it love –
but that's not love, only the fulfillment
of the fleeting shadow-figure
of obligation.

"Prison"

I wish I could express in words
the extremes of my
prison – existence –
but cannot.
An attempt:
I am trapped within four walls,
have absolute liberty
and yet am bound absolutely,
have the capacity to make phone calls –
but have no one to receive them
on the other end.
I am stranded of the paradox of being
and non-being,
my life a living death

"The Birds"

Even the bird calls
I look upon as hostile
am conversant with
their enmity –
look and see.
Can't you
see
the hatred
as it issues

from their eyes
their protective flight
into your eyes
which do not see
anything
which are
blind?

"Disconsolatsg"

Is there anyone – out there?
Anyone existent
who is not a torturer
who is not a peasant
in his mind?
Who is kind
and welcomes one
into radiance of
social sun
refulgent rays
captivating
select ones?
There is none –
no one
no one exists
only the wind
of disconsolateness
of emptiness

Proposal for a bourgeois Domo

I sit here in this bourgeois environment, no longer at the height of cold analysis but at a lazy equilibrium plateau of aesthetic involvement with my surroundings. All things are purposive and yet all things have the aesthetic – sensuous quality of the wholesome waiting up from them, have smells and colours and generally subdued and comfortable tones and presentations drifting from them around the head of the subject, myself.

One could find this quality everywhere – it is the aesthetic universal of class culture, of the venerable interior of the domos. There cannot be anything out of alignment which is to (such is its purpose) remain stationary; has the heavy – weight of having to be stationary – such is the psychology of it. Thus the tables and chairs and to be in proper alignment; only the chairs are allowed to be mobile, to wander from the perfection or near right-angled perfection (or deliberate awry-angled design) of those weightier objects. Those which orient, which have the free-floating quality such as newspapers, etc. are to be (still) aligned with the environment when not in use, though it doesn't matter so much as to their exactitude. They can be helter-skelter, but only in the qualified sense of bourgeoisdom, i.e. neatly heltered and skeltered.

The colours of the house are a subdued pastel, so that the mind may be at ease, so that all thoughts intense and arduous may be dampened, subdued, calmed, mitigated, and even quelled in their intensity and ardour. Why is this? Perhaps because people associate the domos with all forms of comfort – the universal of comfort itself, of bourgeois happiness – this is why the plethoric dispersion of comfort in as many forms takes place with near invariable tact.

My proposal for a house for myself as ethical force will be the converse of the bourgeois (- perhaps I'll keep a room of 'Bourgeois paradise' as a museum enclave of my life, as an ironic tip of the hat to the predominance of bourgeois culture – another world). It will have a room completely barren, completely devoid of anything and everything, a room empty so that I may become full, a contemplators room, the room of the thinking man. The walls will be painted the white or yellow of the desert, perhaps even a grey or a blue (reminiscent of sky, boundless expanse of eternity). It will be a room sound proofed, so that nothing can get in but what had entered, in the corporeal sense, and so that everything can get it which has not yet, namely thoughts, sensations, etc.

In fact, I should devote much of the house to 'the sense': a noise room, sight room, a room of tactility, the former being a room of running water, of music, of air circulation, the second being one of paintings on the wall (painted by myself, and on the wall literally), the latter being a

room with jars of various substances so that the fingers may experience different constituencies and temperatures – so that the whole house, in short, presents variation and change.

One room could be 'the room of function' wherein all functional things are brought out in their conventional hiddenness, such as a fan painted the colour of the ceiling to mask it conventionally being painted a colour striking and repulsive (pea-green on white; purple, magenta or brown, etc.).

The exterior presents the house as a convention, as a 'take-for-granted' whereas upon entering it one enters into another world, into fantasy. This would be my comment upon the bourgeois lifestyle – the outer, theoretically considered, being the inner – a fantasy, a land of make-believe universality and no variation or change.

I would take photos of the guests as soon as they entered in and paste them on the wall as a historical testament to the museum that it has become; I would judge those photographed based upon the expression of their faces as they encountered a world of difference: some shocked, would be judged accordingly, as those shocked by the unconventional and thus conational, for example.

And I would put a hand-carved wooden sign saying 'Bourgeoisville' or 'Howdy neighbour' at the entrance, signifying my contempt.

One can recognize from out of a crowd the man of independence, of non-dependence. He always stands in a remove from the present environment when he is not able to control it and have lordship over immanence.

The intellectual, the wise-man, the sapiens, is similar in that he stands removed, immersed in a haven of abstractions and is unaffected to any great degree by the environment in which he participates. Is this true? Cannot the intellectual be just as affected, just as stupid, as the next man, and be just as dependent upon immanence – only removed from it somehow, distanced by abstractions?

Clearly the independent man can be both politician and sapiens, as a unity or disjunctively, or alternately. But he owns the present or discovers it – he will not be possessed by the present.

The authorities are defined by their efficacy – but where their essence is misconstrued is where their efficacy is: they have efficacy over their own actions, over others', etc. Thus authority is always relative to the efficacy of its exercise over an object.

The world shuts down at the terminus of its cycle – the work week having ended so all of the entailments of the work week, namely people's drive to achieve anything beyond hedonistic

pursuits. This can be ascribed to the conventional notion of 'work': construed as physical employment, as taxing of strength of energy. This concept gets imputed to everything not hedonistic or reserved for 'higher souls' (so often viewed with contempt as they are prepared to make the sacrifices the physically demanding jobs preclude) and these latter are derided as outside of ideology, as 'shirking the duties and responsibilities of the majority' – as if the majority were the limit, unbreakable, a force like a wall in its negation of creative flights of fancy.

This is the seriousness which corrupts life. Laughter affirms. I do not smile because it releases chemicals and 'makes me' (implicit premise of strict causality) happy, but because I am happy – let us not invert cause and effect.

They say to think eminently, to think outside of the moment; but when one does so he loses himself in the moment and drifts towards horizons which negate happiness, the self as corporeal being, and which present him with myriad problems of time (which doesn't exist), of death (Likewise – and if so – so what, why worry?) and of logical consistency and contradictions, simply modes of speaking, simply ethical modalities, having greater or less efficacy – but always in the moment: conceived therein and applied thereto.

My ethic: to live in full awareness, for to live in this mode is to live well, to experience things to the full, to feel them in their heights and depths.

Bourgeois thought is to rank and to file. I counted six quantifiers in a one paragraph synopsis of Nietzsche's book for sale. 'The most', 'all', 'no', 'so much as', etc. – all of these are hierarchical imperatives to rank and file things for the rank and file – and they call this judgement! But to grade things per quanta implies their equalizability. These things don't have that equalizability, therefore they cannot be graded. A modus tollens argument in refutation of bourgeois thought.

Δ Fragment on: Is photography / cinematography – art?

Can photography be subsumed under the concept of art? Only if it, this concept, deals with all things aesthetic; all of those unaesthetic being excluded, and aesthetics being a presentation of immediacy for consciousness (pardon me if I spin criteria here like a good little postivist).

But art, I would say somewhat haphazardly, is a mediation of the immediate in a way involving skill, involving the physical working of reality into a created form, a work of art. Photography precludes this in essence, for it is the machine which does the work. One's work in the medium is the mode of photographing, likewise of filming – else it is simply the machine doing the work, and how artistic the work of these media is depends upon the degree and amount of involvement of the worker of the machine, the yet-to-be-considered artist, whose denomination is dependent upon the degree of his artistry.

This is arbitrarily drawn in accordance with the individual's perspective – is perspectively determined to speak pretentiously though not uneconomically. Thus photography and cinematography are only art in a qualified sense, and this depending upon the degree of artistry on the part of the contingent – artist.

I am ready, I am prepared to exist in the social, though not uncritically and unaware. Here I am: see me, accept me, be with me, sincerely! Such is what I would say to those select few (and their numbers are large enough) who appeal to me and who present, who carry within their breasts as honeyed offerings, potentialities of social coalescence, of being together in a happy state. Where am I, where am I going – why? Such questions are to be answered apropos of the social, for it is towards it, however circumspetly, that I am headed. I feel shivers of emotional anticipation running throughout myself – and I harken unto them.

"Anthropological tract on sexuality"

Men as efficient cause and servitors of feminist acolytes

The man as efficient cause – this is society's perception (perhaps even the anthropological perception innate in both sexes) of the man, and for the woman especially man's actor, agent, primum mobile. The woman sees herself, when not deluded by the perversity of feminism, as a patient, matter worked upon by the agent across all echelon of social strata, and, even though it incurs opprobrium in her (when a feminist) she will nevertheless buckle under and acquiesce in the efficient cause's operations upon her, will make way for the efficacy of this cause. Such is the metaphysics of the sexes and it is unquestionable (except for the importunate) as based upon a vast totality of past and present experience, the body of evidence which contradicts all counterclaims.

And I feel myself as suited to the role, have been sufficiently formed as such a cause, as a man, though previously I had doubt of my substantive character, desiring to be under the (what I thought were) auspices of a woman's petticoat. Such makes for disgruntled people, those hole and corner positions, these hiding – away behind the weaker barrier. One should be his own barrier, and this in large part defines 'man'.

Do you not see how they flock towards you, how they gravitate towards you as satellite planets around a sun – such it is with men and women, the latter will forever seek out the protection of the former, though about this principle I have my doubts and those are strictly evolutionary, women getting it into their heads that they have the ability to usurp power. – Perhaps, but it invariably goes to their heads and redounds to their corruption. For then they do not attract but repel men, and as Nietzsche said they would be going over to vice from virtue in giving up their charm, their attractive weakness, this 'an secour!' attitude, this helpless state of being in need of protection. And the efficient cause, insofar as he is efficient, will necessarily gravitate towards the weak in this form – for it is irreducible, natural, that the opposite here will complement and supplement one another in relation to the telos of humanity, or at least one of its goals, that being the sexual and all its entailments; sex, propagation, love, raising of children and all of those entailments.

And it is deplorable not only for a man to protect against feminism but to acknowledge it, to transform the sponge bricks of the children's play-set which women hurl at his head (feminist railleury against men, their being implicated as the cause of women's subordination when the blame lies in the genes and hormones and physical structure thoroughly blameless as it is; natural) into hard bricks which take effect; thereby he transforms himself into a patient and

inverts natural order, the roles of the sexes. And one should simply say by way of putting things in their rightful place: let women have their rightful place: let women have their feminism and let them be happy therein, for democracy here – once again – is the alibi of power-seeking and to invoke the principle of equalization (of whatever disparate and unequal entities) is simply an attempt either to elevate or lower oneself in relation to the disjunct (or conjunct or 'other term') and in the case of feminism it is indeed a brute power-seeking covered over by a lot of self-righteous ranting, physiologically conduced perhaps, emanating from a sick animal who cannot embrace her femininity and thus becomes abberative, no fish on the evolutionary ladder growing wings or feet, but rather a fish who has jumped out of the water to die in spitefulness of the fish in the sea and their adept swimming. Perhaps these fish are the stronger ones who grew stronger through their weakness and who could not, through a natural, physiological weakness, a distance from the crowd, participate in it? Are they then not to be salvaged from this straying from the righteous path, a turning towards evil? Once can only present himself as an efficient cause in the hopes that he will have efficacy with the matter at hand, shape it, mold it and allow (through a coalescence of disparate essences) it to be what it is; transform it into a natural from an abberative entity. Thus I would have it with women who have 'gone astray' as 'free-ranging' birds.

Display: that is the motivating principle of women, the more sexually mature (ripe for reproduction) the more of a display they will make of themselves. Tight clothes, shiny objects, colourful objects, aesthetically pleasing colour schemes, fit bodies (socio-culturally defined as are all of the above) – all of this constitutes attraction which is the irreducible, display being a means to this goal. The irreducible, considered outside of the immediate situation, is of course the propagation of the species and man as means to this goal; display as means to attraction and attraction as means to man – such is the dialectic of women and especially young women. The lure is inescapable, hence most effective, but only suitable couples can consummate their attraction – and this is perhaps the salvation of the species, else it would become weakened and corrupt through the equalization principle. Thus elitism is necessary and valuable and only those who are at an equivalent level realize it (who have similar if not identical – as identical as different can get – merits will be suited to one another). All people, such is an anthropological postulate, seek themselves across the great divide of sexuality. When first encountering each other they look in a manner which betokens inquiry, a searching gaze desirous of the object of taking up the other into themselves; hence the expression: a tall, cold drink of water. It is indeed refreshing to look at a suitable representative of the species. Throughout this intersubjectivity a

dance occurs and this is the dance of attraction, a questioning of this will, will this situation, rebound to a coalescence of minds, bodies, spirits - a unification across all strata. An affirmative answer, if embarrassment does not 'get in the way', will impel both towards one another and consummate desire.

If one is physically fit his sexuality will be healthy; the outer assists in the formation of the inner. If one is sexually fit his physicality will be healthy, the inner shapes the outer - and yet they are one, call it life and predicate a state of health or unhealth to it.

Epitaph for 'the babysitter of modern times'

That I stayed in front of you
by your side stayed
gained comfort from you -
for this I curse you

A message for a false image
a hyper-real visual illusion:
all I see within you
is appearances
all I derive from you
fleeting glances
which are never there,
which never care

Into you my life invested
distorted perspectives
my gift in return
on account of you
I lived blessed
countless lives
of luxury -
spurned
consumed in the fires
of ignorance
implode into the softened
screen of ruined
education

Now I write to you
beyond the grave
a dead form
to which I was slave
amorphous images
my handmaid

and I the bride
of lived charade

Now I pronounce you deceased
here the magic of my words
ingrain themselves within
the tapestry
of reality, defile
your spawn and kin

I have worked long to
oust these forms
these imagined
imaginary appearances –
now they
are gone
and I am alone
fitting a hollow life
with defeated experiences

That I had not gone over to it
electronic technocratic
temptation
that I had resisted it
but how could a child revisit
the pleasures of the moment?
And thus I went over to it – again and again.

But never again! Never again will I go
disappear from here –
reappear nowhere:
that is what it is like:
to disappearance
gone over to
to hollow life

structured around
the technical monstrosity
and all of its
inherent strife.

This is a lament
a catharsis
an ecstatic moment.
Lament for lost youth
and all its vanquished
possibilities
cathartic moment
in my setting down
my emotional
experiential loss.
Ecstatic moment
that I have
vanquished it
and its influence!

I leave it a reflective negation
blankly reflecting my loss
of youth
and youthful potentialities –
my life of
dross

Which achieved its gloss
from hyper-reality
a dull plateau
made into majestic
mountainside

Now I have levelled the mountains

Now they mean nothing to me

Now I have gone through

my birth pangs

Now I have born

a child unto me

-And it is my potentiality
defected by the radiating
force of TV

I require now

no lead-lined suit,

no protective gear -

all that I require is here

myself, the world and -

you

the Other

You are my reality -

can you understand

what that means?

False Advertising

The fact that something is marketed as a 'novelty' enables the marketer not to make good on his claim, to make contingent claims - as no claim is actually put forth. Why? - Because it's a novelty; such is the tautologic of the advertising of modern day; promise more than you can give and justify this by reemerging your promise through a thousand, virtually inaccessible, clauses, hurried in a pile of information. The promise is not an actual but a 'joke' promise, a simulated promise of a yield of a certain substance which is not in fact yielded, like the food reparations which 'purport' (their false promise) to make good the colonization and ruination of a country through tapping its resources. What are being tapped here are the pockets of the consumer who labours under the illusion that he will reap a benefit through a purchase, for what he reaps is a privation of the goods' authenticity and his own financial loss.

False advertising runs across all media: appeals are made to all the senses and they are inherently false; what they yield is falsehood under the guise of truth. The colourful picture of the real product covers its own dull grey tones: a fast-food exaggeration of an item on the menu covers up the actual sad looking reality. Thus what is advertised is no reality only illusion; the hyper-real which generates illusory conceptions of the real.

Holographic Being

The holographic image of the skull glares into space
transfixed by its own hollowing blindness

I turn it one way, I see the silvery surface appearance
of a lost photographic image grey with time.

Apothor and it has atavized Lazarus-like, golden-red
upon a blue background – king of skulls

But all these image forms are artefactual
are counterfactual through their negation of the actual
through their metastability, their hollow sterility
and illusory two-dimensionality –
or is it three-dimensionality?

I can't tell

Cold blue as ice the skull form, image of
a frozen glacial experience

Past history all

fleeting images many in one

the Thanatos conception

the implosion

into another realm –

call it death

call it a hollow reality

which alludes to pasts lost

a reference to an actuality

washed over by

the tide of

Heraklean flux. –

historical, holographic

images of

skulls

And we are all

passing into them

an endless cycle

an churning, reality's

Black and Decker

material blinder / through time blending.

Our reality is a hologram

we are its metastable forms

transient we are collected

in its arms

And as if we were something

as if we are naught

over to the fossilization

of our immanence we are gone

over to inertial worlds

therein lost in our form

blended in the folds

of eternal fabric

so well worn.

Yet so cold

out here beyond

human reality, which has escaped beyond our grasp

for which we feel wronged.

But out here there is no right

no wrong

only what is

and always eternal holographic

modality,

shape-shifting

becoming.

Knowledge and its history: relinquishment

The notion of knowledge has become superficialized. This is proven by the fact of its assuming the commodity form: whole (condensed) histories of past cultures and figures are presented on the market for sale and redounding to profit. They are a vertiginous past on parade for those who have none, so that the individual of modern day may choose – always the idiosyncratic opinion of the possessive individual of today, who is so qualified apropos of capitalism – this or that remnant of a dead history which appeals to him. Only now that history is offered up in graphic form: once the graphics of a novel, graphai, the pictures in children's books, now electronic units of information as certain digital formation provide the graphic form to colour a long dead history a vibrant colour; now it appears in THX form, an exaggerated and sensational atavism.

This is to lend us our history, this seeking out the past through its representations in commodity forms, so that we pay dearly to acquire the superficial notion of knowledge which enables us to know ourselves, who 'we' are – the Gnothe Seuton is still the regulative ideal of modern times. But the question should be not 'who are we' but 'can we be – at all?' – For we are a construct shaped by the graphic imagery, the advertisements of our individual parts. It is the same with genealogy charts: one must pay for an internet printing of a chart which maps one's locus within the world and provides him with a history; but this history is so superficial and to constitute merely the empty denominations of past ghosts and their chronological connection with their own dead past and present. – And it could only be dead to us, a foreign world, cartoonish in import through its candied colour-tone and schema, through its sensational affects. Witness the movie 'Gladiator' and arrive at any answer to the questions: 'is this a past with any reality' and 'is it a past at all, something which never actually was?' Of course it is all a generated reality, the soporific of curious minds who blindly seek out a reality under the banner of individualism, their 'own' reality, a reality which can be 'chosen' and 'procured' – but never created. The creation is left to the profiteers and they can be said to be today's artists having the widest market ever, for the market has been dissolved into a melting pot in which each and all are molded into the shape of the whole, where one becomes, through a strict causality of participation, everyone.

The state of knowledge has indeed changed and it has exploded the distinction of knowledge or opinion – it now becomes a conjunction – rather imploded than exploded, imploded into the melting pot of democratic values, those of the simulacra whose history would be white-washed by this ideological genesis.

Is history the way to a resuscitation of knowledge? But for this a resuscitation of history is needed and how this is to be effected is a question indeed. All historiography is a playing with the pieces of past reality now unidentifiable through its constant fluxual rearrangement. These are not questions for me to decide for I am also caught up within the value – conditioning of modernity, its proliferation of candied, commoditized forms.

I am a lamentable proselyte: though there's no use lamenting the fact. One should simply attempt to overcome this influence, hide away in the dark for a few years – and then? After once again the state of knowledge, only this time in accordance with his own image? It beats clinging to another's 'definition' in dependency. This is the way towards individualism, for me at least. This is why history should be negated.

Fashion, a polemic

The following is an exposition on the topic of fashion. What is this medium of immanence, this transient code called fashion? To answer this we will examine the phrases commonly associated with, and containing the word, 'fashion':

'To be in fashion', 'fashionable', 'out of fashion', 'coming into fashion' – these are the ecstasies of fashion, the zeitworts which connote the transience of this phenomenon and denote its ebb and flow. I perceive about me the colours of the rainbow – but they are not in fashion; now it is drab tones which have as their extremes blacks and whites which are 'in fashion'. To have the attitude of absolute judge seems the privilege and prerogative of the administrators of 'the code' of the fashionable, those 'who know', who circulate within the sphere of fashion.

Today it is a passing glance, tomorrow it is one cast backwards into the past, at all of the dead forms of fashion raised again to the status of fashionable, the permissible and, if one desires admittance into the elite code, the obligatory: one is obligated to follow suit, to exist within the code of fashion. But what matter it is all a whirling exchange of meaning, a flux of appearances. Even as one washes his clothes and they spin about in the transparent window into this world of fashion he takes out a new form every time. – Thus it will always be – fashion is the immanent material commodity of the marketplace regulated by the administrative body of fashion which legitimates itself eternally.

But it can also be a form of self-expression, one which exclaims 'I am what I wear – behold I wear my flart on my sleeve, my essence is manifest in my concrete existence'. And there is nothing wrong with this expression aside from the claims to expressing one – singular – self which doesn't exist for fashion. Why not? – Because the code is an amorphous, non-referential body of magical forms; perhaps it is engineered and designed with demographic appeal in mind and profit as the underlying thing. Surely one can still achieve a form of self-expression through it despite the appeals and inducements of the code and the profiteering motivation of the sale which lurks behind the cuff of each shirt and pants article or the price tag, itself the expression of a profiteering schema – expression and outcome.

But the shapes, the designs, the colours! – Surely these all have an appeal in themselves aesthetically? – Surely. Yet how can this be sufficient to undergo the privation of purchasing, of the humiliation of giving oneself up to the profiteers, handing over a part of one's being – like going to a prostitute? – But the tactility, the patterns, the feel on one's frame – the colours, the smells of newness and aura of difference! How can one not become a proselyte to the new

consumerist religion? But is it really different – is that what is being offered – or is it not rather identity and wholesale, at bargain basement prices?

Another proof of human fallibility: that the movements we undergo constitute us; we are exposed to constant vibrations we become devoid of mind; likewise television, music – all substantial forces which bombard our forms, they all contribute to the degeneration and deterioration of a once lucid form.

All the reading in the world will do no good if one doesn't understand how language is shaped and performed in practice – and so with writing: with a practical linguistic counterpart one can write with applications to praxis, else he cannot. And this is how languages develop, amidst this dialectic of practice and theory, informal and formal.

I have on my bed a popular movie. I watch it, not because it is popular but because (rather) it is no longer popular; the past forms of the au courant become acceptable in the future as 'underground culture' as retro-culture, some sort of marginal affect. And this is what they call finding their own identity. What they are finding is a cadaver.

Racial mixing and its consequences for future generations

I read a passage in Nietzsche not long ago about this, how the offspring turn out weaker through the differentials present. But he also mentioned their turning out, in some cases, the stronger type – how can this paradox be invested with meaning again and taken out of its contingent yes and no through a discursive rendering of a yes or no – from conjunction of opposites and hence obliteration of meaning, to a disjunction of opposites and an affirmation of same? The answer lies in the genetic code of the individuals, which can be understood philosophically – deterministically through an examination of the genealogy of the individuals and their concrete performance, their existential performance so to speak.

This in turn depends upon climactic factors, upon those worldly conditions which condition the entities formed therein from out of them, namely the individuals across the plane of their genealogy, diet and lived performance. Thus one cannot say that it is purely races but individual strains of races which give on to weakness and strength in individuals. And certain rare intense formations of energy – if we may speak thus about 'individuals' as agents – can upset the whole of a genealogy, usurp its throne and influence and begin a new tyranny in the name of auspicious strength – or weakness.

Things, however, cannot be so particularized ad infinitum – rather they are to be synthesized across necessarily broad categories of climactic conditions (based upon the general, longest lasting conditions of a given region) and the very soil and earth which germinates the reproduction of flora and fauna thereunder, from which all individuals spring: out of the womb of nature considered as a sphere of experience irreducible, otherwise unintelligible, and this is way to pluralize everything yields conceptual non-sense, i.e. meaninglessness.

Adventures of Brendon Risk

I tell myself that I am inept, that I can't play the subtle illusory games of women and, consequently, cannot 'procure' them as a means to happiness, for their present lack directly confutes that happiness. I am incapable of playing the facetious games that are requisite for this end and thus receive the Ostraka of the fairer sex. A simple look from me - that give them to understand this pervasive ineptitude, ~~ensconcing~~ ^{ensconcing} my being as a misaimal aura, radiating outwards to their own ~~judgements~~ ^{judgements} and achieving the utter negation of my would-be being through their negative regard. They regard me with wistfulness, with uncertainty, with sadness, despair, hopelessness, hatred, hostility, etc. I think of approaching them, one of them, that one with the frown and saying: don't worry, you don't have to frown. I'm not going to hit on you. No, it's not that you're not attractive or that I think myself superior, but that you're very bitchiness is completely opprobrious: the look, wounded and sour, on your brow, that cantankerous bitchiness - that is what distances myself from you! I won't even bother to tell that not to misconstrue cause and effect, unpretentious for their being affected by my presence, their misconstruance of my intentions - I will say only that...but why bother! Women always twist the real in accordance with their own standards of the beautiful. They give it a face-lift which is the negation of the negation of negative feeling - if they feel bad they will destroy the object-cause. A simple logic for a simple sex...and...what's this, I'm suddenly ~~charmping~~ ^{charmping}! I can ~~seem~~ that my whole constitution is becoming more active, my limbs are becoming limber, gesturing away, my face is impressed by a permanent smile. I have become who I am - no longer am I the absolute naysayer and critical leveller of all identities! No, I am no longer who I was, I am now the risk-taker, the smooth talker, ladies' man, socially accepted individual, beater of the drum of the status quo but with an ironic smile on his face; an enjoyer of all of life's fruits while they are yet still in bloom. I have taken the risk - I have become Risk and my name speaks worlds of positivity, of daring adventurousness and hopeful horizons.

