



P E N G U I N



C L A S S I C S

HANNAH ARENDT

Between Past and Future

Introduction by JEROME KOHN

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THE CRISIS IN CULTURE:

Its Social and Its Political Significance

I

For more than ten years now, we have witnessed a still growing concern among intellectuals with the relatively new phenomenon of mass culture. The term itself clearly derives from the not much older term "mass society"; the tacit assumption, underlying all discussions of the matter, is that mass culture, logically and inevitably, is the culture of mass society. The most significant fact about the short history of both terms is that, while even a few years ago they were still used with a strong sense of reprobation—implying that mass society was a depraved form of society and mass culture a contradiction in terms—they now have become respectable, the subject of innumerable studies and research projects whose chief effect, as Harold Rosenberg pointed out, is "to add to kitsch an intellectual dimension." This "intellectualization of kitsch" is justified on the grounds that mass society, whether we like it or not, is going to stay with us into the foreseeable future; hence its "culture," "popular culture [cannot] be left to the populace."¹ However, the question is whether what is true for mass society is true for mass culture also, or, to put it another way, whether the relationship between mass society and culture will be, *mutatis mutandis*, the same as the relation of society toward culture which preceded it.

The question of mass culture raises first of all another and more fundamental problem, namely, the highly problematic relationship of society and culture. One needs only to recall to what an extent the entire movement of modern art started with

a vehement rebellion of the artist against society as such (and not against a still unknown mass society) in order to become aware how much this earlier relationship must have left to be desired and thus to beware of the facile yearning of so many critics of mass culture for a Golden Age of good and genteel society. This yearning is much more widespread today in America than it is in Europe for the simple reason that America, though only too well acquainted with the barbarian philistinism of the nouveaux-riches, has only a nodding acquaintance with the equally annoying cultural and educated philistinism of European society, where culture has acquired snob-value, where it has become a matter of status to be educated enough to appreciate culture; this lack of experience may even explain why American literature and painting has suddenly come to play such a decisive role in the development of modern art and why it can make its influence felt in countries whose intellectual and artistic vanguard has adopted outspoken anti-American attitudes. It has, however, the unfortunate consequence that the profound malaise which the very word "culture" is likely to evoke precisely among those who are its foremost representatives may go unnoticed or not be understood in its symptomatic significance.

Yet whether or not any particular country has actually passed through all stages in which society developed since the rise of the modern age, mass society clearly comes about when "the mass of the population has become incorporated into society."² And since society in the sense of "good society" comprehended those parts of the population which disposed not only of wealth but of leisure time, that is, of time to be devoted to "culture," mass society does indeed indicate a new state of affairs in which the mass of the population has been so far liberated from the burden of physically exhausting labor that it too disposes of enough leisure for "culture." Hence, mass society and mass culture seem to be interrelated phenomena, but their common denominator is not the mass but rather the society into which the masses too have been incorporated. Historically as well as conceptually, mass society was preceded by society, and society is no more a generic term than mass society; it too can be dated and described historically; it is older, to be sure, than mass

society, but not older than the modern age. In fact, all the traits that crowd psychology has meanwhile discovered in mass man: his loneliness—and loneliness is neither isolation nor solitude—regardless of his adaptability; his excitability and lack of standards; his capacity for consumption, accompanied by inability to judge, or even to distinguish; above all, his egocentricity and that fateful alienation from the world which since Rousseau is mistaken for self-alienation—all these traits first appeared in good society, where there was no question of masses, numerically speaking.

Good society, as we know it from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, probably had its origin in the European courts of the age of absolutism, especially the court society of Louis XIV, who knew so well how to reduce French nobility to political insignificance by the simple means of gathering them at Versailles, transforming them into courtiers, and making them entertain one another through the intrigues, cabals, and endless gossip which this perpetual party inevitably engendered. Thus the true forerunner of the novel, this entirely modern art form, is not so much the picaresque romance of adventurers and knights as the *Mémoires* of Saint-Simon, while the novel itself clearly anticipated the rise of the social sciences as well as of psychology, both of which are still centered around conflicts between society and the "individual." The true forerunner of modern mass man is this individual, who was defined and indeed discovered by those who, like Rousseau in the eighteenth century or John Stuart Mill in the nineteenth century, found themselves in open rebellion against society. Since then, the story of a conflict between society and its individuals has repeated itself time and again in reality no less than in fiction; the modern, and no longer so modern, individual forms part and parcel of the society against which he tries to assert himself and which always gets the better of him.