The old me has grown stagnant, has become stale and simply goes through the motions. But Risk supersedes the former, near-sublated form who has, through magical causality, dumped all of the negative attributes of his predecessor in favour of positively constructed newness. There is no fear anymore, no hatred. The world has turned and the bright rays completely negate the darkness outright. Now as Risk he moves forth - but not as, not qua, only in-himself, collapsed into himself - or compressed rather! Risk is a nominative tautology - it is it. Risk is Risk.

Now I harken back to concrete situations, I, Risk. There a female sits, a person, an individual, an attraction. I go to her, solicitously, greeting her with a smile and offering her company, requesting her time and persuasively cajoling her to accompany me to wherever and wherever.

But I am far from laissez faire. I am totally interested - completely - I have my finger in the pie of life and cry out: 'jo, de vivre!' Life now exists for me - I don't do anything but embody its radiance, glowingly stretching myself outwards toward all of life's fruits. And I possess them just as immediately as I posit them as objects of desire. For I am Risk, and life follows through, is a direct consequence of my actions, is my action itself.

I am the diamond in the rough, a needle in a haystack bearing both positive and negative values, harbouring injury and malice and ecstasy and happiness all at once. Thus no one bothers to look for me as word went around that...This is often too personal, this endeavour of writing. That I have no content in life, no girls at present, and that this scenario's 'minutes' are transcribed in heartfelt prose, directly establishes my existence as harrowing and riddled with depression as gaping black wounds on my person. But there is no way out and to write, destroys hope rather than engendering it.

I look at the words on the page and they appear as insignificant scrawl, more self-pitying annoyance without any cathartic or pragmatic value. It takes me so long to write now, whereas before I could write reams of sentences and words and letters. All of it is interrupted and curbed by - depression (this latter word took a long time to be cojoked out of my hands and mind). Depression is sought to be negated through a 'block' - a total effacement of anything and everything. This is the pit of nihilism and its blackness surrounds and covers one up so that he can never be at peace or have any reminiscence of happiness, anything reminiscent of ~~safe~~.

I drift off and find myself on a walkway at a beach in Florida, a place where I had visited years before. Though now my present converges upon my past with its black swoop and leathern wings, veined with poison-filled, throbbing ropes. It takes, does this negative depression, the form of a couple who derisibly approach and bother me to no end. I threaten them with words, then an antagonism breaks out and I am menaced by the male of this dyad. I scream out as I open my jacket revealing a gun, that I'll 'pop a cap in his face!' if he doesn't leave. That inanity of nice warm beaches and utter peace is destroyed.

Another where women are playing with a ball around me, always knocking it past me so that it's within my reach, attempting to snag me. I pull out a jackknife and puncture the ball and throw it at them screaming, 'yeah! I'm not a man to play games - go and call the cops if that's what you want!' This is the unending destruction of my happier moments in the total negativity of my expectations - hope is engendered and despair also, like a cancer gradually effacing the former from the face of existence.

Walking along with my head down, slowly and uncontrollably depressed, on a mission to call my only connection, a parent of some years' distance with whom I had great rapport in childhood. Debilitation sets in and I am uncontrollably weak, cannot at all function about my tasks. The conversation ends and I return home, away from the crowd and its persecuting attitude. Herein, in this locus of happiness in potential, this hibernation cubicle, I feel thoroughly happy and content. I arch my back, feel the whole of my body, my corpse, tighten with energy and, so ipso, I become - Risk! But there is no longer any situation in which Risk may achieve his riskiness - he has been made impotent and emasculated by the total levelling effect of the present mode of things - the hollow loneliness, the pervasive lack of all of those happy moments of the past which now exist simply circulating in the void. Risk becomes the former self again and with this persona he quickly falls into the pit of depression.

But isolated from it once more through the imaginative positing of scenarios in which life affirmation goes on. Risk, in all of his eccentricity, speaks to people and they hariken unto him; he hears them as they speak in positive manner. And yet he can't, can he, achieve this empathetic state necessary for becoming his idealized self. Risk is bound off from him and through lack of knowledge of the means to achieve that desired state.

Thus Risk is as yet a non-entity and cannot achieve his desires he has none, has nothing as the empty shell of the most potent cartridges the world has ever seen. That he has the greatest potentiality speaks in his favour, but that he can never, through himself, actualize it without exploding himself renders him impotent. The efficient cause is the former self, yet the latter is too weak, for that is his nature.

He must discursively and conceptually construct himself, molding himself - godlike - in his own image and in accordance with a predetermined plan. But the plan must simply unfurl in all of its arbitrariness, and all pre-determination straightaway negates any hope of the plan's concretization. Why do you not answer the alarms and call to arms which peel out of decibel range, in ecstasy of noise so that it strikes on to the very heart through its impression upon him, tearing asunder one from himself. But the virtual deafness of obturacy directly negates any attempt at achievement of a goal. Goals are for Risk-takers, for the Risks of this world, not for any former types.

I have established an impossible situation now - am bound by the logic of necessity, a necessity itself constructed and established. It can all end if I say so - that depends upon myself alone.

They all call themselves open-minded – but they attack those who fall outside of ~~the~~ bounds of their definition of open-mindedness. And doesn't that make them closed-minded? A

contradictory nature indeed, one which belies their totally dissimulative and specious aspect (totality). Who is the reference here? Who else but the majoritarians, the middle-class drum beaters of ideology qua globalization and democracy. They are all majoritarian tyrants whose fitness – engendered en masse – enables their survival. And what else are they good for? They all may as well explode into the nothingness of their own falsehood, i.e. simply suffer negation at the hands of their own contradictoriness, have their mouths stopped with the diarrhea of words which forever tumbles from their mouths.

Thus, Risk, it is indecipherable what he would say to the former's discourse and what he would say independently of it about the middle classes and their existentiality that remains to be determined. Now I achieve only glimpses of a Risk, but cannot attain the real and genuine – only shadow figures.

Risk emerged from the cover of darkness, cast off the sheets which had been his death, which had been his hibernating state and awoke to the freshness of the morning. Therein he felt that freshness of possibility, a faith in the fructifying of any and everything that he could grasp, and his omnipresence was without limit. But his bare positive being yet had not content, no concrete goals and aims to which he could fly outwards upon the wind. These themselves were the unknown impetus for the soul of this still hollow shell to spark itself to life, blossoming in the purity of its whiteness. But that none were present left this soul very feeble ad exposed to the direct contingency of its own life or death. How could it – life without that striving towards goals which served as the very foundation of its existence? Thus Risk was as glass – brittle, delicate and inert, though in its inherent molecular movement it was a bundle of energy: undulating and contracting like the heart within the breast. And truly the former was in just such a state inextricable from the present confines of a prison cell. – Break free! That he could require the pretensions which thrust him from life as he knew it. But envision it in any other manner he could not ~~and~~ this was the very finitude of his existence: that he was bound to the present and that its narrowness trapped him within its total emptiness of content – all that remained was a buzz of inherent energy, an entelechia which thrust itself here or there but yet never went anywhere of consequence; desultory and aimlessly wandering through the prison yard of its life.

Thus the morning confronted him, and yet what did it really bring forth but the very tragedy of the day, its innermost contradictoriness and impotence. Thus Risk moved about in his mind, agitated about all of those potential goals and aims which might be, and yet whose contingency

clouded their identity in a fog of contradictoriness – they might be one or the other or both or nothing at all. Realized or unrealized – that was the romanticist page. – How about that archaic style? Risk here, deciding to take over the melancholy tones of his catalyst and former prison warden – the other, the former – with some tones of exultation and a receptivity to the day! Welcome day – how art thou? Do not reciprocate my intentions, it is unnecessary, completely and utterly. Really though – how are you? Would you do me the favour of enjoying with me life, of bequeathing life upon me? – Excellent! Life now attained, grasped in hand with the gentleness of a mother for its young and the strength of a cyborg's grip in a kid glove I welcome it and celebrate its radiance.

Is it really true as to what my former colleague of mine with whom ways have parted, said – that I, Risk, am but a bare positive lacking concrete content? But it isn't even up to him to decide my fate anymore, just as it isn't up to the mother to intervene in the fate of its children when it is time for them to leave the nest. And the nest now has been left: allow my promulgation to ring out across the expansive horizons of future possibilities. 'Yes!' Proclaim it and all of its analogues, its traces and scattered magical dust as it shoots forth across the sky! I am I, Risk – and yet so much more. I pull actuality towards me through running into the brick wall of potentiality – and through it! What does it matter the consequences, they are for the weak. And yet prudence, paradoxically, dictates what will transpire in life through apriori and immediate judgements – judgements rendered apriori, amended in immediacy – but never as an after-pense, only as a avant-pense. This is the strategy of the game of life and to be an adept is to accept the rules as they come, as they are instituted and as they entail all of their negative aspects and foolishness.

Where will Risk take his pure positivity? Where will and where can he possibly go? That question must remain undecided and the future must unfurl in all of its secrecy. And yet it was discussed about being engineered? Is it true that one can engineer the most minute part of effectual occurrence? No – but he can weave a net – however tight – in which to trap the potentialities as they float by. Some would only allow the dust flecks, the shimmering flecks of dust, to bombard their bodies I the utmost of apathy and laziness – and yet others would violently thrust arms up, left and right in a mad frenzy of gain – and lose it all simultaneously. Yet others would weave, with careful precaution and/or with artistic endurance, a safety net that surrounds them from behind yet with an opening to catch all that presents itself. So that they must keep eyes forward upon actualization – always alert and ready for the moment to be captured within their locus and imbibed with a receptive attitude.

I stray into the blackness of my thoughts – all things implode therein: hopes, realizations, potentialities. All are blackened with the soot of the unrealizable and the despairing quality of failure. Risk has departed through this shift in thinking, this completely moral shift. He is lost and so must go back into hibernation, incubating in his gradual heartthrobs and palpitations, themselves an echo of his intense thoughts. And of these thoughts? Even he does not know, except that they have something to do with the positivity of life affirmation: socio-sexual, political, artistic, aesthetic thoughts. And yet not so much even thoughts as mysterious valances. I hear the foolish harangue of the youths underneath my floor in the apartment below. It is indeed a ridiculous presence. Like animals they insist upon their foolish jonissance, blowing in a didgeridoo and beating on bongos. And yet I know that these same used to listen to Britney Spears and pop music; and that even now they are as pop-culturalized as ever. Oh well – so much for black thoughts.

Hyper-real Proposal

We have a part that doesn't suit the models distilled and disseminated to the masses of which we are a part (the latter) and which we would become in its idealized form (the former). My penis I deem dissatisfactory by virtue of its falling short of the idealized standards prescribed by the model. And yet the norm is superseded in leaps and bounds to the limits of hyper-reality: whence issues these standards. The means to the attainment of this standard are posited: surgery. And yet could one ever achieve this state of hyper-realized existence? The magical ascendancy of these norms into the stratosphere, wherein they are forever eluding human attainment, is something ungraspable and makes a mockery of the ever-grasping hands of the human. This is, at the same time, the denouement of human reality apropos of its exponentialization, its unstoppable ascendancy into the hyper-real. And thus its artificialization! Everything becomes washed out and diluted in its meaning through the monstrous forms which stalk the real and take their revenge upon it. We are now pressured undyingly but those models which we have created, or which, like growths – testaments of the hypertrophic nature of the present – conjuncture – have generated themselves from off the sustaining nutrients of the present; and our stock is depleting in great rapidity.

And to walk about with an appendage that is this very growth consuming one's reality – what can be said about that? And then what next: whitened teeth, tanned skin, steroidal form, hair and cosmetic products – other forms of surgery? What can be fabricated here within this span of existence – a whole new world, a creation in an apotheosized mode. This is how man becomes god and drives himself insane through megalomania and egotism. But what is the alternative? Far better to lead an active life and this under the auspices of the hyper-real as one must himself become hyper-real as outreached in the war-time scenario of the present:

"Bellum omnia contra omnes".

Poem: The Painter

I am painting the world the colour white
The entire world
All of its nooks and crannies –
And watching it dry
This is the mode of life I lead or am led by
The white drabness lulls one to sleep with its consequent ennui

It is a task
A chore and a dullness
Which facilitates Ixion's wheel
Acts as the grease of planetary revolutions
Transforming day into night and night into day

I am a global, universal painter without limit
My task is to paint the totality of existence
And I splash paint about with deliberateness
Carefully aiming at my goals
But it is all a whitewashing of the world's beatitude
Of its colourful schema
Lexically presented through
All of the singular things
Which populate the world

I have transformed the exoticism
Of chaotic colours
Into a uniformity of tone-pallid
All of the colour of the world
Is effaced with my brushstroke
I used to harbour all sorts of higher ideals in my mind
I used to contemplate differences
Between logical notions
And their application in experience

All of the conceptual nuance
Has departed through my fleeting interest
Whitewashed
It falls away into the voidal purity of whiteness

This is utter disassociation
An idealistic creation
Of a world in one's own image
A dull banality, a platitude

A road that stretches onwards to infinity
Built by no one and never-ending
But posited in consciousness as ending
Though indefinitely

The painter wears his 'sico' cap and is labelled 'psycho'
Misconstrued through superfluous judgments
Thus he paints these judgments
The shade of surface appearances
So that the whole world becomes a superficiality
And he always had a desire to purge the depths of being
But he achieved only a painter's fate
Forever painting to exhaustion

All things become
A smoothness
All rough textures and shapes he submerges
In the thickest paint
So that it drowns therein
It can no longer cause harm that way
And whitewashed his life falls away
Into the nothingness of this utter presence

The universal of woman exists in my mind and body. I imagine the contours of the sex organ, of the effects upon my person experienced apropos of this universe of carnality. Woman represents the fruits of Tantalus for me, is their concrete content, the form's filling, desire's object. I am implicated within this vicious circle of desiring and despairing, that I may not achieve my desires and so reach upwards, Tantalus-like, for the voluptuous fruits of my desiring. I attempt to redirect, to sublimate my desires but find that I achieve only a surrogate content for this form, so that the fruits are dried and lacking in nutritious sustenance. The juicy fertility of woman relegates me to the dust bin of ignominy and anonymity: ridiculed, attacked, despised – and yet lusted after. A paradoxical torture to be tantalus: to have something presented to you and then have the inability to grasp it. That is why I distance myself from the crowd – so that temptation may be kept at arm's reach and that I may go about my swimming in the dark realms of the netherworld looking for the fish my enemies.

In schools they present themselves; they concentrate their forces so that they may find shelter and protection. All of them are akin, are alike, and they all pursue the same goals – it is uncertain whether they band together for this reason or if the goals emanate posterior to their joining forces. In any case the reality is their own incessant swimming after gain: consumption of desired objects, propagation, and consumption of pleasure, etc.

The Compound

To be an ethical person one must have the ability to think themselves in the position of another, that person to whom they are related in their ethical compartments. If they cannot, they are biased and necessarily: their stance is either their own and/or that of a larger group or singular other – it alienates their relational term in the discourse, and hence there can be no discourse.

That through my difference I have obfuscated all conversation renders me an island. The discourse would build bridges out towards me, but no one can speak my language – I am alone and misunderstood, and discourse of empathy cannot take place. Thus no reposition of the alien Other into the absolute ego's place. My locus is bordered with the wires and pits of difference, those who step towards me walk cautiously for this reaction saying: 'care', and generally distancing themselves from me as much as

possible – often they disappear into the night and my fortress remains secure, though barren.

I have polished the ~~come~~ shiny steel of wires glisten with electric fury into the night's incubus presence. I sit alone in the hollow silence speaking to myself, echoes of emptiness sending forth from my mouth. I have no one, not even a rat to keep me company – I have sterilized life so that all fertility has been vitiated upon the wall of my unending executions. Stained with the blood of self-sacrifice, the cries frozen upon the air, preserved in the substance of memory – all of this constitutes my livelihood: a morbidity and perpetual, lively though undefiled by the tears of human agency.

The days march forth and I mark chronometric steps across my life. There are no moments upon the calendar, only the platitudinous surface of white paleness, the sickness of a lonely soul without an arrow or a goal. So I will sit with despairing enervation as I haven't the strength to draw it from the well of my own image – I am not a man sui uris but am a villain of childishness – outgrown aberration of an inner paradise that converted into a hell.

The knell tolls and I harken unto it, in the prison chapel the bell rope I pull it – it tolls for me. Who else could be worshipper and defiler of his own form, a beautiful creature and an ugly simultaneously? Up the staircase I wander, around the endless flights clinging to the resuscitating moment, the breath of life known only in and through the intensity of strife. The rope is rough and sharp around my neck – perfect torture instigating the wishes for death, the yearnings for purity of emptiness. Black around the night, one star glistens upon my eyes as they shine reflectively – out of myself, sui uris – at last! I produce the shine of hope's passing phase, its apogee, and despair confronts me in the face. So be it, nunc diminis, I have fallen and into paradisiac bliss – a return into the conception of immaculateness as the dawn reaches outwards for my bloodied form, hanging – ~~ben~~ carcass, ashen grey with the sadness of a passing spirit, who has lost all its vital essence and has been negated as animate.

Ethically, one should imitate Jesus. A synopsis of Franklin which captures the ethic propounded as that of the summit of virtue before the reaches of science and concomitant atheism crushed the spirit in their merciless grip, levelling all belief to the level of empiria, all transcendentality and universality being imploded into the moment which then collapses upon itself.

The Jesus phenomenon, let us discuss it. He was a good soul, a kind soul; he epitomized goodness and altruism, he forsook all of the grubbiness which has descended upon people and has altered their lives to fall in with the principles of self, mine at the expense of thine.

Capitalism and Jesus are opposed. Possession, property – these are the elements of a corrupt spiritual aspect, a corrupt and decayed spirit. The only possessions necessary to live a life which attains happiness (defined as nature, an ideal to be pursued) are those abstract ones which are the elements of one's essence, his mind and body and the external environs surrounding himself – wants and needs here coincide. When they diverge, when the former exits the realm of Eden, that is to pay of nature, then what follows is a standard of life which must entail great struggle to survive (for survival is maintaining the standard of happiness without which one is as good as dead – hence the endless desire to pursue wants that stand outside of the scope of one's means). When wants are increased and dubbed 'needs' apropos of an increase, a divergence of the standard of happiness from the idyllic state of human existence, then happiness fluctuates and flies out the window. – Not so with Jesus. Happiness is a desire for nothing and Schopenhauer was right.

But the Jesus character entails that peace of mind, that stoical spiritualism, that casts aside any desires – it is a will-less state akin to death and insofar is happiness. But then spiritualism stands opposed to life when considered thus and the falsity of this is seen in the ethic which religions and spiritual beliefs inspire in the believer and adherent: they prescribe a way of life which carries with it the imperative: do in order to live, for to live outside of these standards is not to live at all – the *conditio sine qua non* of life is the standard of living. It is all relative thusly, and to live in the mode which one has an inclination to live in is happiness theorized.

Jesus had some good (desirable) attributes which were: the disdain, or disregard, for the so-called 'passions'; the altruistic concern for others to the extent that he would

sacrifice himself so that others could live. But these alleged attributes can be criticized also: his will-lessness might have been a physiological function in its consequences of unconcern for the passions, one which arises out of mere weakness and lack of strength; to find the strength in gentleness is after all to use weakness for one's own vices (an enthymeme which Nietzsche captured, for better or worse). But should we make such an imputation to Jesus? Should we not notice the positive value of this, perhaps basing it upon inclination for whatever it may be? I, Jesus, have a positive inclination towards you (love) a fellow man, and harken unto thee accordingly. A flipside of Nietzschean doctrine – and martyrdom? what woman wouldn't martyrize herself for her children, or man for same and for woman, out of an intensity of this positive inclination called love?

Ballad of the Globalizers

Purity of whiteness surrounds one, only to be taken away
In an instant through the greedy vice of humans
Global warming
Warmed through the amplification of capitalism
Through the heightening – to fever pitch – of human necessity
And how will it meet its end
Endless turmoil of causal forces
Destroying the earth to the screams of
Six billion voices clamouring for
An end to their own greed
Which they have embarked upon in the name
Of necessity

Necessitated – by what?
But social participation
Collectivist action
Of a collectivity that entails
This necessity of brute attraction
To the same ideals and values
Which bespeak the individual's
Subservience
To his lord and master
Norm and hegemon
All at once
Prescribing an allowance
Of human action

The sphere enlarges, contracts
Through the dictates of social contract
Through the merciless demands of
Opinion, henceforth christened
As truth

Bow down to a truth which rules you
And which has a mortgage
On your soul
You receive a privilege
For your dead pledge
Truth takes its toll

The truth spreads fast
Travelling forth at lightning speed

Across the oceanic boundaries
Over trees and lakes and streams;
It is the vehicle of acceptance
Stands forth in all its brilliance –
Legitimate, valid, perfect
Irrefutable, unstoppable, impossible
To contradict
Without playing the villain

Everyone is the same
After all...
Well – aren't they?
Everyone tolerates difference
And yet they're all alike –
So who's different?
Anyone?
Reveal the inner contradiction
Of absurd discourses
That course with the spreading of
The waves of democratic renown
Redound to infallibility, a report
Of linearity, of identity –
What we have left
Boiled down
Like the polar icecaps
Homogenized,
And melted into a warm
Insipidity
The tears of the majority
In which they drown
With regret in light of
The fact that
They were the harbingers of
Their own deaths

So hooray from all of liberal-capitalist ideology
Hurrah for the inseparability of these two
Confidants
Hooray for the bourgeois dilettantes who
Ascend the political platform
As the majority and with heated words
Serve to warm the barren hearts of
Economic units – neither men

Nor women
Merely androgynous distincts

But hardly that even – for identity
Is the voidal force, the majority,
Into which they lose their existence
Just as they lose their nations
Just as they lose their character
And nobler ideals, their spirit
-But it's better that way –
That no one objects and everyone
Corrects the bearer of bad news
With such implicit coercion that he
Stoops under the force of their aspersions
-For he is different, always was
Always will be
And alone
Stricken from Black's lists of acceptability
He will always be

That is what it is to be an individual –
To stand alone
Individualism is collectivism,
A political discourse politically driven
-The self feels itself apart
And only acceptance brings conformity
Forth

•

I write about etiquette (a pompous way of beginning, a way which would be stigmatized – perhaps – by these initiates of decorum who legislate the rules of etiquette, the Mr. and Ms. Manners of the social).

There is a potpourri bowl of dried flowers in the bathroom, an article whose quaintness speaks of the concern the proprietor, so to speak, of the bathroom has for his patrons and the obligation this same has foisted on the latter to: 'keep it clean', an implicit imperative. – And they talk about etiquette! But what is more constrained (so that one has to drink their earl grey with a pinky finger extended) than these demands of etiquette, themselves an effeminate demand for obedience and expression of a will-to-power? – I imagine urinating in their potpourri bowl, so that the dried flower will contract an odour of wilting and will look the part as well. – But that action would be too animalistic even for me.

I remember a similar incident in the bathroom of a restaurant in Iceland where something – the response to my transgression of etiquette likely – made me very angry and this externalized itself in my urinating in the washroom, but certainly not in the toilet bowl. This is the behaviour the constraints of etiquette conjure from out of my genie-bottle brain – the evil genie of anti-sociality! If only – I lament – they did not foist so many responsibilities upon the shoulders of an allegedly welcome guest but allowed that same to remain in liberty, then said guest would not feel the constraining of his relationship to his host, manifesting itself, initially, in a gamut of prohibitions and obligations tied about him like Pandora's boxes (not to be questioned – runs the imperative), and secondarily in aggressive responses, will-to-power manifestations bearing the mark of 'retaliation, revenge, and get back'.

Life lived with certain people enables one to understand who they are; the kind of life extrapolates itself upon their characters. the petty with its enumerable qualms and protests as one exists out of these bounds demonstrating the pettiness of its agent, of s/he who is its agent and mosquito-like judge and jury who await all possible pretexts of execution.

Etiquette is the system of social constraints which presents itself in a social relation based upon that relation's governing principles which in turn are based upon sheer quantity. If one wishes to change ethics he must amass a large group (a cult or other) and wreak havoc upon the moral imperatives of others, perhaps responsively through

doing contrary things (but response, especially the Ghandian kind, is always the path towards effeminacy – thus goes my ethic) or reactively through elevating those things to a higher power, exaggerating their value for the prohibiting other, though of course both can be active and passive, reactive and responsive.