There is, however, an important difference between the earlier stages of society and mass society with respect to the situation of the individual. As long as society itself was restricted to certain classes of the population, the individual's chances for survival against its pressures were rather good; they lay in the

simultaneous presence within the population of other non-society strata into which the individual could escape, and one reason why these individuals so frequently ended by joining revolutionary parties was that they discovered in those who were not admitted to society certain traits of humanity which had become extinct in society. This again found its expression in the novel, in the well-known glorifications of the workers and proletarians, but also, more subtly, in the role assigned to homosexuals (for instance in Proust) or to Jews, that is, to groups which society had never quite absorbed. The fact that the revolutionary élan throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was so much more violently directed against society than against states and governments is not only due to the predominance of the social question in the sense of the twofold predicament of misery and exploitation. We need only to read the record of the French Revolution, and to recall to what an extent the very concept of *le peuple* received its connotations from an outrage of the "heart"—as Rousseau and even Robespierre would have said—against the corruption and hypocrisy of the salons, to realize what the true role of society was throughout the nineteenth century. A good part of the despair of individuals under the conditions of mass society is due to the fact that these avenues of escape are now closed because society has incorporated all strata of the population.

Here we are not concerned with the conflict between the individual and society, however, although it is of some importance to note that the last individual left in a mass society seems to be the artist. Our concern is with culture, or rather with what happens to culture under the different conditions of society and of mass society, and our interest in the artist, therefore, does not so much concern his subjective individualism as the fact that he is, after all, the authentic producer of those objects which every civilization leaves behind as the quintessence and the lasting testimony of the spirit which animated it. That precisely the producers of the highest cultural objects, namely works of art, should turn against society, that the whole development of modern art—which together with the scientific development will probably remain the greatest achievement of our

age—should have started from and remained committed to this hostility against society demonstrates an existing antagonism between society and culture prior to the rise of mass society.

The charge the artist, as distinguished from the political revolutionary, has laid to society was summed up quite early, at the turn of the eighteenth century, in the one word which has since been repeated and reinterpreted by one generation after the other. The word is "philistinism." Its origin, slightly older than its specific use, is of no great significance; it was first used in German student slang to distinguish between town and gown, whereby, however, the Biblical association indicated already an enemy superior in numbers into whose hands one may fall. When first used as a term—I think by the German writer Clemens von Brentano, who wrote a satire on the philistine *bevor, in und nach der Geschichte*—it designated a mentality which judged everything in terms of immediate usefulness and "material values" and hence had no regard for such useless objects and occupations as are implied in culture and art. All this sounds fairly familiar even today, and it is not without interest to note that even such current slang terms as "square" can already be found in Brentano's early pamphlet.

If matters had rested there, if the chief reproach leveled against society had remained its lack of culture and of interest in art, the phenomenon with which we deal here would be considerably less complicated than it actually is; by the same token, it would be all but incomprehensible why modern art rebelled against "culture" instead of fighting simply and openly for its own "cultural" interests. The point of the matter is that this sort of philistinism, which simply consisted in being "uncultured" and commonplace, was very quickly succeeded by another development in which, on the contrary, society began to be only too interested in all these so-called cultural values. Society began to monopolize "culture" for its own purposes, such as social position and status. This had much to do with the socially inferior position of Europe's middle classes, which found themselves—as soon as they acquired the necessary wealth and leisure—in an uphill fight against the aristocracy and its contempt for the vulgarity of sheer moneymaking. In this fight for