And of course who can forget the dinnertime madness! Never get invited out to a diner without relinquishing your own will-to-power and self-mastery as a guiding principle. If you present contraneity you will be meted out a greater portion in turn; the message is conformity tout court and those who think that they can outstrip this conformism are doomed to delusion. Everything must be just and based upon fairness of exchange: someone pulls at someone's seat and the receiver must (obligatorily) thank the performer of the action. – And a countless number of other incidents and minute modalities of the social, minute dances and dance steps must be gone through to the point of one feeling hampered even in his breathing. Tolerate this and a trial of strength is not needed in any other area of human sociality, in its bourgeois form: the dinner, prepare to dance the dance chosen by your partner and expect nothing but the servile kowtowing of the social to regulate your puppet-like movements. However, as this is largely a significant social endeavour one can perceive (if perspicacious) the benefits of it: intimate togetherness brought on through the libidinal act of the consumption of foodstuffs, heightened relationships, etc.

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Poems

I try to think of how to write poetry
-But to think is an anomie
When it comes to the task
Of transcription
Of the given and the
Things I see
There is a struggle between the abstract
Between time and its
Timeless symbolizing
And its concrete counterpart
Its waves of colours, sounds
And operatic ballad of
Life
This is it
Is poetry
And philosophy must
Distance itself
In a meta –
Narrative
In the dried out sea
Of conceptual life

How can I concentrate on the task
How can I focus my wandering mind
Toward my confrontation
With the given
When it is bombarded
By vociferousness
By loudness
Which destroys it?

What is it about the medium
Of poetry
That conjures
Up a melancholic aspect?
Should it not be without the negative
As a free-floating positive
Flitting on the undulating
Surface of the given?

Can one tolerate
The buffeting noise waves

Of the elderly
As they scream and bark
At one another
In front of the TV?
These miserable souls
Know nothing
Of value in existence
But worship themselves
As existential agents
Living on Cloud 9
They are soon to die
Soon it
This vociferousness
Will be over
And they in
Their coffins

Only then could I rejoice
At my own peace and solace
When these ghost-givers
Give up
In armistice
With death
Bow their heads
To the executioner's axe
Chronos descends
Into the finite
Terminus

Now I am a youth living
Waiting
For my fellow youths
Affirmers of life
To come to me
-Or me to them
Preferably –
And to spirit away
My innermost strife

Analyses of contemporary phenomena

The time-structure of the life of an old retiree who slaved away the whole of their life 'working', now occupies their day in lassitude through paucity of action. Before they were accustomed to awaiting their 'free-time' posterior to work, now that work – what was viewed as the negative but is really the positive – is an absence (the negation become negated) they face an even greater one: the boredom of their own lives! What to do to fill the hours of the day before I 'make/have supper', i.e. the conventional time when the workday was at an end and when life began to have 'meaning'. The answer is of course always, in terms of content arbitrary, in terms of form fixed by the social logic of the day – schema – anything which 'fills' and 'wastes' time.

On the other hand though, the routinization of the life of these worker bees has given their lives a purposive rationale – now they do laundry with diligence and feel satisfied after the fact. Before any reflection – or any vague stirrings of imagination – can set in they have flocked to the TV to give themselves a 'reward' for their 'efforts', token, though on the face of things of dire necessity.

And what meaning do they have in their lives which is not completely relative to the logic of duty/reward/punishment: if I do my duty (that which has to, unquestioningly, be done) I get a reward, if I transgress, punishment is my due, i.e. is just. Outside of this formal system of self-legitimation their lives are void of content and meaning.

Another phenomenon: toilet paper. It expresses the contempt of modern man for nature: we are wiping our asses with the trees, symbol of nature, and do so with indifference, needlessly.

I didn't even require putting this away, I merely began again with the given and necessarily, it came out of contemporaneity lawn mowers mow the lawns: first one person does it, then another – so a whole chain reaction of simple-minded, mass-hysterical conventionality is on parade and display: behold a modern-day phenomenon at its most typical, widespread, and for that reason worst. The norm legislates morality, a simulacral morality built upon an artificial norm. What is this norm but – rather in this case the morality is thoroughly material, emanating from the system's chronological parameters – from a time-determined modus vivendi implemented, policed, and regulated by the state. They are told by the implicit, inner voice of functional reason that they must do A before B as they would not have

sufficient time otherwise; that they must do A before B as this is the necessary sequence (based upon efficacy). The in-order-to, the means, gains prominence to such an extent that it effaces the goal and at least lowers the goal to the lowest common denominator, the norm. And this is how the morality of these same is simulacral (it was concluded outside of evidence-based logic before, and thus prematurely).

Functional/instrumental reason, coinciding, reconciling means and end, without end to its endless dialectic, of use thoroughly and utterly, excluding all artistic thought, all speculative thought – all thought of a nature considered superfluous relative to use. Soon monogamy will be disturbed and the Christian rails upon which modern man coasts will be derailed thus derailing his morality, sending him onto the rough and wild tracks of nature: polygamy. Polygamous: many partners or many members (whatever the etymology, many people in short, and as a handy reference). What is wrong with this concept (in relation to bourgeois conception, and why do they extol the mono- over the poly-? I can't quite decipher their muddled logic, and perhaps the inability to decipher it prescribes its worth.

Thinking about it I believe it has to do with making exclusive the concept of 'love', distancing all away from the hippie age of free love – in short putting 'love' in harness – call it marriage in the most conventional and monogamous sense. Love exclusive to another, to the Other, and reflexively to the self. My counter-argument: what of children? How can you love so many (let us say 4) children, and equally, as is alleged by the bourgeois logic, but cannot love two wives – as if this is a magically 'different form of love' ineffable and inexplicable. It is likely that some sociologist /psychologist /anthropologist would vouch for the 'fact' but adduced his own expert opinion and norms based upon expert opinion – but I find the tyranny of experts unconvincing.

If you love one, why can't you love another? Love is based upon familiarity elevated to a higher power (however described – and it can only be described – doesn't matter, what matters is the veracity of the concept itself). If you can love one, why cannot the powers (chemical, energy) not be augmented to love another, or dispersed, assuming love is a quantifiable phenomenon based upon psychological factors and pheromones as well as material constitutivity – all of which are interpenetrating.

'Poly-gamus' – such a word and its etymology contains no sexist connotations – its history is irrelevant to the word, to the abstract conception of many-members, be that

of whatever sex, and to liken it (totally irrelevantly – once again, which shows that the democratic drum-beaters have no arguments of any value in support of monogamy) to bestiality is ludicrous to say the least – and did we not descend from apes, according to evolution? So they're arguing in a circle! The history of polygamy is irrelevant to its future!

Will to power – more evidence: the social logic of sounds: one makes a noise which causes annoyance to another or which appears to – in accordance with this same logic – conflict in terms of power with the Other, and the Other responds by reciprocating this gesture. It is called 'justice' in the normative perception of things, that of the petty-minded bourgeois and below on the socio-economic scale, perhaps above-how would I know?

It is all a lesson in perversity and those who don't become absolutely subservient become trammelled under the foot of this logic (self-justifying and legitimating); those who do become taken advantage of in their own obsequiousness. Thus there is no way to win, no way out of this social entrapment, of the entailments of this entrapment unless one simply flees to the hills and away from the social.

Is there no alternative to such a fate; can one not achieve a life lived in the social sphere without the oppression and constraint of this petty language game-playing, which is at bottom a petty power-playing on behalf of those too inferior and weak to simply ignore and neglect such things – to the point of having these same 'things' define their lives?

The alternative is clearly present in the educated class of people, unfortunately a class I am, strangely enough, not at all acquainted with. To be educated is to be capacitated to judge things justly and to live a just life relative to others and to the social – and yet education by itself is insufficient, one must be at peace with himself (always through education) to avoid the fate of this petteiness. I know that out there, under the shadows of foreign locales there exist 'others' who fit this description and who would gladly make a convert of me from uneducated to educated class.

The social function of commitment

That people require others to commit to something in order to have faith/trust/ belief in them indicates their own faithlessness / lack of trust / disbelief in others. The ones who do not require commitment from others are looked upon as fools in the eyes of society as society is a ruthless swarm of barbarianism and the motto 'D.T.A' reigns (Don't Trust Anyone). The possessiveness, the outright grabbiness and immorality of society (the only moral being that of 'the individual as sovereign' – liberalism in extremis) have engendered or most clearly express this symptom of it, its very essence – and no belief can be had in others which does not entail the other relinquishing some of his 'pleasure' (based upon the norm, what is desirable to them – an inductive basis) and this is called commitment, the function of which is empowering or enabling another to belief, to trust, in him who commits. Upon this logic is built the idea of social contract, violation of which (violation of commitment) being a 'wrong' and one having an obligation to uphold commitment, a prohibition to transgress it. But this had become so well-known as to have incurred the label 'antiquity' and been consigned to the underlying pulse of consciousness long ago. Now the logic of liberalism and social contract is purely functional and an alibi for the excesses of the modern: it legitimates power-over-others, keeping-them-within-power (commitment, as a bind) and the sovereignty of individualism, which is an impossible achievement today.

Suburban Simulacra

I want to relate an incident which befell me not long ago and which completely altered the course of my life so that what I once was prior to the incident has been all but effaced from memory: rended, tortured, destroyed utterly and completely.

Now I must give a short description of my background for clarification purposes, who I am where I come from, and most importantly of all, how I was raised. I came from a town on the margins of society and yet^u society unto itself – a representative sample of the hodgepodge world in which I later came to live and change in the most deep and indelible way. But this small town environment was of course nothing but the old 'small town' of proverb, though it didn't at all derive itself from proverb, quite the reverse. No, it merely represented, in a bastardized form, the world of dissolution and

compression of districts. There was a class sample present: lower, upper, and middle – but all were, with the exception of the very low class, merely a slight deviation from the norm, the aura mediocrity of socio-political reality – the norm of mediocrity, middle Canada;

And yet growing up traffic with these people was minimal and I never strayed near the thoroughfare of socializing and participation, of an engagement with the average-everydayness of the norm. Rather it was an endeavour in artistry and aesthetics within the auspices of parental finances and comfort, undying support and love. Within the bosom of this beast there arose that ineffable and ineffaceable presence called marginality, the formation of the mark of Cain. All of the sheep who had, over the course of years apart from all, severed me completely from their walk of life so that I was incapable of any inclusion within the group. Over the years there was a dawning of the knowledge of this lack, which latter infected me more and more so that it was nearly impossible for me to tolerate existence as I had come to love and welcome it in any way other than as a promise of better things, of the simulacra and of all the glory and happiness which radiated therefrom in an unending brilliance attempting to conquer the despairing darkness which had been this same lack. But like an addict I soon perceived the destruction of my valency towards this lack, its near-veneration and worship as an idol of power which would grant me all of my desires upon attainment – only to augment them to torturous extremes of intensity as if the idol were electrified. And now the denouement of the simulacra has taken precedence here, has finally become the object of utter scorn and its presence hateful, unworthy of anything but attack and yet at the same time necessitating this same in attempts to excise it, tumours tumescent growth which plagues me.

This is a story of my own encounter with the simulacrum and how I allowed it to vanquish me and to press me further and further back into my own cell and prison chamber of the mind. And yet not only that – but the simulacrum still reigns supreme. The heat of the evening is destroying my brain and capabilities to engage in whatever it may be are becoming nullified through the heat. And it is this weather that all of the simulacra flock to and invite in all of its destructive nature? That, my friend, is because their minds are dull and too exponentiated so to speak, this dullness is something, perhaps, too good to pass up.

They have features which mark them as who they are: uniform-period. Skin is a healthy hue and health is the irreducible standard that they pursue, a nebulous standard without dimension, amorphous and distorting itself in a thousand ways.

Review of the movie: 'Dodgeball'

The movie, a comedy, contains, in germ, the elements of success and failure, the accepted and rejected, idealized conceptions of Good and Bad. 'A true underdog story' they call it, so the movie bears it as a caption, and the whole notion revolves around this point: inverted morals, warped and unnatural perceptions of what it is to be a success, to be 'Good'. The character of White Goodman, epitomized masculinity, a man of bravado and esteem, and self-esteem on the face of things, beneath the surface a man of insecurity and perhaps even self-aversion, true pioneer of the human project whose goals are never realized; the Icarian being whose gods are never finite, never-ending in their positing, always realized in their finitude – one to define himself and forever supply his own standards. Such a man is Goodman and I identify with him completely. A history sooner forgotten, a failure and considered a worthless being at one point – and now: total success. My hope is manifested in the character of White Goodman, a hope for the achievement of any idealized conception of self – the superman. A soft silence follows the utterance of that hallowed name: superman...and the winds blow, the thunderheads burst above in torrents of fury – and I revel in the glory acceded to me by the inferior beings.

This may appear an exaggeration but falls within the mark and White Goodman, once fraught with limitations and with deficiencies, now enters into a sublated form and defies his previous state – supersession of an impoverished, weak, and decrepit state of affairs.

The antithesis of this character, embodied in the mediocre form of Peter LaFleur, average-everyday representative, just a 'good guy' who doesn't give anyone a 'hard time' and make them aware of their deficiencies – a bon homme. This is the man occupying the antithetical position, lowest rung on the ladder of hierarchy – a morally inferior being. And this is the being celebrated by all of those weak and inferior beings who would claim superiority through legerdemain, i.e. implicit, cunning ways. No longer is the hero celebrated, that outstanding figure of mythology, but the anti-hero,

one who defines himself relative to the former, by virtue of his having no being of his own – resentment moralist!

A question: what motivates people like White Goodman to struggle with great intensity in the achievement of excellences envisioned at the back of their minds, somewhere in the corner, in the darkest of cobwebbed places – in which a shrine to excellence has been erected and, irrevocably, construction has been undergone, blueprints formulated as a necessary means. A building that is constructed in the dead of night – the human project. What motivates such people? Is it resentment, an inner hatred of those who have always kept one down, have stolen the willful ardour of one and cast him aside in rejection – such seems a probably course, or is it the will to achievement, the strength of will concentrated in the person without an escape except through these sublimated channels, excavated a priori through the deliberate focus of a will which hardens itself upon a goal, however vaguely conceived.

If I were judge I'd execute them all? But why dream, why not make it a reality? – Thus speaks resentment. Why not, alternatively, simply go beyond the relative and affirm what one has? it is of course a question of whether or not one has it after all. And the test is affirmation. If one can go beyond the relative, unlike the anti-hero who can only in a manner of resentment crawl away and die, and cause a stench with his rotting carcass – his way to revenge himself.

The morality of resentment is two-fold: the first is the above mentioned possum technique; the second, the affirmation of the self beyond the relative in the seeking of self and therefore absolute, substantiated by definition – a man as an island. White Goodman was that island – and that's why he was hated – because he became something that made everything else relative to himself and thus subordinate, deriving its being therefrom. He was not yet free of resentment however, he had not quite entered into the sphere of forgetting – he remembered, and, like a cinder in the fireplace which issues forth fire to all of the other logs and coals, he allowed this to propel him forward. But that's always better than backwards, certainly better than becoming a subordinate being like the majority. I have nothing but contempt for the cynicism and apathetic resentment of the many – whose power is political qua en masse majoritarianism not that managerial power of the elite – like White Goodman.

The following purports to be a treaty on private charity. To many bleeding-heart romantics the concept of dispersing alms to the wayward, the downtrodden and the abused and insignificant, is a way of life – something to believe in, a valency towards humanity as embodied in concrete forms – this deflated soul sitting in a nook in a building or something along those lines.

To others the very notion is disagreeable enough to turn one's stomach – of giving without receiving, or of giving to the undeserving or giving too much to one and not enough to another – in short a disproportionate allocation of financial assistance so that one can (whether he speciously reasons or not) not understand whether the recipient is deserving or undeserving. Private charity is giving without a medium, an alms giver – through one's self, and without great publicity (the minimalizing of public notice) to another who receives without giving in turn. The former aspect is private, the latter charity.

What people disagree with is the following: to give to another without receiving. This confutes the exchange-based contractual relationships of bourgeois existence, without which justice, according to the mindset of these same, will not prevail. 'We can,' they say, 'give to our children without demanding consideration – and thus we preserve justice.' – But the child is the germ of the parent, a product of a union of two beings in which these two have placed a desire for its growth and prosperity – the child is their hope for self-aggrandizement – and thus they receive as they give. It is but an example but will suffice for clarification of the issue of altruism.

The psychology of self-interest, not to be discussed here, prevails else altruism reigns – the two are dichotomous (to employ positive categories). Private charity can exist only through this means – a giving of oneself without expecting any form of consideration as in the case of the male which sacrifices itself in mating for a generation it will not – nor will he ever – know. thus one is compelled to give – or is he not rather choosing to give? Then altruism reigns, otherwise nothing does.

This altruism is a weepy-eyed valence towards an unknown actualization – like a mother who reaches for her baby and nothing else exists before her vision.

Television: an extempore poem

Television is a very unhealthy medium
It saps the mind and makes one
Feel he's not alive

It radiates the soul so that

Nothing remains of any lofty goals

Spirit implodes within the screen

Which governs one's life and makes it seem

Like some hyper-real distorted dream

Of bizarre dimensions

And I won't neglect to mention

That it is the scourge of one's

Intellectual pretensions

Just view the television from afar –

It holds one rapt fixing him

Like glue just where he is

Just try to tear him and it apart!

An impossible task just ask

The child reared on television

Whose mind experiences visions

Of life's horrors and ecstasies

Taken to the second dimension

Flattened out upon a screen

Bearing the appearance, mere

Semblance, of reality

-And he'll tell you in as many words:

TV is necessity

It governs life

La sueno est la vie

Dream-life passed in hyper-real

Ecstasy

There is a moral here

My dear reader

And that is as follows:

When being held rapt by a false world

Don't forget that it's a mirror

Of your own hollow existence

Based as it is on the artificial

The disappearance of

A life of independence

It is master and dictates
What the mind's focus will be:
Whether TBS will be the focus
Of the day or NBC –
Whether Baywatch or Survivor
Will capture all of one's vitality
Whatever little remains after
His encounter with the screen's
Inanity

Spanning all levels of sensitivity
From the visual to the audible
-To the vibration and bombardment
Of radiating specks against
One's once-living flesh.

But the moral!
Throw away your TV
Tomorrow – or today
Whichever, so long as
It disappears from the
Horizon of your life
And this disappearance
Gives you back what
Was so long sought after:
Life

•

Daniel Macintosh lives

'A parable on the relations between men and women'

Yesterday Thomas Kinkaid had the axe. He bore it proudly in his brawny arm and swung it mightily against the sturdy oaken flesh of his enemy. Thomas had replaced the night woodsman as he was now relegated to the day shift and could enjoy the freshness of the morning's dew upon the sparse grass. It was nearing autumn and the woods began to harbour a cold humidity which waited the steam of sweat from Kinkaid's body as he made stroke after stroke against his prey.

The thwacks of the axe echoed through the still forest – none of the animals had yet awakened from their slumber though day was in its fourth hour. The instrument used by the lumberjacks were on the cusp, so to speak, of the cutting edge – clocks – and portable ones at that! The neon green glint of Thomas' watch-face illuminated, as it did with each of the other woodsmen, the dark forest at a time when both owl and bear enjoyed their repast.

The loud crashes – loud against the backdrop of forest solitude – gave testament to the presence of a living soul – Thomas Kinkaid, and a low murmur was heard through the forest night – 'Thomas has come' it said.

The work was hardly an enviable type – for anyone who could as deftly wield a heavy axe as Thomas and his fellows would have been there; they were a special breed of men in the ardent quest for the heavy ^{axe} upon earth, after all that is earthly and which lives – to them – only to fall once more to the ground.

The labours of other men equalled – in a paradoxically different vein – the intensity of that of Thomas Kinkaid's. They were all driven and he was to exemplify the lot of men to the antithesis which stood about in the form of nature and beast – insatiable and unrelenting. Men, labouring under this ethic, could not fall without disgracing themselves as men – becoming pale, hermaphroditic reflections of this standard.

The sun's pale expanse blanketed the dark earth and woke up all that had undergone the provisional death of sleep. Kinkaid paused – noting that he had outstripped his time constraint by several minutes – to watch the unfurling of Phoebus and its refugent rays. But soon his clock beeped, thereby signifying the necessity of his

continued labours. He didn't pause at all but swung his axe into the next tree and hacked away with merriment, under the auspices of the sun.

Thomas soon left the scene to rest, after having wearied himself. It was then noon and his replacement Daniel Macintosh arrived greeting him with a laugh which exuded life and an embrace of all that he felt and saw in this tranquil cycle of sleeping and working. His axe had travelled the path from shoulder to be embedded in the tree many times before his work was interrupted by the presence of a strong newcomer who had mysteriously made its way into the valley which resounded with the thwacks of the axe. Daniel paid no attention, such was his unflagging devotion to his task, to the blonde-haired creature who passed him by with her scent of chamomile and rosehips. Pausing to wipe the sweat from his brow he spied out the girl. She was weeping on a freshly cut log and looking furtively up at Daniel. Puzzled, he knit his brows and passed his hand over his bearded jaw. He went up to her and inquired after her well-being – was she alright, did she suffer any harm. Upon discovering that she was lost in his forest and had strayed here after running away from her parents who cruelly abused her and who had killed her elder sibling, Daniel was quite overcome and forgot his obligation to the trees, forest, and his brotherhood of fellow woodsmen. He comforted her and, afraid that his fellows might find out, carried her away to a ramshackle cottage nearby. He fed her the goat's cheese that was to be his lunch and she ceased crying. He left her there with the promise that he would come again when he could. By this time, however, his shift had ended and he did a poor output in relation to his predecessor, Thomas.

His replacement looked at him with astonishment but passed it by after receiving the excuse that an ailment had been the black cloud suffered under by Daniel. That night the latter snuck out of his bunk and disturbed his rest. He found the girl crying again and gave her some of the sausage he had been induced by his concern for her, to smuggle away from the woodsman's larder. She ate of it and was thankful. Then a conversation ensued and the yearning between the couple became unbearable – the proximity between them instigating the frenzy of bodies which ensued.

The night passed into morning and Daniel awoke to the incessant beeping of his watch – his shift had come and was already half elapsed. With genuflexions he made his way out of the cave and to his regular spot. But lo' – he heard the shock of the axe as it

bore into the tree. He had violated the code of the woodcutters, he had forsaken his duty and thereby his honour.

He ran to the spot where his duty used to govern him, pleaded with his replacement who had to take on a double shift for his benefit – but to no avail. He was cast out of the group and made his way back to the shack to weep on the shoulder of his misfortune's cause – he had lost everything that had meant so much to him and had made the ultimate sacrifice for she who he hardly knew and with whom nothing but brute relations had been cultivated.

They must leave immediately...under-cover of darkness. Upon taking the wood to market one day, after the period of cutting, Thomas Kinkaid overcame the body of Daniel Macintosh under a tree, as if it were seeking shelter from the sun. It spoke to the former's surprise and told him of how his maiden had run off with a well-off merchant and how he had lain down to die here by the road. Thomas would hear nothing of it and took him home to be recuperated. Soon he was healthy again, and, armed with mighty axe, he quickly took to the forests and swung it, embedding it with a 'thock' in the meat of the tree for the first time since he had met his scourge: woman. 'Thock!' It resounded once more, and once more, Lazarus-like, Daniel Macintosh lived.

Stucco-ceilinged reality; carpet's sky-blue majesty – to the motor turned hyper-speed of a fan which whirs/and precipitates acidic reign of confusion through its endless cycle of rotation. The heart matches the fan – ever-increasing until it explodes.

The current situation: race and economy

Tell me again that race does not exist: and I'll argue with you to confirm my thesis: it does. Again affirm the same, albeit in different words – and once more your words will meet with the onslaught of oppositional thought.

Try to dissolve identity of this racial kind, an identity based upon race – and I'll argue with you that the 'myth of race' is itself a myth. Try to whitewash my identity and I will wash off once again your besmirching slander and mud-slinging. The driving forces of this 'myth' myth: are clearly economic for perhaps this alone – let's make everyone an economic unit, homo economicus stands tall on the horizon of capitalism, and burning on its forehead, is it not the insignia, the stigma, of David, the star of Jerusalem? But let us not be hasty and see if such a secondary claim can fall nicely into the argument for the first, surely: man as homo economicus. All identity, insofar as it entail difference, demarcating the one being from the other, is the progenitor of strife. – But for whom? Surely difference merely cases interests on both sides of the fence between distinct groups each investigating the other with the collaboration of their 'Other form'? And yet antipathy nevertheless exists? – Surely. Today thought is simulacral – conjured up by the powers of government-guided ideology and ideologues, as well as its disseminative form – advertising – it is pandered psychologically (and perhaps physiologically as well – McDonald's having the power to instigate hunger in its patrons through polluting the air with grease, etc.). Psycho-physiological pandering of thought, of what ought to be thought of, is the rule of the day. And if people are thought different (racially) then they become recognized politico-economically, as different – and the conception of race is formed this may be false, fabricated, etc. but it is created. Not it is not created – but destroyed, and as a consequence of this it ceases to exist in the thoughts of those dependents (the masses of which all of us are) of advertising and government, advertising's puppeteer (whether government here be construed as 'corporate' or 'collectivist', democratic; I am rather indifferent to the fact – the point is: power is a controlling force and those who can be subordinated to it who

will swell its belly with greedy pleasure will be subordinated to it). Dependency creates a need, that is its definition – to be dependent upon X is to need X. And now that the above powers have dissolved all differences, claiming that 'all differences are welcome' knowing as they do that all such differences will homogenize of necessity in the melting pot of liberalism, they have created the formal and abstract identity that is 'one size fits all' and ready-to-wear – a disposable identity, but only qua concrete identity, qua this individual here – not in terms of precedent or genus; the individual, according to economy, can die – so long as the system and that which holds the system together – the 'individual' – is preserved. Thus all unequal, different beings are destroyed, compressed into the iron-mold of liberal identity.

And not to the so-called 'Jewish question' of whether they are pulling the strings of this system or no. Do they have any identity outside of a formal, religiously-
* conditioned personhood of Judaic religiosity? Granted they endeavour to create a history through the architecture of their media organs – but, surely their history has only been a history by proxy, lived parasitically upon the nobler beasts: the capon, the bear, the griffin, lion, bull, and all of those other European beasts who stalk with noble strength throughout their own territory. And yet what a might¹itch is caused by such a presence! So much so that it influences, does the itching of these fleas, the wherewithal of the above animals: what they eat and how much, and the means to its procurement – not to mention the greater more inspiring livelihood developed from out of these nations and their mutual exchange of ideas, customs, and language.

But the Jew, having been historically barred from the elite sanctuary of his European Other, has had only economic exchange as the basis of his dealings with these same, and as-it-were the payment for his green card (but literally – not simply in a facetious sense, is this meant). And thus, masterful economist up in neocolonygian abstract thought²as he was, he managed to affect the change from parochial individual to abstract one, from culture-enlightened European (the culture of myth, legend, and language – not to mention the arts specific to his country – the voice, thought and life-pulse of the nation and its people); from this wealthy thought figure to that of the utterly impoverished one of economically based individuality, person qua property holder, person qua producer/consumer.

Would it not be just to implicate the Jew as the native of nowhere and everywhere, and in his wake the plague of economy follows – a thriving economy (however cutthroat) a dying people? Is that not the picture of cultural, racial identity, that faces us today? What remedy is there? The ousting of Jew propaganda, smashing the picture of Herschel Moneybags, desiccating the idol of Mammon and putting in place the unknown god of what might be – with a backward (and yet how forward and progressive) glance at origins and antecedents – history raked over and again by the cautious and conscientious gardener of Eden, of the truth without biblical, but with historical ties? The truth is not made in a jello mold but through the intricately wrought mold of iron necessity, wrought in the hearts of those who have awakened to history as it was lived and by whom and how, known intuitively by its living members and their descendants. History is alive now and in need of resuscitation – the truth of material actuality, will be born through this curative means: research. Thus reward is conditioned by the above three factors and a mere trophy on the wall is meaningless with regards to virtue or humanity when it is awarded by the cold hand of a biotechnology company's executive per example.

Domesticity

This phenomenon was the governing principle of the lives of women in the last generation; I seek in the following, though tapping a memory serving as a cache for limited experience, to answer the question of whether domesticity is still a force to be reckoned with where women are concerned. In doing so I hope to arrive at an understanding of parts of the whole that is woman, elements of the essence, etc.

What brought these considerations borne of hazimindedness about was (and unfortunately is now that I hear more of the same) the petty domesticity of the useless matron of this dilapidated domos, banging away with the pots and pans in the kitchen (having no longer any connection with kinder or kirchen – the inevitable recourse if the answer to the above question is affirmative, that 'yes' bourgeois and lower class domesticity is the creed of those women products of these same classes).

I have experience of the endless care-taking of women – forever pluming and grooming their hides and manes with allegedly beneficial consumer products; and conversely pluming and grooming with an arrogant relegation of these same, so that they might

cultivate the appearance of being apart and 'different' (though oh so similar qua 'difference').

I have no intention of finishing the above – a failed project yielding no probable consequences (probably, that is). So...what? Exhaustion, thief of thought, has stolen all subject matter from the matter which is gray, and graying increasing through its impoverishment, it dies away into blackened, burnt-out sepulchritude (if that's a word).

Leaves blossoming on a roof / primacy of the natural / nature refuses to die away into nothingness / choked by the weed of artifice.

The foregoing (in terms of time experienced through the medium of myself, experienced subjectively) was a work which, though short and for that reason failing to amplify the scope of the subject material, was nevertheless poignant treatment of 1) the Jewish character, 2) the presence of Judaism as an influence in the world of music, and finally 3) the degeneration, from the pinnacle of Beethoven (so the author alleges) of the world of music today.

As to the first point, Jews clearly have a character described in part by the author – with brevity, yet with exactitude. their culture derives from an alien geographical location, an alien religion, and an alien genetic makeup; for that's the reason it is insensitive to the history of that people which they have parasitically infiltrated and brought over to the side of shallow economizing and baser motives of interest – so very typical of the Jewish avarice which has beguiled the naïve character of statesmen in many European nations through world history.

That their art, and their corruptive influence upon the art of others is manifestly weak in the former case and strong in the latter is evidenced by, in contemporary times (in other words twenty-first century reality), the baseness of jazz music, the foolishly and premise-less, purposeless excitability in music at this time and in this past century that has sprung from out of the Semites has been Philip Glass – empty redundancy and formalistic hypnoticism underwritten by a message of contemporary ideology: the effeminate whitewash of all identity.

Music is certainly a subject matter whose history can readily be traced – for its form is necessarily still living and, considered in its purity, detached from pragmatic considerations of an economic nature, it is representable and experienceable even and

anew. Thus it can be judged all the more easily as well, even though the judge renders verdicts from out of his own time. And what have the Jews really produced for profound music besides the endless cacophony of levitous rhythms and effeminate jocularity (Porgy and Bess, musicals, etc.). If watered-down production which has its goal profiteering, is art in the sense the author meant then there is no question that the Jews are nothing but showmen, managers of the sensitive souls that artists are, controlling all of these bleary-eyed puppets with the strings of economy.

Concerning the apathetic:

That they are 1) a drain upon the energies of others; 2) a nuisance; and 3) as a reason for 3) more pricks than kicks, more of an opprobrium than a rewarding experience. All of these factors yield the final product which takes the form of a judgment: that the apathetic are unworthy of keeping even at arm's length; that they should be completely annihilated and passed over, at least in the considerations of others who possess value and who have to muster all resources and energies for the sake of creation.

Apathy drains the energies through its making one siphon energies off into the sewerlands of oblivion – drain it all down into a place from which no escape is possible. I, instead, desire to swell and exercise my energies to fever pitch and this requires no adverse influence upon any sort of will, no clutching criticism or destroying judgment nor any lack of concern for that which most deserves it – namely: life and all of its contents.

These Jewish plebeians: I'm living with will never cease with the petty. Material objects circulate around them all and they are forever in pursuance of the acquisition of more; forever in pursuit of the acquisition, conservation, and lending out (with high moral interest rates of course) of these same basic, grubby things.

Thus they have the character of Jews – sleazeball avaricious ignoble procurers (pimps who lend out the crudest and most noble of potential yield – to express it in terms they can identify with).

Summer heat confusion and the endless clutter in this place has made for a very kindred disposition. As what I am now however (on a positive note) I will soon cease to exist. – Consider it a rebirth, a sublation of my being through a nominal transformation – testifying to, and conditioning, circumstances. Examples: the alienation of my family (the negation of the negation, the ‘positive negative’ aspect of the process), the emancipation one with this act – no longer attached to the family and their heritage of ignominious memory, a memory thankfully fading with the passage of time. – And soon a life of my own away from those chains that clutch at me, ‘for my own good’; I need no master...and yet I cling still and feel the oppressive state that I’m in. ‘Soon, soon,’ these are the thoughts with regards to these plebs that are forever intervening in my life. The hatred I feel with regards to their person is absolute. I perceive all of those covert machinations which are conducted behind the veil of their altruism – personal interest as the sole motivation, and of the coarsest kind.

Whenever I encounter these ‘negative examples’ (those figures I do not in the least desire to be and whom I model myself NOT upon but upon their converse), I instantly think of what they are doing (first, and then secondly) what motivates them and from these premises derive the conclusion that their actions and correlative motivations, and as opposed to myself as possible. If I don’t so much go so far as ^{to} deliberate_{ly} construct a character based upon what they are not, then I most definitely evaluate my character (when they – unfortunately – enter my forebrain) upon this basis, assuming them to be the baser, the worse, the negative of all my actions, thoughts, and values.

As said at a previous juncture: I hereby emancipate myself from these beings – forever.

Forever in mind there is distance – an oceanic view, the docks, rising mountain ranges in the distance and in between the perspective grounded in the wharf as origin looking out towards the mountains – the city and all of its mariner-esque underpinnings, from wooden signs overhanging bars and restaurants to the gulls flying up in the air circling the territory they demarcate as ‘coastal’, as the Maritimes (that is to say the ocean-sea part, the coast alongside of which boats are docked, gulls fly, and the well-to-do garbed in sailor suits and loafers ascend the gangplank of their hyper-expensive yacht, named in homage of their fellow Ivy League mate).

The sky overhead, the blue of placid adventurous freedom – the potentiality one can make anything out of – arrive at alien lands, quest over the many seas towards oblivion – and all of this standing forth tall and proud in my imagination. This is the aggrandized future, the exaggerated dreamscape of that which is not yet, not yet present, not yet potentially actual – mere possibility carved out of the rude contents of past experiences juxtaposed, compressed into an irreducible substance out of which fancy hacks away the superfluous, or speciously that which appeals to it the least – such as the mayflies and sea-slime algae, the seagull feces and their screams – the endless line of Asiatic tourists waving peace signs and wearing Mickey Mouse shirts with cheesy artificial smiles. One must of course be selective of that which he acts upon – from conception to its actualization he must be prudent to acknowledge on accord weight of probability (of its actualization) to that which experience vouchsafes will occur – and then act – to pursue the maritime adventure, the swarthy sea and all of its adventurous pomp – or to remain where he is and stagnate – or to flee to some other clime more noticeable and valuable.

I am always either here – or there. the here is circumscribed by praxis and by the immanent gaze of the ocular orbs which message – instantaneously – the receiver – brain – with the contents of experience; so also all my other friends – scent, hearing, touch, ESP, divination of future and of past, quilting point of temporal ecstasies. And the receiver is the mysterious transcendental ‘brain’? But surely the receiver is that slightly outside of the cerebrum – maybe in the hollow shell that is my skull – my fingertips, and their nerve endings and long, rope-like nerves woven by the author of my being (presupposing that I have one, mother, father –god). Regardless of this fact I am here and now – and yet neither nor – the past and future encroach upon this present, conditioning its being, rendering it vital, giving it eyes with which to see that which is not, and the name of these eyes is: imagination! Thus I think always of a distance from this present moment – utopian seas and fluid emotional states of utter and complete boundlessness, otherwise known as freedom. From this most bounded and narrow space – barely 8 by 5’ in dimension – I sit here in the boiling heat and think of winter – of places I have and have never been to and what would transpire ‘if’, that is to say *e.g.* hypothesis, I were to do A,B,C and towards the terminus of the infinite series “N” – what would happen ‘man’? I don’t know, lose yourself in your mind and you’ll discover the potentiality to be so much from this your current state and

then, rather than the simple formula of science: 'a yes or no, a straight line, a goal' it will be: let us construct an artistic scene in the mind ^{to} perceive the general thrust of that which we (me/myself/I) confront and which I must follow; when it is built it is built and the process of building is never complete yet some edifices stand the test of time and war – civil strife within the self or between self and world (and his own world) a war the victor of which suffers his own decapitation by the guillotine of *felo dese* – for he has sundered himself qua self from the sphere of existence called world.

Thoughts on Man

It is said (by women of course) that men are so 'megalomaniac' (if that's the appropriate phrase they use – not appropriate to the subject perhaps but to their perceptions of same). What is the meaning of this? A mania for the mega perhaps? And the meaning of still this? An obsession, an overemphasis, a phallic psychosis with that protuberant tubular object which signifies (in hoc signo) ~~et~~ vinces, victory, trump, power – over others, self, and world? I supposed this is what 'they' (women) mean when they levy this charge against their natural enemy: men.

But surely it is nothing but the raging of a will of tremendous Majestatis – a quasi-divine will that one is not but to which one pays homage in the form of blood sacrifices and ruthless, merciless self-flagellation. No doubt these metaphors will be construed (by women again) as 'typically male' – but this is simple-minded. Why? – Because it is obvious. Clearly such a will begetting such devotion in its carrier (man) to it (the goal, praxis, etc.) is necessarily and unavoidably 'hegemonic', etc. and places itself first. This is not egotist^{ic} or egoism and the separated man and his will is conceptually useful in the clarification of who this 'man' is, who 'man' is generally. To him everything is action, praxis – not because it redounds to the self in a reflex motion but because it is an extrapolation, in utter annihilation of self, of the will employing itself via the corpore of man in endless pursuit of the goal and its particularity and particularization.

Man is neither laudatory nor blameworthy nor vilifiable in possessing such a will for the simple reason that – the will possesses him, for is it not the case that the condition of man is (when he is man at all and not machine controlled by the will, when he has a brief moment of reflection): 'to be insatiable and yet yearn for satiety'? Thus he is

more a victim than anything, although he is not possessed with any conception of self – and thus is nothing but a machine, hence no victim.

Thoughts on Woman

Woman is a display object, reified sexuality. Makeup and finery are her garb deguerre and it is man she goes to war with. Her emotionality is the perfect wildcard and unintelligible schema that paradoxically both attracts man and keeps him at a distance. In her mind always there exists the conception of herself – egoism is the fundament of all her motivations and everything redounds to herself (in her youth most prominently). This is because she must cultivate her chains as a lure for the semen-machine that man is, the tool and pleasure device that satiates her lustful pursuits and precipitates her greatest goal: the child. She is a mirror forever viewing herself reflexively – everything may jeopardize her value for every little thing must be in place – otherwise she might not attain the status that is hers in potential – the best man for her and the ascendancy over all others of her sex. Everything is a plot, thus, and everything active on her part is: plotting, cunning, stratagem, design aforethought when, that is, pleasure and the moment do not overcome her capricious nature.

She is made to serve: men and children – for service is the tie that binds them to her ever tighter and in proportion to the services rendered she strengthens her grip the more on the phallus of man and the results of their union – the children. Obedience is thus a form of belonging, a guarantee of her self-pleasure; when she does a dutiful job and belongs to ‘the community’ she then establishes the possibility of the presence of menfolk in her life and the supportive means of child begetting: social assistance (moral and financial), others to support her in her endeavour, etc. The community is now the nouveau god and absolute – and those who serve and pledge allegiance thereto are like servants awaiting a tip – the more service the more yield and all of this is cashed out in moral banknotes. The redeeming grace of woman lies in her emotional conditions, which is to say – her all (for she is in essence an emotional being): she that is so bound to the moment, to emotional effect though being physiologically sensitive, is thus happy, glad, angry, etc. through merely immanent causes (although the well of her memory is shallow it is very broad and holds all of the petty circumstances that add up in the balance ‘against’ or ‘for’ her continued association with someone or her

judgement of them: 'affirmo' or 'nego'). Thus, though her fount of motivation be the ego, she is nevertheless susceptible of great change, great devotion and great selflessness through immanent situations depending on their effect. As the creature of day and affirmer of life that she is, she is in a perfect state of nature when she is not the coldly reasoning being of strategy (although gyrations and mixtures always apply).

Seeking, in his sacrificial devotion, to please her, quickly was guillotined in public forum, for the weak had, apropos of liberal ideology, triumphed over the strong – through the backdoor of strength's weakness, man's weakness for the mew of the innocent, of woman, and his devoted adherence to her heartbeat. – But he met with a roar! – And this shocked him – he was not to war with a friend; but the friend had betrayed him and was now a railer, a hate-filled being beat upon his destruction. The naïve tool that he had always been with respect to the woman, was too shocked to fight back, and if he weren't would be too noble to protest at the calumny of this strange circe creature. Thus man has become victimized. The ideology of the downtrodden ('recognized minority' religion) has been the formal guarantee of the dissolution of his own freedom – for now he is ever-hampered in pursuit of goals he would, through genuine merit, otherwise achieve, by those bureaucratic constraints preventive of his exercise of his innate strength. Thus he must languish, thus he must sit back and wait for a sterile process to permit him to go to stud. This is the way of the world: people refuse to assume the yolk of responsibility – they are forever justifying themselves by policies governing (or interpreted by them as governing) their capacities – they are weak-willed and refuse to go to war; they are effeminate, hiding behind the bureau while the warrior figures of men (now fading) rattle the cages endlessly and spend their strength in impotence. This is the celebratory song of democracy: let the weak get their revenge upon the strong – and the whole bureaucratic apparatus as guarantee of the most egregiously unjust vendetta that has ever manifested itself on this earth before – a complete inversion of natural law, with the weak's triumphal march over the strong who were, in the name of a deific principle, forced to lay down arms and accept the biting slave collars the leering eyes of self-righteous being placed around their necks – and woman, with her mongrel slave asiaticus in the forefront.

Political questions: One is never at peace when entering the mad strain of political questions – for they are as with human life, virtually unending. I take my leave of them, and, having no abstract conceptions any longer by which to abide, I find myself floundering and the life of intellectual pursuits I have for so long cultivated fades away and with it life of any meritorious form.

The richness of life surges forth, quietly at first in humble obeisance, gradual boldness lifts its head and the fruitful splay of life enters into the actual.

Without the so-called 'lyrical' character of philosophy there is no depth to the discipline – for depth is lyricism, by which is meant an intense (and to varying degrees) emotional effect upon a being by another being, a being susceptible of affection. It all, does philosophy, become 'just a lot of scholarship' when it has no great application to one's affairs, when it espouses objectivity in the manner of the schools. This is wrong however; philosophy loses its meaning (lyricism, effect) in being collectivized, when the individual is passed by in the name of the mass, the collective, and when philosophy is 'for it'. – But surely this is not true either, for does not one attain himself (oft-times) in the crowd, in its ecstasy and the ecstasy of the text which has brought them both together whether realiter or otherwise? One is a 'believer', a 'Christian', and thus is at one with his fellow Christians.

Nevertheless academic philosophy is largely inapplicable to the life of the individual and the concrete mass – for it (in this day and age as under the thumb of liberal ideology) is so barren and superficial as to be completely empty, in its positive aspect and in its negative merely a critical refutation – naught else. Thus it just 'gets ya down man' – and 'naught else'.

Woman will always be a slave to man (this has been discussed on a previous occasion, of yesterday's treatises on 'Man' and 'Woman' for an elucidation of this view). Is this a verifiable statement, is it susceptible of refutation, can it, moreover, be embedded in stone as a law, on the table sexuality in the codex legis of humanity as a whole (atemporally, ad aeternum)?

With the codex legis of contemporaneity, the code of rights acceded such infallible and unchanging virtue in this present day and age, one would think that all suspicions as to its aleatory nature were null and without foundation. But – being as abstract as it is, and thus being susceptible of constant interpretation and interpretive change it is the most necolophrygian of codes – thus we may all live in a perfect world up in the Newtonian space of formal abstraction that is the very aether of law, but simultaneously, in casting a glance down upon the disease-filled mundane sphere called earth, we are beset by the idealism of this same document, specifically the charter of rights and freedoms. One must, so it is expected of him, breathe a fresh breath of Olympian air when he hears the name of this venerable document pronounced; quite unexpected it is, when he breathes nothing but the noxious fumes of a dusty old archive in which the past remains of the ghosts which haunt the present and allegedly keep a record of what was – so that what is will not run awry of justice. – Caveat! What was is not and what is, namely the forgotten memory of those ghosts (legal briefs, cases in the common law, historical anecdote, etc.) will always be remembered anew by the diseased minds of the judges and legislators who clothe them in the garb of contemporary fashion – for they are polluted, are these cerebra, with the miasma of liberal humanism and its democratic manifestation qua state.

This being the case women will not always (and are no longer – for the natural law never existed apropos of hermeneutical alterations) be slaves but will rather be acceded greater political rights than their masculine forbearers – for it was, hermeneutically speaking, through men and their adherence to liberal theory, via man's emulative (for this particular manifestation) adherence to the theory and involution therein that crippled him from being the master of all – sex and race, etc. Thus woman has been freed from her bonds – yet, she who has been freed is now a slave to power, and this invariably discloses itself in political tie and shoulder-padded jacket. Granted, they (women) are quite capable of the tasks they are assigned and conscientiously go about them in their typically pedantic manner (all the better for the system) but they are lacking in that inherent aggression which was the province of man until the turning of history in its confrontation with woman, issuing her a divine challenge: 'canst thou, woman, do the task thineself? – If so, thou wouldst be free – though it be at the cost of your own happiness as woman, as servant, devoted helper, of man.' And she answered this disembodied voice: 'I am woman; hear me roar!' – And

with that the wily Amazon tore off her domestic garb and picked up the pen and sword saying as she did so: 'behold – the new woman!' But in her heart she doubled this newness, doubled its genuineness and cast aspersions upon it; and with her innate humility with respect to tasks and their completion, looked upon the braggart image projected upon her horizon – herself in her new aspect – as a sacrilege upon the utopian state she had previously been so comfortably involved in.

Now to war! She girded armour upon her – knowledge/power, the impenetrable armour of reason and its formalizing conceptions (true, false, means, end – ideals, logical binds, shackles, etc.). Then she went and, with rapine and incendiary vice – all in the name of a cause (herself, her power – in the name of the mother, the transcendental 'woman') fought a war wholly unjust – ^{against} man who was still attached to her.

The Return: a review

Father, absent for over a decade, returns unexpectedly one day to his two sons, pre-teen Ivan and his elder brother Andrei. The former is suspicious of his father, not so much as to dubify his role as to doubt his claims to it. Is the father really a father, does he merit the designation; Ivan wrestles with these issues in questioning the origin and motivations of their father's arrival out of nothing as a sui generis being, an apparition, being from an alien world descending upon the earth with unknown purposes and an unknown past. It is questions such as these that structure Ivan's doubt as to the authenticity of his alleged father.

A photograph the boys have hidden away is the initial guarantee of their pater's identity – they are excited about it, - finally, a father has swept into their lives as a raging storm or a revitalizing breeze; which of the two forms he assumes realiter and in the boys' minds attains to being throughout the course of the movie, though each gives way in a vacillating fashion to the other, thus mystifying what is authentic and what merely a semblance about their father, though the stronger winds blow on the outside, within blows the gentle breeze of fatherly instruction and a will to impetus the outstretching of the wings of his progeny and to see them fly.

However, 'business' calls, a mysterious good that drives their father onward with themselves, the two brothers, caught up in the maelstrom of a raging current directed towards unknown destinations. This is what dubifies the father in Ivan's eyes, the eyes of the son who most resembles his author; what is the real concern of the father; is he doing all of these paternalistic tasks out of courtesy for their mother, about which he even gives voice to on their trip and which clouds the relationship of the respective parties as they drive along in their father's vehicle, for it may have been at the behest of the mother that father has become father – to Andrei this appears an impossibility and he is simply happy to be buffeted by the winds; to receive their punitive blows, just so long as he can soar upwards and attain the sought after form of the fatherly image. Ivan, however, struggler and self-willed person, obstinately refusing to do the bidding of an authority who has so recently, and apropos of unknown causes, assumed the familial kingship, is unwilling to pay homage and obeisance to a tyrant, whether he be there by fight or no. It is, after all, the mode of his being there that matters, and the darkling thunderheads behind which his father looms overshadow the being anticipated, the authentic father and what such a being brings with it: a capacity of concern, of benevolent paternalism, of love and devotion and will to instruction.

It is this last which is saving grace of the father – yet, his brutal technique of instruction overrides its efficacy and the form lays content to rest, for the naiveté of the sons prevents them from understanding the true meaning of their father's acts. After all, the question again resurfaces in the mind of Ivan (for he alone, though on agnostic stance, defends himself against blind allegiance to a master figure): is the meaning of these teachings to strengthen and temper the weak forms of his sons whose weakness derives itself from the feminine influence of their mother – or is it to serve his own aims and facilitate his mysterious journey? Only at the last, when their unknown father threatens the most heinous brutality in a moment of severe instruction does he become a father figure; not through this act by that concomitant to it – the attempt to save his son Ivan's life and the eventual sacrifice of his own. Only then is it recognized by the sons that he harboured beneficent intentions as a father and that it was merely the harshness of his stormy nature that obscured his true being behind clouds of unjust severity. This reveals itself in Ivan's running into the

water to salvage the living presentation, but dead body, of his father as it sinks into a seaman's grave in the dark waters of Northern Russia.