social position, culture began to play an enormous role as one of the weapons, if not the best-suited one, to advance oneself socially, and to "educate oneself" out of the lower regions, where supposedly reality was located, up into the higher, non-real regions, where beauty and the spirit supposedly were at home. This escape from reality by means of art and culture is important, not only because it gave the physiognomy of the cultural or educated philistine its most distinctive marks, but also because it probably was the decisive factor in the rebellion of the artists against their newly found patrons; they smelled the danger of being expelled from reality into a sphere of refined talk where what they did would lose all meaning. It was a rather dubious compliment to be recognized by a society which had grown so "polite" that, for instance, during the Irish potato famine, it would not debase itself or risk being associated with so unpleasant a reality by normal usage of the word, but would henceforth refer to that much eaten vegetable by saying "that root." This anecdote contains as in a nutshell the definition of the cultured philistine.³

No doubt what is at stake here is much more than the psychological state of the artists; it is the objective status of the cultural world, which, insofar as it contains tangible things—books and paintings, statues, buildings, and music—comprehends, and gives testimony to, the entire recorded past of countries, nations, and ultimately mankind. As such, the only nonsocial and authentic criterion for judging these specifically cultural things is their relative permanence and even eventual immortality. Only what will last through the centuries can ultimately claim to be a cultural object. The point or the matter is that, as soon as the immortal works of the past became the object of social and individual refinement and the status accorded to it, they lost their most important and elemental quality, which is to grasp and move the reader or the spectator over the centuries. The very word "culture" became suspect precisely because it indicated that "pursuit of perfection" which to Matthew Arnold was identical with the "pursuit of sweetness and light." The great works of art are no less misused when they serve purposes of self-education or self-perfection than when they serve any other

purposes; it may be as useful and legitimate to look at a picture in order to perfect one's knowledge of a given period as it is useful and legitimate to use a painting in order to hide a hole in the wall. In both instances the art object has been used for ulterior purposes. All is well as long as one remains aware that these usages, legitimate or not, do not constitute the proper intercourse with art. The trouble with the educated philistine was not that he read the classics but that he did so prompted by the ulterior motive of self-perfection, remaining quite unaware of the fact that Shakespeare or Plato might have to tell him more important things than how to educate himself; the trouble was that he fled into a region of "pure poetry" in order to keep reality out of his life—for instance, such "prosaic" things as a potato famine—or to look at it through a veil of "sweetness and light."

We all know the rather deplorable art products which this attitude inspired and upon which it fed, in short the kitsch of the nineteenth century, whose historically so interesting lack of sense for form and style is closely connected with the severance of the arts from reality. The astounding recovery of the creative arts in our own century, and a perhaps less apparent but no less real recovery of the greatness of the past, began to assert itself when genteel society had lost its monopolizing grip on culture, together with its dominant position in the population as a whole. What had happened before and, to an extent, continued, of course, to happen even after the first appearance of modern art, was actually a disintegration of culture whose "lasting monuments" are the neo-Classic, neo-Gothic, neo-Renaissance structures that are strewn all over Europe. In this disintegration, culture, more even than other realities, had become what only then people began to call "value," i.e., a social commodity which could be circulated and cashed in in exchange for all kinds of other values, social and individual.

In other words, cultural objects were first despised as useless by the philistine until the cultural philistine seized upon them as a currency by which he bought a higher position in society or acquired a higher degree of self-esteem—higher, that is, than in his own opinion he deserved either by nature or by

birth. In this process, cultural values were treated like any other values, they were what values always have been, exchange values; and in passing from hand to hand they were worn down like old coins. They lost the faculty which is originally peculiar to all cultural things, the faculty of arresting our attention and moving us. When this had come about, people began to talk of the "devaluation of values" and the end of the whole process came with the "bargain sale of values" (*Ausverkauf der Werte*) during the twenties and thirties in Germany, the forties and fifties in France, when cultural and moral "values" were sold out together.