Of Men and Children

There are men who are children and children who are men. Those who are so childish their lives over (who have, perhaps, been placed into such a position by circumstance, through having a figure overarch them that suppresses their childlike struggle towards manhood – out of the egg and out of the nest, and into the world). Such people are forever chained to their youth and even to their childlike, etc. – youth, that which came before, still remaining fast to the teat, bound to their forbearers if only in conception, their forbearers perhaps being a distant memory, and a tranquil port to moor their weak craft.

Such people invariably cultivate dependencies upon others and become their slaves.

Children who are men are masters prima facie – those who have had no discipline and are allowed to range freely over their inferior superiors (superiors who are too inept to constitute themselves as what they are – and thus become what they are not; for the relationship defines the parties therein and, when the inferior anticipates his inferior character, the superior is potentially superior – but only potentially – he may yet suffer a fall from grace upon his display of inferiority; upon such a display he will be struck down from mastery and bear the yolk of slavery to his now superior, that same who once was shackled just as he is now). Children of a masterly sort invariably achieve worlds or suffer destruction through either ranking in ignominy or through the civil strife which bests their unemployable faculties. Counsel for the future from out of the present (an intimation of what might eventuate potentialities): the best way to raise a child is to put it through privation – to demonstrate and then clarify; to explain as what is being explained still lingers in the child's mind as a memory, a memory which comes alive though with heightened clarity. Thus the clarion bells of knowledge ring forth and the oppressive silence of deathly ignorance is banished from the kingdom of rubicund wisdom.

Put the child's hand, like an iron, into the fire – you need not then concern yourself with it, fretting over it for years across the then suspect development of your offspring

– for you have instilled a lesson within it that it will never forget. Who is it who can be strong enough to thrust the hand of the innocent into the raging fires of brutal experience – who wields the rod that beats the ghost of corruption from the body of the meek? Though it may not take physical education of this sort (for it is not entirely meant in a literal way) to such great lengths, education of children best assumes the form of ‘assimilable instruction’.

The hands, not strong having been wrought in such a white-hot flame, can grasp the enemy’s neck and squeeze out its vital spirits or can lift up, from the quagmire of ignorance and ill-fate the impoverished spirits of those who never received an education of this sort. Truly one creates so that his creation may create in turn.

Language and Meaning

Language is the medium of meaning – but only abstract, formal meaning. It is a medium of penumbral proportions, one of grey-area circumference. It sculpts and creates meaning – thus its power. For this reason it is lauded as a transcendental medium; but here is where confusion begins: it is merely the physiological effect of language use, when it has attained abstract, formal heights and accelerated our thoughts that is the transcendental property (really one wholly immanent) claimed to inhere within it.

Meaning⁴ is the fluxual locus which surrounds a concretized – through energy concentration – individual; the impingement upon his body and his body’s (to speak conventional philosophical parlance) movement about rival and complementary entities. It is a fluxual locus in short. Thus all language is merely the nourishment assimilated by the individual and worked upon through articulatory and discursive acts, which is its translation into energy and thus being the act’s exhaustion of itself.

Neither ‘mind’ nor ‘body’ exist outside of ideology – they are fabrications with many arriere pensee(s), purposes hidden behind the most immediate of appearances. They are formed linguistically, in the formal and informal sense of movement’s conveyance, presentation, or display to other individuals. Thereby formal systems are created and language itself comes to take shape in accordance with its own image, its mirror

reflection in the substantial flux of reality. The world is actually ineffable – or entirely effable (articulable), so that everything is language or nothing is. In any case what does it matter, for all language then becomes arbitrary and becomes sacralised only relative to distinct groups who actually believe in their metaphysical distinctness. This is the true globalization and answer to the question of race, etc.: that there are no substantial distinctions, only distinctions regarding formation of substance (also an answer as to how quality arises from quantity, difference from identity), according to geography and climactic conditions. Meaning is not exclusively human as humans and not of degrees and so are not themselves exclusively human; to call them this is merely an attempt at being meaningful, an act of throwing darts at a target obscured by midnight blackness. All things – if we concede meaning conveyed only through language and dichotomize the latter for ‘funzies’ into formal and informal to actually mark the qualitative difference between the two (perhaps even the quantitative) are language and thus all things are meaningful as agents and patients, subjects and objects, references, referents, acts and reactions. Thus through the total proliferation of meaning to the nth degree, a consequent loss of meaning is achieved; it is the same with the so-called problem of the limited and the unlimited: to gaze infinity in the face will afford you with nothing but sore eyes – why? – Because you can’t limit it and this is the nature of language in its formal sense, and more than language the nature of identitarian thought, thought which eventually comes to rest, corrupts and dies.

But this itself poses a problem – does it not? No. The problem of formal meaning in opposition to informal does not exist – it is all one, a Heraclitean flux of language wherein there are no stops and starts, no precedents and consequents, no causes and no effects; meaning is distortable – which is why it so easily becomes distorted.

Socially it is agreement, personally and monadologically it is agreeability, which is why man is so dissimulative and specious. There are no problems on earth for they are meaningful, but they are meanings which have passed beyond immanence – and this is called ‘transcendence’. – Another falsehood, an impossibility, for these meanings have become attached to other situations and are structurally defined therein.

The world is a Heraclitean flux and is absolutely meaningful. The absurd doesn’t exist as it is bound within the logic of its own meaning, i.e. absurdity, a deep well from which none can escape, not even those most clever and juggling meaning.

carrier of the seed, was a martyr for the absolute's manifestation, apotheosis on earth.

The man was not the creator, the creator was 'man' and the former the catalyst,

unknown and sublime absolute, 'man'.

appearing as the distant echoes and rumbles of that greater than the appearance, the manifested in the personal 'man' is forever a work in progress; it is revelation, miracle,

'man', has come down upon the earth to engage in good works. This standard as

greatest standard, the most desirable goal, is the same being and no derivative – He,

concrete body. But this son, this messiah of the absolute, this testament to the

'Man' is the absolute, and his embodiment, as son, must achieve worlds through his

and – knowing self.

change it all with a divine gesture, imperceptible but emanating from his all-seeing

is that he has the power to change the whole configuration of relations. He may

mark the limits of relations between people; but what differentiates 'man' from the rest

by no means is he above anyone – situations supply those relative standards which

gives; he is the absolute authority figure – and yet by no means does he lack affability,

must serve. – Or others serve you in the making. 'Man' is the administrator, the law-

intelligible form – for yourself, crude material of blindness, for use, for others you

mandate upon the crude matter which states: though shall be forged into discernable,

not for others' they simply are in accordance with a standard that imposes the

the good works which are my mission, miracles sweating out my pores – but they are

radiance. I smile upon the earth of beings and through 'man', the universal, achieve

daybreak and the clouds have now separated – in an instant by the thundering of my

through himself creative – yet formless and open to the light of day. This is my

contained, yet borderless, propounding a self yet selfless; completely within and

the ecstatic being who is yet so completely himself that he will never be lost – self-

stands over the gravesite of all men – is 'man' the overarching

the birth of perfection. Now the remains have been cleared away and the figure which

been borne of myself as myself, and through which he, as concrete being, had died in

any group of men, any particular demographic; no, I serve the universal which has

circumstance and slavish devotion to self or other. I serve no man, in the singular, nor

benevolently for my peregrination to a greater height away from the din of petty

transmigration of souls – place me in the universal which waits receptively and

I am not a lord and master over myself – insofar as 'I am, 'I am 'man' – I here begin a

This apotheosized form has buried the dead and now ashes only scatter to the wind, forgotten history never to be recovered, the gravesite a marker written in a language never to be known again, indecipherable, unintelligible mysterious graphai. The absolute, 'man', pays no homage to the faded sign for it doesn't any longer exist. It too has been particularized into a dust and has swept the earth with its grains. Lost, it will never be regained; dead, it will never arise again to the living world. Man is dead. This is no lamentable fact for the life of such a one was strife and degradation, a suffering through its own self. Now suffering has been quelled in negation. The absolute exists now and nothing beyond this same, no other testament of the union of its coming to be, its birth, of which all memories forgotten.

In the beginning god created the earth but in the end he created for himself his own death. He was an unstable creature this being who flirted with *felo dese* – always destructive, always having to be reproached for he didn't 'play nice' but was forever causing mischief (tut tut). Well...now he's dead. Now what will you reproach when your scapegoat is crucified and when the cross itself burns to the ground leaving nothing but ashes and a heap of living bones, made from carbon pure white? You have no one to blame but yourself and the war, once stilled by ideals of pious vanity, now once more rages forth over the pestilential earth and all of the crawling maggots thereon.

Pandora was angry when you stole her box, wasn't she, god? Now you, child of the great beyond, have smashed it in a tantrum and found yourself, through your own lack of something to do, infected by that which you would have infected the cat with. The tables have turned, and the innocent, in recognizing your own contradictory messages (saying as you do 'be nice', reiterating your mother Pandora, and then, 'punish the sinners' the next) stoop over your body to claw out your eyes.

There's always another fad coming around like a fly to pester those who aren't content in themselves, but must lope around seeking out amusement. Why not swat flies for a living, if, after all, you have nothing else to do? May as well devote yourself to trivial practices and I find myself bothered even as I unite this that I should have to swat the fly-swatters in criticism of their own pettiness. – Oh well! The world must be permitted its delights, and these take on the form of the most momentary and superficial. – A glass of warm milk for the exhausted workers.

Far better to be completely one's own, *sui uris*, than to leave oneself for others, to derive one's being from the scrap heap of their judgments. Truly they are all vultures: taking pieces from one and holding it in mocking torment away from his outstretched, begging hands. He cannot be anything unless permitted; he must beg and dance to be admitted to the cliques which surround his struggling being, servant of the masses more than seeming / or seeming independent but really servant, slave, vessel, beholden to the social code that overarches in sublime prostration he falls before it, vision of miracles he has discovered it – the truth, the tabernacle, manifest in the mysterious form of the opalescent, shimmering pellucid being of the social code, his master and lord. *Vox populi vox dei* – and language is the bearer of the divine truth.

Poems Juxtaposed

To be merely content with existing, without acknowledging the doing and oneself (as oneself) as a doer, is to go the way of the beast. To have a dawning acknowledgement is to precipitate anguish, to enter upon a rift with oneself.

Existing is always, however, an existing in warmth or cold, as this or that, secundam quid. And yet as such one is a beast only when his mind is non-existing, when the brain is merely operable in a technical sense, as a functional entity. The image of a person sitting in front of a computer or a VLT conjures up the concept of that state of existence, namely the passive decision – maker who is active only within very narrow limits, selecting to pull the handle on the VLT or to click with the mouse on an icon which has the meaning of being the harbinger of the desired change, the cause of the effect.

Once can't be content with this form of existence with a mind which seeks out things beyond bare physical action, a natural consequence of its presence as acute, aware, and awake to life, truly living in other words. Thus the anxiety of the intellectual, a driving force leading him to pursue other contents, is that valuable motive force constitutive of himself as who he is, even if only secundam quid – it is a question of the degree and proportion to and of which one employs his faculties.

Waiting and yet present
Arrived and yet set
Peregrinate away from here
Yet remain here
Away
Struggle between divided selves
No reconciliation, harmonia
Horrible lack of determination
Determining one's sadness
Heritance its basis

Homely ennui
A dull activity
Generating interest
Sui generis
-And here me

Alone and waiting
For a –
Blocked content
Of consciousness
Flat-lining hope
Lost in desperate caress
Of one's face

Poetry Liberated as it is Confined

Why, environmentalist
Would I, health-conscious
Not consume the totus
Of these blank spaces
In dark characters
-Call it a poem of
Sorts?
Why do I deserve
The magnificence of
Lack of conservation
Of the paper
And its white purity
If I must stain it
Let me do so
Wholeheartedly
And refuse to preserve
My poems as gems
Stored away on a
Shelf
Does this not,
I poetize,
Accord with health?
Not because of
The environment,

But because of
My own divine
Sacrament:
Homage to my
Inchoate beginnings
In poetry

B-Town Blues

I hear the mine exploding
Underneath hard earth
Ricocheting throughout
Thunderous dynamite dearth
That the town would fall
And stagnate in death
A gaping chasm dynamited
By profiteers
-Dreamscape amusement
The bequest, of a town,
Which was blown off the map

Aztec Sacrifice

Right angles harken
To Aztec patterns
Temples of the ancients
Erected to
The denizen
Gods of their
Flighty
Imaginations
Did they bloodily
Kill their own? Did they

Call this waste or
Necessity? Was the goal
Preservation of a people,
A political reality or an
Affirmation of the elect
Character of that people
Who alone could sacrifice
To the gods – to the
Exclusion of all others
And yet self-
Preservation most
Certainly underpinned
If with the dire
Necessity of
The bloodletting
Of one's own
Kin even if it was
'For' the beyond,
The transcendent
Forms of noumenal
Reality from the
'Spirit world'

Allegory of the Tailored

Mispronounce someone's name and you transgress who they are, you violate their being by ascribing them a suit of clothes improperly fitting, where 'improper' here means that which doesn't suit.

What does it mean 'to suit' however – is this the task of the tailor, the client, or the tailored? The suit 'suits', it 'fits', which terms are used interchangeably. The tailor's judgment, based on an overwhelming experience with tailoring, is raised to authoritative status. But the client here questions seditiously the authoritative judgment and, if he would not supplant – usurp – it with his own would simply put forth his objection as a complainant against a trespasser. And indeed, insofar as the client's judgment can be given any credence, accorded repute in some manner and mode, then he is justified in putting forth his complaint of 'trespass' although this does not at all make the tailor liable.

The tailor, having tailored the clothes which are alleged not to 'suit', is rendered suspect if the allegation can be in absentia of suspicion. What does this mean, however, to be 'in absentia of suspicion', to not possess the quality of being suspect? the client might, as exempting himself from suspicion, put forth the claim that he knows himself well and that he is therefore the best judge of any suit he dons. However the tailor may counter this proposition by saying that he knows the tailored, that is to say the clothes, best and that the nature of same is to stretch, to alter, to wind itself around the body it clothes. Therefore it does 'fit', in potentia, and eventually will come to be worn in absolute comfort.

But perhaps the client doesn't want to wait, he wants clothes that suit him now, does not want to gain the requisite ten pounds so he can slip into them or take ten pounds off. He wants to be wholly who he is and the clothes would merely alter same, would render him who he is not and to his utmost dissatisfaction would render him a disservice, the extreme opposite of what he had desired when contracting the services of the tailor to have a suit made. Services were desired, not disservice; a 'suit' not a tailored article which doesn't 'suit'. The contest would go on forever unless the judge (The Judge) puts a stop to it, and indeed, the function of The Judge is to stop all disputants from deviating from the law, which it is his duty to administer as a palliative, an instrument of justice, a bludgeon.

The law is absolute and not to be questioned, all disputants, tailors, and clients, over the disputed – the tailored – are nullified by the divine decree of the imperial codex whose very absolute character forbids reproach and question. But is it so infallible as all that? Does it not lend itself to hierarchization, a tyranny of expert opinion between tailors and judges, both interpreters of the law as both within its grasp and both of whose actions are a consequence of its influential power, only one to a greater and the other to a lesser degree; the law becomes a personal law, becomes something relativized carrying only vestiges of its absoluteness in the minds of those who have taken it down from that higher peak of Mount Olympus – absolute only as a pragmatic way of lending weight to one's own opinions, attempts to impose an authority which one does not possess except by proxy (derived from a law as a cache of gold by a thief) upon another who acknowledges such possession.

And yet at the same time the tailored, the clothes, lie on the seat of judgement having a moral claim on each of the disputants, hinging upon the binaries of a logic which says 'for', 'against', 'pro', 'contra'. They assume different colours, shapes, forms, in the eyes of each of the disputants, The client protests that he is unwilling to accept the clothes as they are (which is what is in dispute, their being what they 'are') and willingly forsakes them if only the law via the judge would grant him a will to do so. The tailor solicits this same higher authority for the opposing reason, making of them opponents relative to the fate of each other over the living corpse of the clothes, which, though finite, yet live in the infinite possibility of their alterability.

The Judge takes a fancy to the clothes and would possess their splendour, their brightness in adorning his own drab and ignominious figure therein. He wants to nullify the dispute and appropriate them for himself, only his moral conscience in the form of the law forbids him to do so and creates the indifference to each participant out of strife of his desire for and incapability of possessing the clothes, tempting as they are. The disputants must suffer the fate of the law and its exactitude, though all the rhetorical legerdemain they attempt in its overriding. But it can only be perverted so far – it is flexible but not breakable; it states that clothes of such and such a make (in general outline) are to be dealt with in such and such a manner, are to be treated by disputants of such and such a type – if they are the ones who deal with the clothes and a dispute of such and such a type arises – an a manner of this type.

But do the clothes suit the client – or don't they? The tailor has been usurped in his expert character by The Judge, in accordance with the law, and the client is the one whose protests the law is most interested in hearing – in addition to the tailor of course, despite his being stripped of expert knowledge, which same has been devalued, amortized, to the level of mere opinion. The Judge is constrained by the law and its law codex; his interpretations are not the result of blind caprice but rather that of carefully honed reasoning in accordance with the principles governing his thought process. The law stands against them all in shadowy tenebrousness, a dark being foreboding ill in its foreboding an uncertainty of good. The silver lining has yet to appear and consequent of this is dread: for the client who may have to wear clothes he deems unsuitable, for the tailor who may have his reputation as a tailor – a judge and craftsman of clothes – besmirched; and for the judge, who feels the guillotine of his own fallibility poised above his head, the dubious nature – or potentially dubious nature – of those judgments he is to render of necessity once all the particulars of the case are weighed in the balance.

But the particulars are inexhaustible, and history will live ad aeternum as nothing – only the fear of something, a growing fear which annihilates, after a time, all hope – will herald its death. The clothes, it must be added, always decay and corrupt, thus rendering the case an imbroglio of eternity, the very portal to oblivion, perhaps the weed-infested garden itself.

No one knows I'm here, sitting with the melting snow pounding the wooden floor, sounds of Skidoos around and hot sun blazing through sundry media: faux glass doors of the gazebo, infinite distance of space. But still the moment is preserved whether I write it in words or no – the mind finds ways of preservation, yet memory is fallible. It preserves through constant repetition, the memory is thus light and sound and sitting upon a flat surface. It becomes abstracted and universalized. But is it really so – can there ever be any constancy in thought, in consciousness – any memory at all? Is not the retention of experiences like a cache whose lock has been broken by time the thief and each deposit eventually lost through the force of inevitable banditry. Or is it thought and memory not rather like a cache which receives more investment with time – and the interest exponentiates and from it the means for the construction of a world is possessed?

The two conceptions of memory here, its fallibility and infallibility are unrealizable (-ized) absolutes – they are a unity. The mind is not a perfect archive nor is it a cup with a sieve bottom. It is rather an archive which is administered by the self – the onus for organization placed upon the administrator the human self and its operating budget, the will. The extent of the operations is contingent upon the intensity of the will.

No one knows I'm sitting here – nor do I care. People exist as phantoms of the imagination, potential threats, love or concerns in some respect or other. When one is alone it is a reflection of his peace of mind when he is not plagued by the premonition and memory of others.

Time in itself the instrument which measures time. A watch that I look at is time manifested. Time is not measured, it is the measure itself. The instruments with which one measures are the measures themselves – hence the term 'measure', 'measuring tape' applied as a synonym to 'ruler'. There is no time, existing as a transcendental *je ne se quoi*, independent, substantive of the utilities that are called temporal utensils: with these we, people, concrete human beings, grasp time. This is not so much a grasping as a utilization of time (*qua* tool, otherwise unutilizable – for how can one grasp a linguistic notion, a universal? That's merely a way of conceiving of things and erroneously subjecting them – these meaningful tools in which, and why in which, time is captured – to nominalism.

All talk of substantives like reason, universals, also are an abstraction of reality: appearance is essence – though we, concrete human beings, can never know appearance except as it manifests itself to ourselves – to say that there lies an archetype, a universal, which exists as this sublime imperceptible – that which escapes perception – is again a falsehood – it is nominalism, making everything reside in names. The Kantian block exists and it is the sublime, but not the result of faculties clearly delineated – rather, perception is the absolute and there is nothing behind the mask – always leaving us guessing as to foundations, origins and starting points. I admit neither of these last but simply say that a search for them will invariably result in an exhaustion of life, a futile expenditure of energy. Human reality is absolute and none exists independently of it unless the dissolution of the subject is conceded.

The threshold of tolerance

One's tolerance is conditioned by sensitivity and this in turn by one's antecedents, his experiences. If I have a life of leisure and ease, the likelihood of any tolerating a loss of a meal or a comfortable bed, or smaller in proportion to my expectation and near demand that these same be perpetually in play; their privation will cause me no amount of grief. If I am accustomed to putting up with swarms of insects then there is not much likelihood that I will be bothered by a fly, though conversely the toleration of a fly does not imply my tolerance of the swarm. A threshold of tolerance is demarcated by experience and the trials and obstacles that one encounters lends weight to the solidity and diminishes the assailability of his 'threshold for privation' – for what else is tolerance but the putting up with, the suffering of, a pain. In short: the greater pain suffered, if one can at all escape the broadening of the ripples of stones cast into a potentially calm pool, then he can tolerate one more stone, and another and another, to the point at which all stones cast against him have no effect.

But shown the smallest kindness, or attacked in a way he is not habituated to suffering, such as Baldur and the missile of mistletoe cast against him, then the whole of that seemingly impregnable dam he had constructed will be exploded and what will come of it is the corruption of the whole edifice. This failure to deepen and broaden the threshold of tolerance was my mistake and still is – for how could I tolerate the novel of privation when it appears the most egregious, the most difficult and impossible to

suffer – a suffering perceived as the step towards the dissolution of self by this strange other.

Thus one must steel himself to occasions of all kinds from kindness to death, for the most flowering auspice might be the rankest of weed and, that one has failed to prepare himself to experience thus renders him susceptible of injury.

And yet – this whole ethic of aescetic privation – does not lead one away from an actual existence? For it harbours an absurdity: to prepare to experience a certain thing entails/implies that one has already experienced it. In absence of experiencing it what is one to do with all of these preparations, being as they are simulated acts of devotion, mere sham and play-acting before the curtains are drawn open? And then to walk off the stage before they are opened, on the premise that one has done his 'duty' – to some absurd ideal of justification of his claims to be this or that (a noble, worthy soul, a thinker, an intellectual, an artist, an athlete) – to do this before the games have begun and without even entering the lists. It is fear which underlies this preparation in extremis, this servitude to the maxim 'preparedness is the key'. Preparedness is the key to success once one has learned – how to prepare. But how does one prepare for that which he has never learned; and just what is 'learning' – what but: experience. Thus experience, then prepare, without which no preparedness is possible.

And yet the concept 'preparedness as key [to success]' following one prior to action, goads him with the spur of the imperative of reflection prior to action – to draw upon conceptual and other resources as a means to greater –

Threshold of tolerance as a negative conception of an openness to the experiencing of this or that form (relationship, novelty).

I am herein a public, semi-private, quasi hotel 'hostel'; the fan above beats rhythmically, jackhammering the roof as if beaten by fists. Heat and noise and ill-defined tidiness, surrounds me here. In an area that I have come to hate owing to its utterly plebeian disposition, utterly self-righteous and self-glorifying character, I am nestled here in a hard chair bent over a hard desk pouring out thoughts I have grown to hate, the overwhelming majority of people on this earth – all typifiable to the nth degree – all bent of things – telos – defined by their class – and self always apart and distanced from these same.

Longing for people of my own nature, to be apart from them no longer, a part of their lives for once enabling me to grow stronger – and to leave aside my sadness for a while. Now I must go back to Red Lake – and the torturous nature of life takes hold of me again: the loneliness, as if it weren't bad enough here, exacerbated by the distance from any and all potential peers. Now so maladroit, without the means to speak nor to achieve any sort of state-of-affairs that I have so long incubated in mente.

I am to live among Montaine and Baudrillard and the sages for another two months. Expunge all vices and live the rustic life of a monk. I dread its acceptance and all the boredom which will inevitably ensue. The thoughtless patron that I have has no regard for how I live my life, cares only for his own thoughtless momentary pleasures and cares. I detest the vulgar attitude ^{he wants} I'm bound. The only conception of self one should have is a play of fictions or a perpetually outward looking eye that views only the world of otherness through the lens of fiction. This is a cinematographic conception of existence, wherein everything is created and a utopia blossoms before one – from out of a ghetto pit a rose blooms.

Sitting in silence no matter where I go, gaping void in which life implodes and all of that which stood outside of the self – interiorized and destroyed thereby apropos of a cry for help. No one, of course (as has been said for many years) responds.

People who have the power to yield benefits and do 'good deeds' only do so at the behest of the beggar and the pleading 'Amicitia inferiore' – made such by his pleading and utter servility. One stands on pride and is labelled inferior – by his 'egotism' and 'self-indulgence' – but this is merely the judgment of s/he who refuses to acknowledge the truth of the relationship and why they judge in that way. Why do they, the judges,

judge? – Because of their own subconscious recognition of their inferior quality and their rationalizing way of placating themselves in their feelings of inferiority.

Aggravated by the presence of nothingness one seeks to fill it with sparkling contents, magic baubles and golden dreams. – All shattered by the crudity and vulgarity –

And so I drift off...

I'm sure this paper is here for a reason, perhaps for letter writing to significant others? Do I have any such, any hope along lines of that nature? One passes and I meet – an undesirable Asiatic being, another paranoid minority creature, bothered by the slightest thing (of course the fact that it is a she doesn't help). Now I am once again alone. I detest the brown-shirted, plain-clothed, hemp-clad beings who stalk with arrogant self-righteous smarminess through the streets. With their 'funky' hats and their 'quirkiness' – and all other superficialities that appeal to the levitous. But now I am descending into abstractions, focusing not upon the conceptualizations of what might be, lying in potentia within the self.

And the out-of-doors calls to me, with all of its great promise. And here I sit and study and apply my craft without the fruits of a social being, long-lost presence that I have never been capable of attaining.

Considerations of motion and its measure amidst and in leisure: time, scales and other abstract unitary systems of measurement:

Here I use a scale, numerically with a fixed system of referents (they being the units 'thereon'), to achieve utilitarian goals – it is a utility, nothing more. This is analogous to the usage of a clock, or one's own biological regularity as clock – he measures his actions through themselves and creates the clock and system of time in abstraction out of this. All are merely inventors of the concept time, in so-called 'consciousness' (they 'psychological, psychical' conception, grasp or understanding of same); a recognition of so-called 'regularity', which is nothing but a memory of what becomes considered as 'like' to that which now is – an empirico-generalization as the basis of –

The above is a harangue borne of abstraction and confusion in the mind, drifting off into countless avenues and paths along which one travels with absolute caprice and devil-may-care ethos. Goodbye for the present – I'm off on a jaunt into the world! By saying this I envision my leave-taking and would act as a concomitant gesture. This argues for intentionality – maybe Husseil and Hegel are worth a perusal again. The actualization of the conception and the negation of the previous contents of consciousness through the positing of the noema. - A lot of indiscernibility prima facie – but, worth a look. Consider this a mental note.

Gauguin's paintings bear testament to the effeminate lackadaisicality of the present age. No one works, no one has any ideals beyond bestial grazing, a nudity and lounging around with loin cloths and, perhaps, diapers (such is the utter juvenility of the present – bourgeois convenience in which everything is handed to everyone and is not only expelled, but, like the spoiled child, demanded of the paternalists – which, democratically, is each and all. Everyone has the dyadic structure: parent/child, and must both solicit and provide goods from and to others). The conception of peace, as Gauguin so appropriately illustrates, that the bourgeoisie have, is one of absence from...this or that. A removal from the labours that they pursue as is conditioned by the fact of their possessing no ends or goals above the easiest and least – intense. Those who do have these and define themselves, thereby – could it not be said that they are, as individualists, the last bastion of hope for an inner type of peace, one which can persist in the most tumultuous of storms, that of the crowd. Thus it can be explained that the caricaturist on the boardwalk can take pleasure in his art (perhaps – at least potentially if he is the above described type). But if the end is substantive and absolute then all displays mean nothing relatively – they are mere proxy forms, incidences, accidental predicates and so forth.

Smacking the majority in judgment, by slapping their face, is like hitting a cobra on the head. You had better be a safe distance away if you don't wish to experience their poison – or you can always use a machete and sever the rasping head with its poisonous eyes, jaded as they may be. 'I hate this school.' Such is the ambiguous consensus written on the desk; there is some dissent by a narrow majority confirms it. It therefore must be true – mustn't it? But are we (the 'individuals', the 'other collective') going to allow the majoritarians to control us? – Never mind that we, me, myself, and I think that this is a true statement which 'maps onto' the world as a whole, experienced in its holistic nature through myself, through 'us'.

I tell someone, some condescending authority figure, that I am leaving the city – immediately this is interpreted in condescending terms as a failed project, this being here in the city, based upon the tone in which it is conveyed, etc. But I redeem myself and cast down my enemies by saying: 'behold! I do this in the name of a loftier goal which you also must recognize! Etc., etc. – And this authority figure, along with all representatives of that same figure and configuration of social position' –

The raillery between myself, the propagandists, and the philosophy continues onwards. They represent it in my eyes but I needn't make the identification. Only thusly can I save myself as a philosopher. It is to be read on its own regardless of every- and anything, by itself and alongside of my own interpretations. Definitely, under any and all conditions, I will leave the province. Definitely, under any and all conditions, I will migrate west and go to Vancouver Island. Definitely the past will be effaced in auspicious circumstances of my own engineering. Now I can breathe easier but in doing so do not relax any grip upon the throat of my ideals. Rather I am one step closer to them, one step closer to that which has outstripped my longing these past years. How could I forsake my ideals through going over to business or some such crudity? Rather to fall outside of society altogether than to ignobly stoop to a base and vulgar aim. Icarian I am and will remain, soaring through the heights of my own creation. I have no need of any others in this state only the pure presence of my own creation. I can live throughout any and every condition – will live as a writer, will never stray into the domesticated regions of this world except with tongue in cheek and armoured defenses blocking out the value of those same others. Gradually through the years I have emancipated myself my ties to the world and now stand forth as a being auto-nomos – one who genera—

Thoughts, apropos of my philosophical/doxic crises, are running vivid, dancing away from my current project, that of writing. I don't want to feel strung along a linear track in life but rather seek the absolute freedom to do what I please (naturally enough, if one follows that conception of freedom) – circumstances would confute my progress/praxis but I must strive through them – that is my duty to myself, iron-willed will be the edict and iron-willed I must do all that is heaped upon my shoulders. To unite, about more discernible subjects matters is at this point perhaps a hopeless dream – I must solve all my problems and then writing can undergo on abstraction from my life. But it never does, it is one with life and forms reciprocity of conditioning

- praxis of writing redounding to living in a way with one less problem and vice versa - this is development. Language is not to be adhered to at all - it is to be neglected, ignored, spat upon, upheld as an idol of creation, glorified and gloried in - but never, never pedantically sought and amplified. - No formal systems of language.

The birds / outside the window in the trees secretly, secretly/ hiding amidst the
blooming trees / green and leaf-bedecked, emerald scene / chirping daily, gaily /
commutatively / encoded messaging system / network of spies of an avian /
constitution / Briskly taking flight / appearance from the void / of concealed nether
realm / brought into the light / of dark-spaced camouflaged / emerald-bedecked en-
clave / I perceive them all / flitting from trench to trench / vertically ascending / unto
the heavens / all the while chirping / their encoded messaging / communicatively,
secretly / they dive bomb the enemy / thinking thusly to self I say: / If only I
possessed poisons / in the form of attractive objects to these beings / seeds or waters
/ ambrosia of avian reality / - Or a flamethrower would do just as nicely / sending
forth columns of heated-death / swirling orange and gaseous / choking, scalding /
burning offering / homage to those creatures so detestable / in the vermin vestibules
/ preaching all the day / infiltrating sensitive ears of those who have a will to
concentrate / we rebels of the human / must quell the hostile presence / through
double-agentry / planting the delectable seed / visible to the eyes of the winged steeds
/ swooping down to sate their cruel and unthinking / hunger - to precipitate their
death / through bell-tolling poison assimilation / - just a matter of time.

Creation is not borne of a military march but on its own two legs it walks amidst the regularity of the uniform. Uniform it is not – unless creation be defined as mere reproduction – and not a novel producing of the new and never-before-seen nor heard. This is the only valuable sort – and ‘fiddlesticks’ to all evaluation criteria and standards outside of those forged in aestheticism by self in his own march to his own drum beat towards his own battle and victory. Of what value is that of the average run-of-the-mill discourse, way of life, thralldom to such norms as 9-5 drudgery, familial structures, systems of objects? Of what value are adherences to such pettiness, when one can rule over all through impositions of his own achievements posited in potentia merely perhaps? Now – I dream or fantasize, in the mode of drifting lethargy, of a lawyer woman I had perceived at the law courts when undergoing any ordeal of mock seriousness. She was plump and overfed, but had an air of command as well as being an obvious mover and shaker (outside from the shaking of her coarser parts). I was drawn to her by the above presence of shaking – command and the shaking of her charge or client, whose aleatory fate was contingent upon the success of his case, itself contingent upon the command and, perhaps the shaking, of his lawyer, this plump woman that solicited my ardent gaze.

I still, months later, harbour the memory of she who, with her English features and femininity of curvature, impressed me with her ‘shaking’ and her endearing traits. Now I can only cast in marble these features, while the whole of her animate being escapes me.

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Since I'm in the feminist room, I must discuss feminism. A circumstantial change in which I have vacated the oppressive character of this room and its endless raillery dwelling implicit within the loud and boisterous texts (containing little articles of course) written by the feministas, enables me to dissociate myself from the vice and its rampant character. Here in this darkened room I can safely say that I dwell apart and in utmost security (on consciousness' part) away from the discursive missiles of femininity. Thus I can pronounce surer judgment, not burdened excessively with the emotive character of the feminine endeavouring to stand over me in judgment and pronounce the absolute. Now I may finally reflect upon feminism. Truly this topic is extremely disagreeable to me and the motive here, which should clarify my perceptions of this theoretical position (if it may be called such) is to put it – like 'women' – into its place.

Women and woman and all of this formalism! – As if it spoke truly of the empirical. And yet – doesn't it? After all, what we (the people) call women have a tendency to do certain things: babies, church, paternalistic authoritative figure veneration in a thousand forms of devotion. – Service, and self-serving thereby, etc. A formal conception of the subject holds and yet its equivocality brings into question the nature of its holding. One does not need formal conceptions absolutely and exclusively to understand those beings formally conceived of as women – mere experience and memory, and in proportion to its extent one knows women. What motivates them; what makes them 'tick' – well, the answer lies in the province of experience as the tribunal of what is, whether what is passes or fails, is guilty or innocent. Feminism can be spoken of as follows by way of descriptive definition: feminine egotism, raillery against men and the sexual (or other) Other of feminism; an endless harangue in the form of a justifiable critique (its masque and guise).

Why should one not amuse oneself at the expense of others? Why not derive enjoyment from the abusing and bullying of them? Why, is short, deprive yourself of such a privilege? After all, if one consults the anthropology of homo homini lupus, and accepts its broad theoretical principles, then he must (of necessity it must be added) assert and claim, in very truth and without qualification, that is to say absolutely, that bullying and other-abuse is not only justified, but that it is in fact – in very point of fact- a natural phenomenon.

Man is a wolf to man – homo homini lupus! And that goes treble where women (soft and gentle creatures they are not) are concerned. The hardness of women, when it eventually (and perhaps inevitably) manifests itself is such as to shock the bumbling cruelty of man into an acknowledgement of its own impoverished character where cruelty is concerned. The image of the praying mantis, the black widow – these are women whose spirits have transmigrated into the house of another corporeal, fleshly creature. The acts and vices of these creatures, purely instinctual, purely obtuse in sensibility – a neglect of all thought, a working up of all action – are the very cruelty attainable only by women – instrumentalist praxis, a devotion to the goals coldly set and deliberated upon apriori, emanating from the commands of their instinctually driven bodies. This of course, as has been acknowledged by the whole of prior civilization, etc. is of a more intense degree, so much so that the governing principle of women are those unalterable facts of their existence, namely children and the family, pleasure and excitement. Tell them who they are and you will be blasted by judgments, by the scornful missiles of their darkest emotions. And then you will bear witness to cruelty.

Dualism of the noble and the base

I watch porno, I lie, I steal, I cheat, I harbour thoughts of all manner of vice and inhuman acts. - Defined along classical lines of course. Also defined along classical lines is the conception of the noble, in contradistinction to that of the above, baseness, vicious inhumanity, the sole characterization of traditional morality's view of what is undesirable and not to be pursued (by those beings, it must be said, who subscribe to this theory prima facie). They posit the absolute – the noble, in opposing this baseness of action. This concept harbours all that is right and good, morally approbative.

But no longer is this dualism and refinements made along those lines solicited and propounded; it is eschewed for the sake of the pervasive crudity which stalks the earth in the form of what was either christened vice before or virtue, a warped and perverted hybridization of the good to suit the baser individuals, nobility stripped of crown and laurel wreath. I have nothing to do with this same construence of the good ideally, in concreto I am its unfortunate proselyte and victim. I do not desire to watch porno, or be sneaky or lie or harbour thoughts of hatred, etc. – at the most with respect to this last indifference and unconcern. But I defeat my own lofty pursuits. Maybe the masses in their virtuous aspect will find a solution to this problem: by going in small steps, as a weak-willed man of virtue. -Only- just the opposite. Small steps towards moral ideals, a progressus ad infinitum in the direction of the impossible, per impossibile.

A repertoire of hackneyed conceptions forever and always the same thing, a beating of the drum of a convention no longer anything but this, no longer radical, merely a homogenized and trite phenomenon.

Decisions pervade the mind now; distant memories grown vague now argue for the value of contradicting previous decisions made from out of that irreducible moment when to make a certain decision was absolutely right, unqualifiedly and unconditionally. Now this moment does not occur again but presents itself in some undesirable form, apparently glad and auspicious, mask of that former actuality which lost any hopes of pleasantry or appeal. And to decide contradictorily; to seek out a path inevitably establishing one in the undesirable space he had left – from knowledge and prudence in decision-making to vicious ignorance and complete loss of decision-making ability – is this the path desired? It would seem so, if one forgets but in

remembering he adheres to the plan, conceived of as it was in aesthetic infallible knowledge.

The sickliness of philosophers sickens me – Allow me to expound my own philosophy and refuse to be a hanger-on to anything else but my own narrow enclave of the concept: immanentism! – I begot thee from the ardour of my philosophical questing, from the depths of far-reaching speculation.

Immanentism – what? – to believe everything meaningful is conferred meaning not by a subject but by nothing. There is no conferrance but meaning merely is: a physico-chemical process borne of the movement which is. Not through time (merely a measured motion, a measured movement in barren abstraction based on the unit); neither through space (an empty category of the topos, quantitatively based – ‘of course’ for science). Meaning is time immanent – it is, it develops from out of itself, its being is its existence – speaking, writing – processes which are not ‘external’ for there is no informal, no objectification as no subject – only a lens, only words of the air not substantive but inherent to the totality of being that is. To write a word is ‘to-write-a-word’ – it is. Meaning does not lie dormant within the symbol but is a physico-chemical process that inheres in a section (always penumbral) of a world which doesn’t exist. It might be said ‘classically’ that ‘we’ confer meaning upon things subjectively – that is absurd as portivistic, laden with assumptions of the classical in metaphysics.

Human reality: it is all human reality, insofar as human. All discourse is slipped under the hands of the human (system or individual). All human reality is a cultivated enclave of reality inaccessible outside of itself – thoroughly perspectival – being in itself thoroughly unintelligible to beings Other than those who have such privileged access. This is called ‘rationality’ so that one can draw inferences (so-called) about the ‘Real’. Such a procedure does not exist, merely a fanciful flight of the imagination which is where all meaning and belief inhere – a topos, non-spatial of course, without location – localizable only through itself – for it is: perspectival.

Science: control device (necessary lie); pragmatic device (useful fiction), that is all.

Humans: the same – something to believe in.

What ‘we are’: a point-de-capiton in the totality of being, a coagulate of matter. In fact, no coagulate but matter itself. Try to demarcate the self from the non-self, life from death – impossible!

'What we must hope for': nothing. What despair of: nothing. 'Exist and be merry' is the only conclusion. Or else be sad, be happy, in short: be what you are insofar as you are you; in shorter terms yet: 'you' are what you are, thus be that thing – nothing else.

Immanentism is a description, or perhaps an emotional attitude without any linguistic elements towards and of what is – reality, being.

The disproportionate irregularity of line, inclined away from its origin in descending/ ascending movement towards an infinitely prolonged destination. The factory workers must have made a faux pas here in refusing (accidentally, intentionally? – perhaps the word ‘refuse is too strong and connotes the latter – an act, with agency carried out in nefarious character) to adhere to the regulations which set them in play, they the workers and they their movements, inclined towards the accomplishment of the task prescribed to them both carrot and stick – the carrot hardly enough to afford luxury diamonds, the stick, fearful imposition of club-like consequence. And the factory workers, what motivated their slanting lines and their refusal to (or their failure to) adhere to the imposition from above divinely decreed? Let us assume their low-browed salvage character had the capacity for rumination – they conceive of a plan, spinning from their dissatisfaction, a dissatisfaction arising from their recognition of themselves as anthropoidal beings here and now situated. They act it out, unfurling it experientially across the great distances of their own cunning – to its limits however expansive.

But does the supervisor see the egregious error; does he perceive the contempt with which these vicious (made vicious by vice, made vice into a lifestyle) beings treat the sacred standards of line and paper, their juxtaposition and arrangement, their mandatory symmetry – a symmetry violable although espousing divinity. Apotheosis smeared with the fecal actions of savage low-lives.

Norms: chains that bind. Being so bound one can only be happy if his standards of existence are on a par with those of society or the proponents of the norm at large. If he obeys he’ll be given a Scooby snack – and he rolls around on the ground in pleasure accordingly. Otherwise, and simultaneously, he feels the imposition of the stick forever held above his head; cringing he slinks back into the doghouse, the chain which binds him given a rattle by the hand of authority in imposition of its threat upon him.

The spectacle of ancient Rome: Rather than describe, with literary ebullience, what went on at Rome and report to you fair reader what about the Romans were, I will endeavour to portray as acutely possible the unfurling of the scenic scene, the development of the eventual events as memory may relate them to me. But rather than do that – would it not be best if instead I investigated the nature of myself vis-à-vis this spectacle and the conjuration within myself of emotional movement within the nether regions – and internal, intrinsic, organic locations – of ‘self’.

The phallus stands tall at such an event – the thumb heralds its descent when spectators crush the spirit within the man. And knife-blow cruelly penetrating emasculated being by emasculator – man makes of rival man a lower form; or debases himself in the act – take your pick it suggests a certain moral stance of your own subject.

I see myself draped in gaudy gold, refulgent reflecting the waves of Phoebus outwardly to the eye beholding penetrating cornea, pupil concentrating with painful, virginal penetration.

‘Windows mediate the given’ – I’ve heard told. But do the givens look upon themselves as the mediated, media themselves – are they willing to concede that they ‘pass through the hard-shelled sandy surface of mundane being – being as they are themselves mundane? Why not ask them: ‘Hey givens! I say givens ol’ boy! Where for art’ – no, they have entered my mind, parasitic vermin infecting the cavern of Chinese noodle-house secrecy. Now they mingle with the noodles – but if I go to eat the noodles will I be poisoned or nourished, will I have the cornucopia of life or a tantalus – death? Thoughts are themselves mediated and as such they are media – the mediated is the media and everything either implodes or explodes into medium, the totus of matter of substance – ousia. Nothing and everything, like a hotdog and a bun – rolled into one – take a bite – and spontaneously combust.

The intellectual animal is a sick animal: what else, however, can one possibly be when human? But what does it matter then if one is sick or healthy? – Answer: health is conditioned by the intellect, as that governing force that issues commands and edicts and which one must act upon and follow. But these actions and edicts themselves are dictated by the force which one is as is the intellect. So health is a condition of the intellect which we are and the intellect a condition of the world and body which we are – and health is or is not on the basis of its conditioning force, is earth mother. And yet how then is it possible to change and act upon edicts, etc.? Answer: through a mystical process ineffable in content, indecipherable in abstracto, always constructive, never deconstructed.

Intelligence is conceived of as a sickness – but only when it is not attuned to bodily strivings (to speak in terms of dualism). When all efforts are concentrated in the mind, at all times and across all occasions, then one traps himself in the prison cell of thought and throws the key away, next to his jailer, the sleeping body. And he, intellect, mind, has lost the knowledge to wake the body in its Rip van Winkle slumber – thus it traps itself, thus it finds itself a prisoner of its state of introversion. A dialogue, whether with self or other, is always a liberating feeling, an act of escape from a prison cell.

I am on the floor with the psychologists, the den of the self-torturers, those whose pits of analysis are dug deeper with each passing reflection. They drill a hole in their brain with judgment and dig around forever examining what made it so, what made it this way and not otherwise, drawing upon premises and rules which purport to govern their every movement. And they steal, like a thief, the contents of experience, appearances, and coveting it hidden away in their lairs forever brooding over it. But what they've stolen is a simulacrum, a tromp l'oevil and what they believe is something of substance is as seeming nothing more than a wispy presence whose shape dissolves with each grasp.

Drifting off in my mind once more, dreading the apprehended uphill climb of coursework, of working upon that which presents itself as a grotesque and giant monstrosity, a grand and impressive obelisk – impossible, seemingly, to scale or to topple to the earth and stand over vanquished.

I feel the laziness of the summer months sweep over me with that lethargic haze of forgetfulness and subdued mental functioning. The bird song around my window and the path of sound marked out by the passing vehicles is the ambience I meet with. Perhaps the neighbour in the adjacent room will ply his musical trade and bombard the walls with the waves of a pounding surf of sound. That being the case I can tolerate it for thought at this point, amidst the summer months, lays dormant and exists as placid lower-level function. I have hope that the above course I dreaded taking will not have to be taken after all, for how could I possibly waste my talents and creative capacities about such pedantic memorization and regurgitation when this same can be maintained and myself cut adrift by simply shifting the energy onto a like task, without the endless memorization. It is another world, the world of the physical, of scientific conceptions of the given. But I can't pursue it to any great depth owing to its character of ruination. Life for me is a perpetual holiday and I despise the lack of work – but work such as this I am unwilling to take on as its consequences impose upon me a heterogeneous way of life that I would sooner repudiate and hold at arm's reach.

I feel, if I must continue to diagnose my state of existence in all self-obsessiveness, like a drifter, a wastrel, one whose attempts at accomplishing anything are stillborn and asphyxiated apriori, prior to any attempts in endeavours on my part to 'work them up' so to speak.

So much of the knowledge and so forth (theories, systems) that people devote their lives to appear to me to be absolutely useless – the vast majority of them for that matter I consider wasteful. Why study Greek, why math, why anatomy? – Well then, what else would you do with your life?

I am an abjure poet, a.k.a. a minority who is granted great opportunities in the name of a principle. Hooray for democracy that blight upon the policy, greasy pimp waiting to be – popped! But no one exists as the fingers to do the popping, they lack energy having been cut off by the punishing ways of that tyrant – the majority. One cannot voice any sort of truth – chain-type statement, any sort of utterance, without being beaten down by those who feel themselves in a position to do so and who moreover have the power to push those made weaker through their standing alone.

I grow weary of the nature of this world, of its presuppositions and rhetoric masquerading as truth. If truth is a human function, so-to-speak, then that doesn't at all mean it's anything but an aesthetic function – and that art. Life passes one by when he exists in the mode of aesthetic contemplation.

Long, irregular sheets of paper, their shape and size unexpected and unknown. The words I write upon them evince their alien character. I am recuperating my forces, if that's the appropriate phrase, having worn myself thin needlessly over a certain thing unrealizable. Otherwise – the otherwise is what I now confront, my situation and state. I have apparently no hope for any sort of success, no desire to achieve anything anymore. The whole of the world is to be experienced if it is to be meaningful – an explanation of why to me it is so meaningless. The whole of the movement observable in society I look upon from afar and thus it appears to me a fantastical realm of alien beings directed by unknown forces, made machines moving above in accordance with magical rational plans that govern them and strip them of their inherent caprice.

The world has rejected me; I must find consolation in my stoical creed, philosophy, the nobler pursuits. All careerist ploys fall away while in their wake arise authentic hopes for a life defined independently of that artificial scene. I felt like a child in school, in the work a lost soul, but no longer a babe, rather a hardened soldier creeping into enemy camps, an alien having just last night landed – or having been here for time immeasurable observing the systemic spectacle which follows some unknown rational plan. Will the plan forever be unknown as also those bound to it? Or will it not rather be disclosed and with it all of those who are under its thumb?

I feel so cut off from everything that life is almost non-existent. I keep waiting to be beamed up to Mars by some unknown god, judging by these strange looks and reactions I receive from those I've apparently been destined to experiment – albeit only as a proximal silence – with. I desire to jerk people around only as a means to recognize their animate nature, to understand that they do possess life and little else but a life suited to some sort of petty achievements.

Life is a waiting, a mid-point between the aforementioned and the yet-to-come. Or it is pure presence and aesthetic being. Writing is the sole means I have to achievement of a happy aesthetic – for that is precisely what happiness is. But this very often leads to will-less inertia and certainly to a state of drift, a maladroit state of will-less weakness – without a goal without the strength to reach it.

I conceive of myself as an artist living in shameful (from the perspective of the bourgeoisie) conditions, simply writing always, growing knotty hands and a bent back, never being freed from this endless task of this self-imposed slavery to an ideal forever outstripping me. Yet...is not the condition of man to be insatiable and yet yearn for satiety, so well exemplified here in my will to escape my own prison? Is it not best for myself to remain within prison, to remain within?