Since then cultural philistinism has been a matter of the past in Europe, and while one may see in the "bargain sale of values" the melancholy end of the great Western tradition, it is still an open question whether it is more difficult to discover the great authors of the past without the help of any tradition than it is to rescue them from the rubbish of educated philistinism. And the task of preserving the past without the help of tradition, and often even against traditional standards and interpretations, is the same for the whole of Western civilization. Intellectually, though not socially, America and Europe are in the same situation: the thread of tradition is broken, and we must discover the past for ourselves—that is, read its authors as though nobody had ever read them before. In this task mass society is much less in our way than good and educated society, and I suspect that this kind of reading was not uncommon in nineteenth-century America precisely because this country was still that "unstoried wilderness" from which so many American writers and artists tried to escape. That American action and poetry have so richly come into their own ever since Whitman and Melville may have something to do with this. It would be unfortunate indeed if out of the dilemmas and distractions of mass culture and mass society there should arise an altogether unwarranted and idle yearning for a state of affairs which is not better but only a bit more old-fashioned.

Perhaps the chief difference between society and mass society is that society wanted culture, evaluated and devaluated cultural things into social commodities, used and abused them for its

own selfish purposes, but did not "consume" them. Even in their most worn-out shapes these things remained things and retained a certain objective character; they disintegrated until they looked like a heap of rubble, but they did not disappear. Mass society, on the contrary, wants not culture but entertainment, and the wares offered by the entertainment industry are indeed consumed by society just like any other consumer goods. The products needed for entertainment serve the life process of society, even though they may not be as necessary for this life as bread and meat. They serve, as the phrase is, to while away time, and the vacant time which is whiled away is not leisure time, strictly speaking—time, that is, in which we are free *from* all cares and activities necessitated by the life process and therefore free *for* the world and its culture—it is rather left-over time, which still is biological in nature, left over after labor and sleep have received their due. Vacant time which entertainment is supposed to fill is a hiatus in the biologically conditioned cycle of labor—in the "metabolism of man with nature," as Marx used to say.

Under modern conditions, this hiatus is constantly growing; there is more and more time freed that must be filled with entertainment, but this enormous increase in vacant time does not change the nature of the time. Entertainment, like labor and sleep, is irrevocably part of the biological life process. And biological life is always, whether laboring or at rest, whether engaged in consumption or in the passive reception of amusement, a metabolism feeding on things by devouring them. The commodities the entertainment industry offers are not "things," cultural objects, whose excellence is measured by their ability to withstand the life process and become permanent appurtenances of the world, and they should not be judged according to these standards; nor are they values which exist to be used and exchanged; they are consumer goods, destined to be used up, just like any other consumer goods.

Panis et circenses truly belong together; both are necessary for life, for its preservation and recuperation, and both vanish in the course of the life process—that is, both must constantly be produced anew and offered anew, lest this process cease

entirely. The standards by which both should be judged are freshness and novelty, and the extent to which we use these standards today to judge cultural and artistic objects as well, things which are supposed to remain in the world even after we have left it, indicates clearly the extent to which the need for entertainment has begun to threaten the cultural world. Yet the trouble does not really stem from mass society or the entertainment industry which caters to its needs. On the contrary, mass society, since it does not want culture but only entertainment, is probably less of a threat to culture than the philistinism of good society; despite the often described malaise of artists and intellectuals—partly perhaps due to their inability to penetrate the noisy futility of mass entertainment—it is precisely the arts and sciences, in contradistinction to all political matters, which continue to flourish. At any event, as long as the entertainment industry produces its own consumer goods, we can no more reproach it for the non-durability of its articles than we can reproach a bakery because it produces goods which, if they are not to spoil, must be consumed as soon as they are made. It has always been the mark of educated philistinism to despise entertainment and amusement, because no “value” could be derived from it. The truth is we all stand in need of entertainment and amusement in some form or other, because we are all subject to life’s great cycle, and it is sheer hypocrisy or social snobbery to deny that we can be amused and entertained by exactly the same things which amuse and entertain the masses of our fellow men. As far as the survival of culture is concerned, it certainly is less threatened by those who fill vacant time with entertainment than by those who fill it with some haphazard educational gadgets in order to improve their social standing. And as far as artistic productivity is concerned, it should not be more difficult to withstand the massive temptations of mass culture, or to keep from being thrown out of gear by the noise and humbug of mass society, than it was to avoid the more sophisticated temptations and the more insidious noises of the cultural snobs in refined society.

Unhappily, the case is not that simple. The entertainment industry is confronted with gargantuan appetites, and since its

wares disappear in consumption, it must constantly offer new commodities. In this predicament those who produce for the mass media ransack the entire range of past and present culture in the hope of finding suitable material. This material, moreover, cannot be offered as it is; it must be altered in order to become entertaining, it must be prepared to be easily consumed.

Mass culture comes into being when mass society seizes upon cultural objects, and its danger is that the life process of society (which like all biological processes insatiably draws everything available into the cycle of its metabolism) will literally consume the cultural objects, eat them up, and destroy them. Of course, I am not referring to mass distribution. When books or pictures in reproduction are thrown on the market cheaply and attain huge sales, this does not affect the nature of the objects in question. But their nature is affected when these objects themselves are changed—rewritten, condensed, digested, reduced to kitsch in reproduction, or in preparation for the movies. This does not mean that culture spreads to the masses, but that culture is being destroyed in order to yield entertainment. The result of this is not disintegration but decay, and those who actively promote it are not the Tin Pan Alley composers but a special kind of intellectuals, often well read and well informed, whose sole function is to organize, disseminate, and change cultural objects in order to persuade the masses that *Hamlet* can be as entertaining as *My Fair Lady*, and perhaps educational as well. There are many great authors of the past who have survived centuries of oblivion and neglect, but it is still an open question whether they will be able to survive an entertaining version of what they have to say.

Culture relates to objects and is a phenomenon of the world; entertainment relates to people and is a phenomenon of life. An object is cultural to the extent that it can endure; its durability is the very opposite of functionality, which is the quality which makes it disappear again from the phenomenal world by being used and used up. The great user and consumer of objects is life itself, the life of the individual and the life of society as a whole. Life is indifferent to the thingness of an object; it insists that every thing must be functional, fulfill some needs. Culture is

being threatened when all worldly objects and things, produced by the present or the past, are treated as mere functions for the life process of society, as though they are there only to fulfill some need, and for this functionalization it is almost irrelevant whether the needs in question are of a high or a low order. That the arts must be functional, that cathedrals fulfill a religious need of society, that a picture is born from the need for self-expression in the individual painter and that it is looked at because of a desire for self-perfection in the spectator, all these notions are so unconnected with art and historically so new that one is tempted simply to dismiss them as modern prejudices. The cathedrals were built *ad maiorem gloriam Dei*; while they as buildings certainly served the needs of the community, their elaborate beauty can never be explained by these needs, which could have been served quite as well by any nondescript building. Their beauty transcended all needs and made them last through the centuries; but while beauty, the beauty of a cathedral like the beauty of any secular building, transcends needs and functions, it never transcends the world, even if the content of the work happens to be religious. On the contrary, it is the very beauty of religious art which transforms religious and other-worldly contents and concerns into tangible worldly realities; in this sense all art is secular, and the distinction of religious art is merely that it "secularizes"—reifies and transforms into an "objective;" tangible, worldly presence—what had existed before outside the world, whereby it is irrelevant whether we follow traditional religion and localize this "outside" in the beyond of a hereafter, or follow modern explanations and localize it in the innermost recesses of the human heart.

Every thing, whether it is a use object, a consumer good, or a work of art, possesses a shape through which it appears, and only to the extent that something has a shape can we say that it is a thing at all. Among the things which do not occur in nature but only in the man-made world, we distinguish between use objects and art works, both of which possess a certain permanence ranging from ordinary durability to potential immortality in the case of works of art. As such, they are distinguished

from consumer goods on the one hand, whose duration in the world scarcely exceeds the time necessary to prepare them, and, on the other hand, from the products of action, such as events, deeds, and words, all of which are in themselves so transitory that they would hardly survive the hour or day they appeared in the world, if they were not preserved first by man's memory, which weaves them into stories, and then through his fabricating abilities. From the viewpoint of sheer durability, art works clearly are superior to all other things; since they stay longer in the world than anything else, they are the worldliest of all things. Moreover, they are the only things without any function in the life process of society; strictly speaking, they are fabricated not for men, but for the world which is meant to outlast the life-span of mortals, the coming and going of the generations. Not only are they not consumed like consumer goods and not used up like use objects; they are deliberately removed from the processes of consumption and usage and isolated against the sphere of human life necessities. This removal can be achieved in a great variety of ways; and only where it is done does culture, in the specific sense, come into being.