The placid nature of immigrants of the negroidal persuasion: They are really akin to happy little animals. Our 'western' (by which of course is meant European) mentality, a mentality localized within the races of furthest north to the Mediterranean and to the borders of Russian-China (the hybrid nation state of quasi-mongoloid slaves). This same enables us the master races to look with Christian condescension upon those others who are so tangibly inferior. It is astonishing; truly astonishing, that the world considers itself equal when you stand beside one another two obviously, perceptibly, disparate creatures such as negroid and Teutonic man. They are night and day, truly.

The argument is that night and day comprise a cycle – but the cycle here, if we allow of its application ex-hypothesi, is one half wheel rolling towards a goal never attained. Why racial harmony? Why disharmony? It should be neither nor and people should view each other as a spectacle – in fact, people of all kinds, as on plurality, should view one another as a spectacle, as individual windows into individual worlds – monads, absolutely heterogeneous entities.

Or perhaps they could view the world and all of the people as completely complementary, holistic, happy. Why both, why either, why choose? Such broad perspectives are of great ethical efficacy, are ethics themselves – entailing making decisions impractical circumstances, the sole value of morals, the sole value of values, namely having values redound to das leiben.

But a dull topic indeed, and of what consequence really? The world is becoming a state of socialists who say that tolerance must be pervasive. A rather intolerant view if I must say. The majority tyrannizes because it is self-legitimizing; it confirms its own worth.

Johnny's Ballad

The karaoke bar that night was packed to its full capacity as Johnny was scheduled for his bi-weekly performance. Down front in the audience elderly bingo players awaited his entrance, in the back the truck driver rowdies cackled and hulloed – for the excitement of Johnny was uncontrollable for these parties and the vital beating of his musical semi-hemi quaver notes struck the chords of the spirit and played a funky jive that no dancer could resist. Johnny was there, in the limousine, the converted hearse painted bright pink and studded with the glitter young girls put on their faces. Yes Johnny was progressing, with the inexorability of the planets, towards the centre of Pawtucket's universe: Wily Bill's Karaoke shindig, held at the community hall – all for the sake of 'Johnny', a name which sung out in a confident if indeed raucous manner: 'I am here, pay attention – to me! Yes Johnny had arrived in town, accompanied by his two roadies, those who drove the limo while Johnny practiced his trilling vocals on the waves of the wind as the canopy top of the converted hearse was lowered; those who routinely made him the blueberry pancakes he had loved since a child. Yes – Johnny had entered into the borders of Pawtucket, having crossed Millcreek Road and ventured down Clover, turned a right down St. Francis Boulevard and steadily, one might say inexorably, made his way to the stadium; destination: Wily Bill's.

The doors were thrown open and Johnny entered – by the back door, by the janitorial bucket and mop and the tartar sauce splashed nonchalantly on the linoleum floor. His gator-skin shoes made their way delicately around this excrescence – 'Pawtucket sure's gone downhill' – and found themselves a flight of stairs to ascend. Into the dressing room, discreetly abandoned, for Johnny was a sensitive man (and thus didn't like to be disturbed before showtime). He could hear the catcalls and whistles of his favourite fans: old Bertha and Uncle Sam...

Domesticated animal means animal saddled with inhibitions and suppressed emotions. An animal of repression that has no modes of expression but those permitted to animals on a leash: defecation, fornication, and mastication (assimilation/consumption). This is the triadic structure of the bourgeoisie.

Whenever I venture outside I hate myself. Whenever I remain within I love myself, for: how could I tolerate being authentic amidst the falsity of the world without shifting to a false character and, eo ipso, being within myself and not being authentic without the winged monster of hatred – forever watchful – swooping down to my death and destruction?

I am spending much time over this page masticating myself with doubts and thoughts, etc. I claim to have no goals and this is based upon (is this claim) their unrealizability. I say: 'journalism' – but I refuse to be a panderer. I say: 'Well then, simply acquire the skills for the task and thereby gain inclusion within this discipline'. Yet – do I not have to have the greasy social skills demanded of each and all in each and every sphere of activity, however reclusive and individualized? Nothing is individual any longer; everything is socialized and belongs to the Other, to that vast vacuous category of the social that is other than oneself and in and by which he loses himself and with it all control, unless he is capable of giving battle with the unknown. But how can he know how to give battle, when to learn and acquire these techniques presupposes he is ready for the fight, and more, already in it? He is stricken from the lists, banished, apriori, before he can don any armour. That would be his armour but he has discarded it as unwilling to be seen in that which makes him a ludic figure – someone not permitted to fight because judged unworthy, rendered a knave and a squire forever, always a bridesmaid but never a bride, etc.

This page has taken me a long time to complete and it represents my confusion over what action and manner I should comport.

It hurts my being to the core to feel myself so ostracized – why should it be me of all people, just because?

Description of an emotional state, left ambiguous and non-referential for elucidative purposes. I want to participate in the world is what this statement means; but, further, I am incapable of it, because no one allows me entrance, no one opens with invitation their arms welcoming me to the kingdom of humanity. I am an object, a tool, a piece of organic flesh to be buffeted about, used and abused by each and all and when no longer of use, like shed skin discarded. I have come to an understanding of people via the route of being rebuked and beaten – by their laughter, by reproachful words. I am a feel-machine, a machine which feels and is acted upon by others, a responsive mechanism, a mute-blind intangible object whose unseeing eyes (made unseeing by apathy and self-hatred, the consequence of being hated apriori) stare out into an ungraspable distance, the dull-glowing of a goal forever outside of my reach. I attempt to speak and confront my own muteness, attempt to hear and cannot convey understanding – but I receive the painful reverberations of other's sounds within my mind: reproaches, judgments, scorn, contempt, condemnation, judgments of my being supplanted by nothingness, a nugacious non-entity worthy of relegation. Beat down those you can never understand and you stand over their beaten carcass, scarred and lifeless – all because you couldn't resist their blows as too unprepared in your weakness. Everyone wears a contemptuous grin for those apparently naïve – but can they never feel themselves as anything but virtuous when they make a practice of casting aspersions upon those they consider beneath them – and call it virtue? How can they tolerate their lives except for the fact of their thoughtless arrogance, their feeling confirmed in who they believe themselves to be, without doubt, without self-investigation or analysis.

When in proximity to those who I can never reach (as undesirable to them as cast aside, unworthy to them) I feel the depths of despair at the fact that I could even be a participant of life except in some abstract formal sense, just another 'human being'.

How is it that any of these city dwellers can label themselves intellectuals with all the noise which pervades each and every area of this commotion-fraught world? They claim to know so much and yet, through their alcohol-haze they see in a very distorted way; an absurd situation when people claim to be something which they're not, when they claim greatness in their utter impoverishment.

With the noose of practicality forever tightening its hold on one's neck how is it that he can remain within it? Will he not rather take a chance at escaping, at slipping it, even though he will be shot by the guards of necessity.

The phone rings and I think that it rings for me – at least I anticipate it and focus myself upon developing an answer, finding the inappropriate way to respond to the unknown of a voice on a telephone. With that category to think of and to answer to I await achievement. Speaking more globally I have awaited and have been awaiting achievement time and again, as the undercurrent of my life, however barren, for so long it has made me who I am. – Always waiting till next time despite an ardent longing to consummate my desires in the present. And in waiting, though my desire remain, the desired is already taken; when my desire remains and when the object remains both are augmented exponentially. But when desired object remains and when desire wanes (as a response to a will to avoidance of that desire as to its painful effects, its barbs embedded in soft flesh) it is all reduced to a nullity and nothing had any meaning in the first place; it is as if nothing had been at all.

People hate one whose intensity outmatches their own, they hate him whose virtues outshine them and reduce their value on the market of human existence. But these people are the crowd and one must, in this society, involve himself in a crowd of some sort. I wanted the world and would have devoted my life to it – but no one was there to witness it: An indication of my dependence upon the Other and its impossible neglect; it is a superabundant star that shines forever in my eyes. I look at the clock and decide that it is not time yet to devote myself to writing as I immediately think of the practical chores which await me. As such it all floats away, draining down the tubes of conscious value like the used laundry soap and water that has been discarded by one whose raped its function, killed its beauty as anything but that.

The day passes in silence, in the horror of voicelessness. I meet a woman on the stairway and offer to sell an item to her; friendly she responds and in responding the whole of the human world descends from silence into the music of presence. I hear the flutes of life dancing in the background of the morning glow buried still under night's blanket. I envision the hills and the becoming of that experienceable to my eyes. But she is just an old woman after all and as such there is no possibility of my relating to her in any intimate capacity, the only one which precipitates the fresh vitality of human existence. I had caught a glimpse of it, blind man that had an epiphantical opening of the curtains of his blindness to welcome the distant dawn. All he saw was a grey-amber bar of light infinitely graded with the blackness that overlooks it and quells its youthful ardent strivings.

Now I am brought back to reality qua the actual scene that I face: annoying music beating on inchoate minds that, in all arrogance of youth, make the claim that somehow they are better than that, then questioning in silence the pursuit of an unattainable ideal. For they have none outside of the modalities – simplistic, juvenile – of a music that soars on crippled wings, on paper wings towards panes of glass – the standards that I profess, something beyond them, something creating strife within oneself and thereby grasping greatness.

It is difficult of course to overlook their arrogance when it crashes upon one's mind in waves and waves, when it would be so much more desirable to have a calm not angry ocean storm buffeting a swimmer whose strength has failed. To swim against and through the waves is the most difficult of things – for it is seemingly endless and one must make of himself a fish to dive within them – or a bird to fly above, if not an adept swimmer to undergo the rigors of that exercise. What is meant by this for the uninitiated: bird, or levitous being, feminine, thoughtless flies above all that which would be received in its intention by a more weighty creature – like the fish who swims beneath through his own missile-like body having the capacity for sub-surface dwelling – by avoiding it all, avoiding the crash of the waves, swimming past the undertow and experiencing the depths of being in all their loneliness.

People enjoy creating problems for themselves because it gives them a sense of value. Just observe the people in the school (to take the only example I'm acquainted with and thus knowledgeable about): they adopt all of these problems of globalization, etc. and make them their own – and thereby construct an identity by proxy. But others have problems which originate in their own lives (for they alone can truly be said to have any sort of authentic existence). They have adopted the problem like a will to give battle and they refuse to disengage in proportion to their strength of character. They are forever drawn backward to this antagonistic state – they can't help but be, for that constitutes their essence.

When all else fails do it yourself if you were bound to others before and conceived of their actions as a means to the realization of your ends. Forsake all dependencies and thereby realize, achieve. I can only write maxims now, the endless flow of words is to me something unendurable unless it emanates directly from myself. And with a forsaking of all of that which is other than myself my horizons narrow apropos of the negative ethic I espouse. I would achieve worlds but cannot do so, all because I either have no belief in the thing, or have grown stale and inert in relation to it, or else am not inclined towards it (generally for the former reason). The aristocratic grandeur of life was flattened and crushed by the onslaught of plebeian pursuits.

I hear the pop-cultural music below me with its incessant assertion of its volubility and the cars roaring past – when I had the blissful silent heights of a natural landscape at my disposal – which circumstances led me to dispose of (o' fortune). What could I possibly achieve now that life has been stultified by the practical, now that possibilities have been exhausted and doors closed in my longing face? I suppose I am a beggar which must go hungry, starved on the neglect (privation of attention), esteem (contempt) of and by others. School has a 'function' – so I'm told. This 'function' is normalization, indoctrination and a general subservience to commonly accepted (but always acknowledged, in an arrogant and tongue-in-cheek way, as 'merely accepted') doctrine; just the opinion of the majority. The enthymeme carries greatest weight, the heaviest burden: you must follow suit if you at all desire inclusion within the body politic. The grins of the professors incline people to agree with that which is agreeable, appearance is essence.

I wish I could be simple again, thereby it is hoped I would finally enter into the golden kingdom of unreflective innocence, without judgment of anything for it is of course the judgments which make it so, which make the anything what it is. All my writing now doesn't have any stylistic flow, is unworthy of critique – all emanates from depression, from a lack of concern with everything. Of what concern is life to me when I have not found any entrance into it and cannot – the means are inert, the configuration of life remains fixed like a labyrinth out of which I have never found escape. The outside is the inside of the social, the inside standing out in the cold looking into the window of the warm and glad-tidings home from which I was so rudely spirited at an age so tender and ignorant. But the age is meaningless, it is the sophistication that counts for something – and this I have only procured through ardent striving after unattainable ideals for many years. But never have I either been brave enough nor have I been invited to become a participant within the body politic. That soft, loving body I have forsaken for one ever-hardened by the cruel strivings of its inherent machinations. But I must accept this insofar as I am a man – the condition of man as defined (and appropriately) along classical lines.

I cannot adopt the present discursive construct 'man' – it is an aberration is this domestic, this handmaid to woman, this caricature of a hybrid form of sexuality. It is not even anything comparable aside from women – a standard of effeminacy! But what matter? I feel my strength ebbing apropos of the pavenity of environments in which I might act – lacking all form of action my life amounts to nothing – all because of a lack of salesmanship! Triumph of the petty, dissolution of nobility! I desired (and still do desire greatly) to have a few friends who are in a similar state to myself: intellectual, cultured, unconcerned with petty things. But to reach this same looking as I do is impossible. No one wants anyone who puts them to shame and the unfortunate thing is that I intimidate all and for lack of the appropriate responsivity that engenders any type of relations.

But what of psychoanalysis, what of descriptions of psychical or circumstantial states, a.k.a. 'my situation' as I had alluded to it time and again in the past? – To be dispensed with? - And then a calumnistic work ethic without any cessation, without any respite.

This place looks like a bomb shelter: cement walls and floor, carpeted with late 60s rug (surprised it's not shag) – uniform desks and chairs cheaply made of plastic – the desks appearing to be bolted to the concrete floor. The only instabilities of this place are the two lone monitors which stare out in blind reflectiveness at those in the room. Now thankfully no one is here, an emptiness, a solitude – outside a warzone of money-makers, commuters, lower class boozers and gangsters. Within this shelter I avoid the bomb of their mentality; a tri-sectioned pane of glass covers the window, an outlet and inlet allowing commerce to flow in and out in a communicative exchange of meaning. - The ugly sneers and insecure swaggers of the labourers – the roar of hell-bent traffic racing one another in competition. The stillness of an insecure room, a room susceptible of violation at any minute – the doors, perhaps even the window or roof, could burst asunder and the room be filled with invading storm-trooper Jews and Zionists, left-wing, right-wing political extremists – who knows, they walk, perhaps, in one's midst, their smiles covering real intentions, real feelings.

Now thankfully (I thank the fates for establishing this situation) the room is silent, inviolate. Muffled sounds from outside do not intelligibly penetrate the transparency of the shield protecting me from the outside world.

How many bombs has this shelter withstood? It doesn't matter. How many have made concave ruts upon the roof – how many more can be withstood – it doesn't matter. For though the rubble falls all around me I will never be touched by falling debris – inviolate, stone, impenetrable – this is the mode of indwelling. - Uniformity of rows, of desks, of chairs, of walls, of life. A sad thing that everywhere one goes he always meets with the uniform – shape without colour, form without content – and so on. An endless repetitive landscape untraceable, ill-defined in its vagueness. One cannot escape this world of pervasive simulation – must simply dwell within the redundancy of the social spaces that are blue-print gleaned and derived from a mind of transcendental proportions – everywhere and nowhere the social totus (the all of society in its pervasiveness) stalks the individual and eviscerates his vital workings, organs constitutive of him as 'Him' – as a god and man unto himself. He must dwell amidst desks and chairs and walls – all mathematically proportionate unto another – like things made like by a model governing their being. They have no independent existence, generated apriori by this inexorably propagative system. The world is a mathematical thing and for this reason necessarily rational/reasonable – for the latter

dyad is nothing but necessity, nothing but necessary knowledge, understanding, receptivity and action of, towards, and about – the necessary. But I want things to be as different as possible – so much so that they remain on the aesthetic level of the ineffable. I don't want standards of comparison, I don't want judgment: it is this which defeats us, the will moving inexorably towards 'A' has no motives, does not 'move towards' apart from discourse – it simply is.

Build a case of intentionality, for the intentional action of a rational agent; build castles in the sand and watch the wind blow them to the furthest reaches of space. Disappearance – they are gone and exist as if they never were. Useful devices perhaps! Organize matter through discourse and an adherence thereto, a belief therein.

Treatise on psychiatrists and schizophrenics:

Go to any psychiatrist as a complex person (one necessarily complex if you are diagnosed as troubled and more specifically as what follows) and you will be split apart, fragmented, into a thousand pieces separated – all a bundle of causal machinations, of causes and effects, of valences and receptivities, attractions and repulsions.

I go to such a one and, given a complex personality am immediately diagnosed as schizophrenic – or at least there are intimations in the diagnosis which purport my decipherment, my understanding them as such, latching onto them and agreeing – for to agree is to believe, to foster the hijinks of these expert salespeople.

Never mind why I call them the above (refer to previous discourses or psychoanalysis), but attempt rather to understand the nature of schizophrenia. One has developed into a complex of competing personalities, competing drives and so forth – what gives rise to the complexity but an underlying tension, an antagonism of drives which cannot remain together and so must find dissolution as coalesced, must strive for isolation. This enables one to infer the state of the schizoid, namely his utter self-alienation and atomized psychical state. He, apropos of whatever influence it is the province of the psychoanalyst to discover (or to discursively construct – and necessarily this it may be added as a side note), presents variance in personality, sometimes one then another, never together. Causal analysis renders the separations conceptually ripe for the picking and taken up into the psychoanalyst's vocabulary they are recognized and reserved until other evidence presents itself. Then the label of insanity is thrown upon the person, in such a diagnosis, or 'mental unhealth'. This, what follows, is what I'm endeavouring to reach as a conclusion of this digression: the standard of health is a discursive construct. Why? – Because it, the 'symptoms' of the 'disease' were never present before the psychoanalyst discovered them. But it is the manner (always discursive) in which he does discover them that they reveal themselves to the believing patient. But this patient, in his complexity, may simply be on the verge of building something of great import which necessitated the drives being in this alignment; and to diagnose – that is to say 'to discursively construct' the patient as a schizoid or whatever else is to take away the wellsprings and the strength needed for those greater actions to fructify, for an auspicious eruption to engulf the world of the patient with its

promise of happiness made good – and if not happiness then action, or whatever other purpose or end or lack thereof that this was leading.

The norms of those people are political and one purported to have far-reaching application over all – all that are ‘good’ and approbated – representatives of the body politic, the lowly worms who crawl. Who desires to do anything about them when one’s concerns are bound towards greater things?

A whole-hearted rejection of such norms is heeded and a veneration of those great figures that the media presents (for how else could history exist?), those elected as of greatest appeal: Mussolini, Hitler, and so on down the list of masculinity all should serve as one’s standards, of my own for, not being a politician, I don’t impose my ideals upon the world and the ‘Other’.

Towards a Racial Identity

“On the wish to live, like Mowgli, in the forest with wolves as my adopted parents”

I could write such a piece but then would have to reproach myself for soliciting globalization and all too intimately seeking involvement therein. Why? The answer is obvious: by transforming myself, a Teutonic male, into a brown-skin salvage, by erasing my genetic history, by discolouring my racial purity, I would imply (or it – the action – would seem to imply) that I have forsaken my genetic ties to this earth and all of that – culture, history, character – which is entailed by such genetics. - And for what? – For a donning of the parti-coloured, technicoloured dreamcoat of a lack of racial identity through complete racial ecstasy, a hypertrophic proliferation of all races through the self, so that, like primary colours when mixed, I arrive at this swarthy brown skin into which I have become bound. And this is the type of wish of the present age: “that I, a representative of the modern/ post-modern times, the decade of attainment of civilization (though not of course without its problems); that I, such as one, adopt the manners and forms of the pygmy and the Asiatic, of the negroid and the Arab – in short, of all of those races disparate to me, all on the premise that this act will be instrumental in the unification, always ideological and formal at first (because everything issues from ‘rational choice’ of course) of all difference into a bland and homogenized identity.”

This is the statement of the asexual, non-sexual (and yet profligate and hedonistic) representative of contemporary identity, that is to say, an identity lacking all concrete identity but a capricious juxtaposition of all parts, selected (always rationally) from just about every eclectic sphere of socio-politico-economic and cultural reality at his/her/its avail. This is the common notion of the construction of an identity, a ‘self’.

So now I no longer wish to be as Mowgli, the swarthy-skinned savage, but rather as a Teutonic being emanating from the rough and humid-atmospheric lands of the north countries. I feel the cool solemnity of barren rock and oceanic expanse of rolling hills and of soil for the cultivation of greatness – from out of which each Teuton, as potentiality, springs, from out of which the future – if it were not for this mass presence of the downtrodden – will spring. It is a racial, sexual, and identitarian cold war, always based upon the ideological premises of formal being, of that being and creature of, for example, the charter of rights and freedoms.

And in the process of this cold war, the concrete identity of the earth, of genetic-racial ties thereto, is worn away as a pounding reef wears away a noble cliff, attempting to precipitate its collapse. But the pounding was not recognized by the cliff, so high did it stand; rather it was only until it noticed the itch of the degeneration of its structure – as cliff, as highest height – that it began to put up a resistance.

Many too many in this degenerate age are becoming consumed by the tides of these subtle Asiatic mongrels, these downtrodden races, these amalgamated forms who derive themselves genetically in a diasporic way from all across the vast earth (and, through being so dispersed claim worldliness as opposed to the character of being lost as an identity in the midst of each and every racial element not co-aligned with those others intermingled within itself, a rift and strife within the parti-coloured 'self' no longer a 'self' but dispersed). They were once pure of race, the standard which is itself based upon locality, upon geographical similarity, but now, apropos of the liberal creed of equalization of the unequal, as mythologizing the unequal and thus difference, all racial purity has become tainted.

And people want to be Mowgli in these days! Is it not sad that they would forsake that element of strength, acting as a source of inspiration and this phenomenally, a knowing oneself through one's own body as a lived being explained in large part by his earthly genetic ties. They would forsake this, not for a god-like absolute of wholly mundane earthliness but for that transcendental barren womb of Everyman, of an earth mother that has no ties to anyone and who through impotent barrenness spawned none save the utterly general, utterly formal and thus empty, premises, arguments, and conclusions (never conclusive other than in-themselves) of liberalism and democracy. It is these which are the discreet courtiers of this worldly palace of ideology, hiding behind their flowing silk-robed backs, a curved knife to be burrowed into the neck of the once-noble king, the aristocratic powers-that-be. – But they no longer breathe and now must remain a memory forever clouded and besmirched by the mongrel pack who, whining and lick their nervous lips, have cast their urine and filth upon the strong, shaking all the while lest those stronger than them notice the fact and can rebel against the sheer numbers of these vermin beings.

Is there a hope for a nobler tomorrow – I won't even say 'nobler' but – noble? Is there any way that this abominable force of mass-mediocrity, of the sovereignty of the lowest

common denominator, can be effaced by those forces strong enough – which begs the question: are there any such forces remaining in society and, can they employ their strength in that net in which they are caught? It is my sincere hope that the assertion of one's racial purity attains to such intense pitch that it has the power to sunder the glass prison in which it has been encased. There is not much time – the hope lies with proselytes of lived and living identity.

Philosophical dictionary

1. (inclusio): pictorio-advertising: is: aesthetic marketing
2. qualico-quantifiablecility): the qualification of quantity is the quantification of quality
3. metaphor: that which unifies two otherwise irrelevant things, binds them from free-floating distincts to a single concept and/or incoming [in an image]
4. reason(s): answer(s) to 'why' question(s)
5. phonos humorous: that which sounds funny, sounding funny, etc.
6. 'because': an indefinite reason
7. spontaneity: an intuitive flash of life (inner/outer)
8. imagination: (formal aspect): the instancing of hypothetical realities
(informal aspect): the amorphous play of dreams, of unrealized acts
9. term: that word or conglomerate of words that serves to denote the essence of a subject or predicate
10. money: the ultimate control constant
11. politics: the representation of class interests by an organized body ostensibly derived from these same (generally the elite classes)
12. wisdom: a productive power of thought wholly independent, thus a higher power
13. essence: the explanation of a thing and it is also the thing being explained
14. reality: an irreducible constant (the in-itself-for-itself)
15. 'driven comportment': entails the formula 'what, why, and how' as its constitutive basis or essence.
16. circumstances: material-historical situation
17. society: anonymity
18. will: intentional action
19. system: a nexus of relative objects (relativity)
20. apology: a moral soporific

On Computers

Which is more the virus – the computer or the viruses which it is susceptible to? The ‘computer virus’ is of course a metaphor meaning a dysfunctional quiddity in the otherwise completely functional ethos of the computer – it is threatened in its function in other words. Now is its function, and this is the question, a desirable thing or is its dysfunction desirable? If a computer could make a choice pertaining to its good it may very well say that it chooses to function, for this is its entelechia. But no such choice can it avail itself of, so it is a question of who may choose and the user of the computer has foisted upon himself this task of choosing: to contaminate the computer or not? The basis of his choice is whether or not he defines himself as a ‘user’ if so he will elect to subserve the functionality of the computer, he will play the doctor and cure it of its ills – if not he will allow it to die its own-most electronic death.

The computer is silent now; it has been put to sleep, that provisional death from which waking is born as a possibility. In this case, my own possibility of choosing to awaken this beast or to allow it to die presents itself to me and I act accordingly: whether a ‘user’ or not, a subversive or a dependent, once bound to the electronic visual realm which distorts conscious. Why would anyone voluntarily desire to distort the very screen of their lives when they could have a world emancipated from that same narrow screen? This is the goal determining one as a ‘user’ or not, and to what degree, and this in turn determines the fate of the machine: whether it is worthy of use or not – one must in deciding whether he is a user, acknowledge what goals he has and what he will be defining, himself as when he embarks upon the mission of computer usage.

People live their lives by proxy, through the medium of electronica – they are screened out, subservient to the visual screen, perhaps imperceptibly magnetized by the radioactive properties of the screen which impels them towards it, damaging flesh and brain cells as it does. – And why? – Because it claims to contain the totality of human knowledge, information, in potentia? But it does so impotently, as a mere graphic form of information, which graphai are not stable or constant, which flit across the vision blurring it, which are swallowed in a multi-coloured pit of oblivion. An endless scroll that rolls in starts and stops, secret passages to other realms through clicking upon a box – a Pandora’s box of pestilential mystery, a harbinger of thoughtless being

unhealthy radiating echoes of meaning – so meaningless in themselves that they defy the value of pursuing such machines.

The life of contemporary man if lived inside of a machine such as this – finds a whole world of simulation discoverable therein and solicits it with anxious grin and discovers oblivion – nothing more – that's all computers have in store is an endlessly spiralling insanity precipitated by the radiating vision-obscuring rolling scrolls and their pavenity of meaning.

Computers – you have to have virus – prophylactic protection against the viruses which are forever being made – an interesting plot indeed! Create a need and then create impediments to this same which in turn require (and are thus needed) other needs to maintain the original need – original as primary commodity – but where does this need originate? Surely within the brain of the needy who adopts this – existentielle, this modus of being, when he has it implanted as a seed in his mind by marketers and advertisers – clever aren't they? He must adopt it and based upon the strongest argument: ad populun – 'They' are doing it (they of the uppercase 'T') and so shall I because I consider myself one of them; thus I must have these needs, I must need of necessity. 'To need' is the existentielle adopted by those who have a lack, who lack something within themselves, and that is simply what they need – tautology. To speak positively 'to need' is to procure, to have and to pursue it with desperation. That is the attitude of consumerism, engendered as it is by the body politic.

Computers are a representative commodity form – they entail a surfeit of needs putting themselves forth as vital deficiencies. But a computer is not vital, nor (and for this reason) doesn't have any pressing necessity bound up with it.

Who would elect to radiate his testes with a machine that has the power to damage limbs, skin, vision, the body corporeal in its total presence? That contravenes health, and contravening it is, for the healthy aspirants of health, something negative, to be negated and cancelled out, erased from the horizon of one's possible choice. I choose not to pursue computers and will pocket a handy amount of money in turn. The computer, electronic generation it may be proclaimed by political economy to be – but I forsake it and choose a life in and amidst Eden, harmonious greensward awaiting me when I soon escape the torturous character of diseased radiation.

To be a deep thinker it is thought that one must have about him a seriousness expressed in his frowning face – a furrowed testament to profundity. But smiling faces abound when immersed in the most challenging intellectual work. It is challenge which procures enjoyment.

The type of intellectual work determines what one will have as an attitudinal comportment towards it – mathematics engenders a silly, drifting naiveté, a vision of clouds above in the most vivid colours – it lies on the logical structure is – Tartuffe. Void of content all empirical contents being placed within that form are directly viewed through the grid-work of mathematics' iron necessity. Thus math can be anything from art to science in its utter pavenity.

Conceptual work engenders an attitude of attempting to understand what exactly (if indeed there is an exactly) its meaning is – thus it begets a determined frown upon the brow. But let us not judge superficially, for that same determined frown is one springing of a joyous will (more often than not) and when joyous the problems under consideration are of infinite consideration accorded – until they are solved or their enjoyment wears away – for to struggle is the greatest enjoyment of all.

The ethical function of art

Once I had conceived of classicism and the renaissance, romantic art also, as the canon of all other art forms by which they were judged although paradoxically I left them (in judgment) as supplying their own standards.

This paradox was the wellspring of doubt and doubting/questioning I begged answers from my own ignorance. The old standards were, and are at the moment I write this, being levelled to prepare the earth for new forms of ethical existence, new modes of existing which lead towards new and different ideals. For art redounds to life as a goad, a persuasion, a subtle caress which moves the resisting hand of obduracy from the lever of one's narrow machine and project. He is taken away from same, turns off the machine and builds it from the ground up, alters or dynamites it to serve his ethical ideal springing from an aesthetic fount as it does like a new life from the womb of the earth.

By latching onto the ideals of classicism (in its ancient Mediterranean forms of Greece and the Hellenes, in its renaissance forms, a re-nascence of same, in its romantic forms of idealized human figures) I attempting to cultivate a character in the light of nobility shining from the figures, the light use and archetypically human anatomical forms inherent in this media. Now, with such a character forged, it once again plunges into a crisis – not a holocaust but a cool spring, fresh and invigorating. The endlessly novel, innate too thought as a drive away from itself towards the unknown, once again arises paramount and takes one up on its wings towards ever-new regions, imaginative topographical loci in which it will relish its being there as a being-in-itself content in its own self-exercise – perhaps more.

The prescription of aesthetics is the ethical aspect of the assumption of aesthetic standards, those towards which one is inclined, and from which he derives his being. Why? Is it not because aesthetics is imaging the world, and to 'image'. The world is to have a conception of it, namely as a meaningful totality fragmented conceptually perhaps into a multiplicity of 'beings' traceable or untraceable to that being from which (again perhaps) there derive themselves?

To imagine the world through having assumed aesthetic standards is to create a world – the only choice available to humans, the fate as creators of their own private or communicable reality – and to embed one's thoughts with certain aesthetic

inclinations is to create a thought of a certain 'colour' so-to-speak. One's thoughts become what one is and one is thinking so he is being and creating who he is. There is no discovery only invention, for to discover is to invent the conception of discovery. To pronounce 'eureka' is to put forth an assumption following the logic of discovery, but to put forth a state-of-affairs (created, the creation itself) from a different perspective, namely that of art.

Aesthetics is the taking of a perspective, imagining a given thing which is and becomes through this act the thing imagined, in other words not a thing unconcealed in revelatory 'eureka' but rather a thing created in the furnace of the imagination.

The glass, filled with mineral-replete water, is cloudy and afterwards the cloudiness recedes, ascends from bottom to top rendering the contents clear. This could serve as a metaphor for analytic thinking and a basis, and empirical ground, for time determination, a new form of water clock. Clarity being achieved I desire to discuss the separation existent between psychological types and the *causa efficiens* of this separation. The cause is the knowledge constitutive of an identifiable with this same psychological type, namely the discourse which is the thinking itself. Here I accept all valences of thought, all of thought's motivations and movements, as discursive, as being meaningful for a thinker a discursive agent. To think here is to create linguistic movement but language is far from being an atomistic thing reducible to simple elements. Rather it is holistically the totality of meaning, not merely the vehicle of same. As such language pervades reality and is the real itself, language is the rational, picking apart immediately and reuniting it with itself, and is thus the world in its entirety as the world of meanings.

To know is to know as agent, as knowledge flowing forth towards entities not oneself, namely his creative products. The manner in which one exists knowledge (as knowledge *tout court*) is his psychological type. The scientific thinker must assume and analyze on this basis as the artistic must create from out himself, possessing as he does a clarity which serves as the backdrop to his making manifest those conceptual, imaginative constructs of idealism which are his own. Each type appears so wholly separate and yet not one thinker is wholly one or the other. It is a result of the learning process that one becomes constituted as the type he is; if he gravitates towards art then he develops a mind which is predominantly artistic and so

forth with the different types. But this psychological typology of course rests upon assumptions that they are separate and is a function of its own assumptions are the conclusions which it reaches.

And yet the types appear so distinct and are so readily conceived of as a result of the learning process that it is difficult not to accord veracity to the nature of a psychological typology based upon the extreme division of 'aesthetic-reflective' on 'logical-poetic'. And yet poetry has its own inner logic just as the sciences of math and physics have a poetic quality about them about the way in which they flow towards their results in a linear, or circuitous and winding manner. All of this is seated in the imagination, in that faculty of the brain which is not locally situated but which is rather the pervasive quality of that organ itself, the image presenting, assembling, and constructing process of the operation of thinking. The distinctions, the nature of such a physiological typology of 'right brain - left brain', are a result of the thinking of it and not at all dirempted thought as a corporeal complex somehow the ground of its 'product' like a machine which drives the acts and operations of the being in question in this case the brain.

Thinking is the brain as the brain is thinking, as the man is the totality of his acts and they are him externalizing himself in the world. The outer is the inner and both are merely positivistic assumptions.

Art has an ethical function as the very structure of the imagination and it is this same which redounds to praxis. The causal chain here is causal only in abstracto - realiter it is a development flow towards action.

Whatever 'antecedently' is present is consciousness is so only in an irreducible moment, in the nun, for it becomes action instantly, and the action becomes, relative to one's agency, no longer his but a part of the not-I. But assume it is still 'his' - then the world is his also. Perhaps creation, artistic creation, is an attempt at the usurpation of the world?

Visual arguments: How one stands on this issue determines his conception of art (assuming that arguments are logical chains of reasoning that attempt to propound an idea, value, or, generally speaking, a 'posit'). By conceiving of visual arguments one assumes that there is an ulteriority within the visual, something behind the appearance. But no merely something ideational, meaningful and valuable, something that, rather, has an inherent logical form which these values, ideas, and meanings can be derived from as the conclusions, purposes, of the process which is (perhaps) necessarily undergone in one's confrontation with them (visuals) and which is the intent of the visual.

That the visual has an intent is an assumption, that it even has an audience or is intended to be revealed to audiences is another. Be that as it may, visuals do contain – although not in themselves – values, meanings and so forth that are placed therein by human agency, the result of the reading of the visual text: always interpretive in the broad sense, never a narrow product in instantaneity as a necessary result of the relations between the objects, man and world.

By taking a stance upon art as something which necessarily conveys A or B is to say that its function is extremely limited and is nothing but a corpse to be sent to the archival morgue of scholarship, to be taught, retaught, and regurgitated time and again. The architectonic of aesthetics has the limiting function of shutting art up in an archivists room, boxed and neglected. But art should have living ethical function and to merely put it forth as scholarship, as something exhausted in its being through scholarship, is absurd and defeats the purpose of art, which is to mystify, elude reason and purpose, and to remain on the plane of immanence without venturing forth towards the sepulchre of reason and its stale concrete walls.

To totalize art in a meta-narrative, the province of philosophy, is to put it aside and defeat its purpose. Yet here it is on one side with philosophy on the other. Or is this at all the case? When philosophy lies implicit in art and vice versa (in the case of metaphor)? Arguments can be visual – but only insofar as they are merely an attempt to communicate meaning and not to put it in the order of canonical forms.

Mathematics, the canon of all canons as it takes everything in its most abstract and simple form, may be a part of art, but it is a tool alone, not an explanatory device of analysis.

The tools of abstraction and argumentation pick apart but do not synthesize. This has, in the realm of the intellect, its province as imagination, in the external world that of art are always to the good. Language as an attempt to grasp being is and must remain language in and of itself, not a system except in the broadest sense of symbols conveying concepts in conjunction with one another – an atomistic, analytical, and constructive system comprising all languages and all symbolic forms. This is symbolic language however and the totality of language is ubiquitous, the meaning of everything (language is meaning), the being of human reality, communication with self, with others, and with the divine. Thus the totality of language can only be judged by the standard of the meaningful – even nonsense has meaning, meaning as absurdity.

It is in this sense (this meaning) that art and aesthetic forms, insofar as they are forms identifiable in their identity, in their revelation to self has communicable meaning.

“He was wont to rune to himself as he sat alone, thrust aside by his sons as childish.”

– M. Franklin, ‘All That Swagger’

The above quote illustrates quite well the separation of the generations. The old problems are now grown grey and archaic, they lie in the archives of history supplanted by the new, themselves being fated to die with the inexorable corruption of their history which will sweep them within itself, the new waves of the coming generation’s onslaught. Rune here means to lament – it could equally well mean to write for writing is a means of understanding one’s emotions and in ‘runing’ one speaks to himself in a certain tongue, that of abstraction.

I, an empirical existent, never write about myself but here I endeavour to do so. The above quote pertains to an interesting psychological study forged in the furnace of Christianity, my father. Weeping away as not having any understanding of how to relate to his sons who view his acts as childish he pines away, laments, runes, that this fate has befallen him. But what brought about this fate and why should it be so lamentable, that fate of being neglected and cast off? I don’t even desire to continue a psychological study of the self-pitier for the simple fact that this one is merely unworthy of contemplation, a sad case which brings one down, dragging him to the depths.

The city is like the raucous mind, always tepid, hot and furtive, questing after that which it doesn't have as a presence. This explains, perhaps, why the mind that is so formed – in the image of ecstasy, of going-beyond-oneself, being-in-the-midst-of-the-world – always gravitates towards city life and only in old age, when the metabolism has forced such a soul to calm down does it do so and seek out a quiet loess in which to rest its weary carrier the body. – And conversely, that mind which is the silence of a peaceful countryside always finds itself most suited to living a retiring life therein, in the topography where it may best view the beings that it yearns to know and to create with. The city engenders an ardent questing, but one without a definite object, without content of any stable kind. It is forever seeking its own absence in the beings that surround it. Perhaps this is explained by its inability to tolerate itself as it is itself barren, full of anxiety, woe, doubt, and troubled emotions of all kinds.

The distinction between the artistic and the pornographic

I walk into a museum and have a look at the works which have astonishingly been put up on public display. Astonishingly as they are in themselves, as works of art, as products and progeny springing from the womb of human creation, they are a far cry from those standards which can be called 'aesthetic'. They fall short of them by such a distance as to accrue shame to those who erect them in their living rooms for the entertainment of a few private guests. But why call them so derogatively: failures? Simply because (and here I propound a canon of aesthetics) they do not involve any characteristics which correspond, on the one hand, to natural kinds (art qua the beautiful, the beautiful qua representative of nature in artistic form) which is the classical definition of art, and, on the other hand, possess little in the way of strenuous exertion and utmost devotion.

Ethically they are justified; at least for those who view them as representatives (biological art works) of the norm, and the administrative bodies who pander to them in their pursuit of profitization. They are justified, as the ethic of the artist in the execution of the artwork is on a par with their own: leivitous, cynical, curious – never serious, never experiencing the deepest ecstasies of the act of creation taken as an in-itself (which fact, I suppose, explains why the artists – let's call them that – prostitute themselves and their art to the means, namely money, and not the act of creation itself).

But all of this aside. Ethics spring from art as art does from ethics – not as disciplines or theoretical discourses but through the human vehicles who believe in and espouse them. This, I suppose, is why I do not look upon these objects as art – there is heterogeneity in the two ethics – myself and the other.

Art thus is defined as appeal. On the reflective plan that immediate appeal is picked apart and analyzed and reconstituted – the most superficial presentation to consciousness might be the post appealing – a beam of sunlight which appears, apropos of what the observer doesn't know or attempt to know, through a slit in a blind. Art is not pure appeal at the level of immanence, it is the human engineering of appeal (which constitutes the objective character of art) and this same having a lasting appeal within the observer, an appeal which, following classical lines of definition, does not excite the sexual instinct.

But classicism is an archaism and the 'sex instinct' an assumption alone. Appeal is a desiring flow a positive movement towards something, and thus not only not emancipated from sexuality (i.e. desire) but rooted firmly within it. Why then, can't pornography be art? You depict a man with a flaccid penis – and it's art. An erect penis – and it's pornography. But what if the flaccid penis had a face (the man's face) which had a look of perverse lechery on it and the picture (painted, photographed, sculpted) of the erect penis was attached to a body, the harkened to the noble classicism of ancient Greece? Would that merely express anachronistic properties or would it be art in the latter case and pornography in the former? – Or vice versa? Would both be struck of the list of 'Art'?

It is simply a question of criteria, and whether they can have an absolute foundation in an allegedly contingent being (human) or if all such criteria, in its complete positivism, is vain and incomprehensible? But by simply posing such conceptions, that of the impossibility of aesthetic norms for example, the flood gates of ugliness open and pictures and 'displays' (for lack of a better term) are what galleries trumpet as the nouveau aesthetic.

A philosophical question perhaps without any answer except the pragmatic, the positivistic, and the historico-relative. But on the other side of the superficial stands philosophy in its authentic being, namely that of universalizing, the creation of conceptual norms and the judgment of empirical realities thereby – and the purification, by these standards, of galleries and the public sphere of that chant of the masses: 'everything is permitted!'

When a rat squeaks it is annoying, but not intolerable. But when a trio of rats do the squeaking, and grow bolder by the strength of their numbers, is it tolerable? How long can one hold out when a multitude, a vast sea of furry rodents, squeal and shriek as they attempt to overpower stronger forces? The force of aesthetics should be exercised and serve as a nullification, similar to a nuclear explosion, of these cries so that only silence ensues in the confrontation of these rats with a being beyond themselves, namely art.

And yet pornography? It is the obscene, the excess, that which, through its very excess, destroys the standards which purport to hem it in. It is, like any discursive construct, a function of how it is constructed (defined, described, etc.), and if we

define it as obscenity, that which has the function of destroying previous standards (art and aesthetics) than it becomes the new standard as the principle of chaos in relation to order, non-reason to reason, etc. But it is a descriptor simply for the motley hodgepodge that constitutes the nouveau art: post-modern pastiche, the assemblage of the disparate as opposed to the ordering of elements in and by reason, canons, aesthetic architectonics. People rebel against systems not only because they totalize and limit, but because of their difficulty. – And that which is difficult is most worthwhile (in thought and thinking). – But people don't want to think anymore, they don't want difficulty, they want intellectual pornography, a warped and homogenized way in which to know and comprehend the world – this through the baseness of the art of present times. That's why art is pornography in this present day. But what of the more direct references to sexual pornography, to the heroic form made all the more heroic perhaps, by his possession of an erect phallus? Why should this be tainted by the word pornography? Pornography should only refer to the obscene and these words used interchangeably, the sexual sphere, as with all others that pertain to and evoke aesthetic analysis, reflection and experience, being susceptible of both.

I call pornographic, with reference to a sexual sense, a portrait (sculpted, painted, photographed, etc.) which attempts all too obviously (and thus with obscenity) claims to 'be art', to be artistic through its obvious depiction of the human form: a girl standing naked in the rain. Give me the phallus man, symbol of masculine virility, a presentation, an aesthetic sign, which points beyond itself and represents human striving, rudimentary 'trieb' in all of its givenness.

Art is not a simple, bold-faced attempt to portray nudity or other, it is rather an attempt to convey being-in-itself to the for-itself and as such is thoroughly representative, a finite representation of that which cannot exist as finite otherwise, namely the vast movement of Being contained as a cessation, within a picture frame, a window into the beyond, the field of imagination.

The temptation of laziness descends upon me and with it I solicit ideals of a weaker, less interesting character. They interest my laziness but it is this which I would desire to emancipate myself from. We 'the people' are always being in a certain capacity, but each and every capacity reflexively refers to the standard of our being, namely who we in fact are, and thus they are mere abstractions. It is an invocation of the principle of conservation is acting towards a specific goal in a specific mode – we conserve energy for employment in one or another area – we allot and allocate, the function of existence is the allocation and generation of energies for the realization of goals and as an in-itself the goals themselves, in their being played out as well as in their being worked up, are the goal, are existence.

Nosferatu's Question

The sun sets and with it Nosferatu stalks the hallowed and sombre environs.

This treatise purports to be a psychological study, an investigation into the psychology of peasants, which is to say the same as the average-everyday middle-class bourgeois representatives.

How can I equalize both seemingly heterogeneous forms? By what standard o' arrogant fool! – Thus the charge levelled against me by the hypothetical interlocutor. Well in answer I need only say their naïve adherence to orthodox systems of rationality (the ratio of things, the standards, reasons and means of conceptual grasp of the unknown).

Phenomena such as this Nosferatu being once shocked the peasants. Now it is ridiculed by those who plume themselves upon having a scientific conception of things. What should be ridiculed however is the utterly shocking presumption that such people know anything but knowledge itself. – They know nothing more than their own knowing and delude themselves more often than not in the task. Why should a non-belief in spectres of this sort, spectres which introduce an attitude of interest in the surroundings of the world, interest as something which could fly up and kill one in an instant, be repudiated in favour of the nihilism consequent of a faith – always of a naïve kind – in the nihilism of science. Annihilation of human reality as insistent upon bracketing off human evolvment in favour of the cold sterility of objective truth, not borne of humans as knowers but of a system which explains, describes, controls, and puts in place everything outside of it.

The psychology to be investigated here is that of the naïve materialist, he who views and comports himself towards a world which has become 'merely' irreducible substance, matter, etc. To simply view a situation – without even conceiving of it as 'situation' – without analyzing it or attempting to circumscribe it in thought – to view it naively in other words and feel that such a conception is sufficient to really comprehend, though the guarantor of science in its popular form, is a deplorable way of thought.

Science claims to be causal and analytical, and as such implies that which is other than what is – implies abstraction and is thus a rational system. As such it forbids naiveté qua taking what is with a simple explanation like substance – it does this at

least in general. In fact, however, science claims an incessant investigation and it is only a slavish devotion to a motley group of superficial laws which constitutes its devaluation in naïve scientific conception. This conception deserves the term 'scientific' appended to it. But the alien quality of science, that it claims that its means of constituting reality conceptually are really an isomorphic confrontation with the world, that it is inhuman, factoring in no human elements (so it would claim, even though the factoring is the most human of all elements) – leads to a dogmatism in relation to acceptance of empirical phenomena, with their 'laws' and 'necessary processes' and to a nihilism in relation to belief in 'the human'. Is this morally bad? If 'the human' and an acknowledgement that there is a human reality out there is trodden in the mud of its own becoming illusory, then, if this is valuable to people then the Nosferatu figure is less monstrous than the amorphous.

OLD WRITINGS 2003-2005/6

Appearances

I have a shirt on that's suggestive of bourgeois comfort; a quasi-regal character about it, soft, earth-toned, elegantly cut and fitting an athletic frame which attempts to give it the fullness of a mannequin - just as any store-bought being taken from off the shelves and packaged on a mannequin form. The shirt speaks of unobtrusive bourgeois sensibilities, it placates a forward thrust and bloodcurdling urge to affirm oneself - a soft brown stagnation which stagnates that which it covers, as if to say: 'I don't care much. Not to say I'm indifferent but simply to express my own unwillingness to commit to anything definite - the definite is so crude.'

All I desire is the hardest of colours: black, white, neon - colours which shock and which proclaim my own affirmative upsurge in a world which is far too placid - a ripple on the pool of life. Why not a wave - a typhoon! But these are difficult achievements and I, affirmative being, slide back into bourgeois stagnation as I doubt my own upsurge.

What, really, is the meaning of all of this, my surrounding prison? - The prison of comfort and of petty strife - a limitation, a goad, a curse and blight upon the earth. The earth as what it could be - my own; something beyond the petty conceptions of bourgeois possessiveness!

I always find myself struggling against bourgeoisdom - to overcome the overcoming, to give battle to the swine in shimmering peal-hard armour. What! Do they deserve my strivings? Do they deserve the attention a warrior could give? All around me I experience the utter baseness of people - animals rather, the debasing of man, the affirmation of fools.

I write between the lines - but do not read between them! The only bounds which I have imposed upon myself are those I pose. I voluntarily write along a linear track of empty space, eating up empty space with the words and their implicit meaning - made explicit through hard, cold, syntax. Reading between the lines cannot be done from a superficial text - it is too small, the words too crowded - all that exists there as meaning is blackness.

I, a writer aspiring ('I'll never articulate 'being'), can never write the heights, transcribe them upon a blankly receptive page - for all around me exists that overcrowded blackness of meaninglessness - black foolishness of petty bourgeois noises. Noises and images which reproach others and which is their sole intention - to be reproachful, to make others attend to them; they who are too insignificant to merit attention in any other form but that of annoyance and critical negation. Is it my fate to be a flyswatter? I must learn to be indifferent to worldly crudity, to experience better things through my field of vision - not focus it so narrowly upon fools and the thoughtless - for they shouldn't exist as anything but tools and animals. If they

outlive their function, even though they possess animate being or potentially animate being, they are dead.

I don't want to be a destroyer of goods who have perished already - I am not a garbage man or an alley-cat gobbling dead fish and rancid milk - let them curdle and rot in the hot sun of my strivings, for they don't belong in my world. The world must grow to monadological proportions - and become boundless in imaginative ones. The concrete proportions of a narrow room filled only with tangible silence and secret thoughts of electric current. - The currency which really can be said to be an appropriate investment - the only one.

For Brian

request: please have

(Ginoma here) 'Ginoma' document

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It is my health

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