The question here is not whether worldliness, the capacity to fabricate and create a world, is part and parcel of human "nature." We know of the existence of worldless people as we know unworldly men; human life as such requires a world only insofar as it needs a home on earth for the duration of its stay here. Certainly every arrangement men make to provide shelter and put a roof over their heads—even the tents of nomadic tribes—can serve as a home on earth for those who happen to be alive at the time; but this by no means implies that such arrangements beget a world, let alone a culture. This earthly home becomes a world in the proper sense of the word only when the totality of fabricated things is so organized that it can resist the consuming life process of the people dwelling in it, and thus outlast them. Only where such survival is assured do we speak of culture, and only where we are confronted with things which exist independently of all utilitarian and functional references, and whose quality remains always the same, do we speak of works of art.

For these reasons any discussion of culture must somehow take as its starting point the phenomenon of art. While the thingness of all things by which we surround ourselves lies in their having a shape through which they appear, only works of art are made for the sole purpose of appearance. The proper criterion by which to judge appearances is beauty; if we wanted to judge objects, even ordinary use-objects, by their use-value alone and not also by their appearance—that is, by whether they are beautiful or ugly or something in between—we would have to pluck out our eyes. But in order to become aware of appearances we first must be free to establish a certain distance between ourselves and the object, and the more important the sheer appearance of a thing is, the more distance it requires for its proper appreciation. This distance cannot arise unless we are in a position to forget ourselves, the cares and interests and urges of our lives, so that we will not seize what we admire but let it be as it is, in its appearance. This attitude of disinterested joy (to use the Kantian term, *uninteressiertes Wohlgefallen*) can be experienced only after the needs of the living organism have been provided for, so that, released from life's necessity, men may be free for the world.

The trouble with society in its earlier stages was that its members, even when they had acquired release from life's necessity, could not free themselves from concerns which had much to do with themselves, their status and position in society and the reflection of this upon their individual selves, but bore no relation whatsoever to the world of objects and objectivity they moved in. The relatively new trouble with mass society is perhaps even more serious, but not because of the masses themselves, but because this society is essentially a consumers' society where leisure time is used no longer for self-perfection or acquisition of more social status, but for more and more consumption and more and more entertainment. And since there are not enough consumer goods around to satisfy the growing appetites of a life process whose vital energy, no longer spent in the toil and trouble of a laboring body, must be used up by consumption, it is as though life itself reached out and helped itself to things which were never meant for it. The result is, of course, not mass

culture which, strictly speaking, does not exist, but mass entertainment, feeding on the cultural objects of the world. To believe that such a society will become more "cultured" as time goes on and education has done its work, is, I think, a fatal mistake. The point is that a consumers' society cannot possibly know how to take care of a world and the things which belong exclusively to the space of worldly appearances, because its central attitude toward all objects, the attitude of consumption, spells ruin to everything it touches.

II

I said before that a discussion of culture is bound to take the phenomenon of art as its starting point because art works are cultural objects par excellence. Yet while culture and art are closely interrelated, they are by no means the same. The distinction between them is of no great importance for the question of what happens to culture under the conditions of society and mass society; it is relevant, however, for the problem of what culture is and in what relationship it stands to the political realm.

Culture, word and concept, is Roman in origin. The word "culture" derives from *colere*—to cultivate, to dwell, to take care, to tend and preserve—and it relates primarily to the intercourse of man with nature in the sense of cultivating and tending nature until it becomes fit for human habitation. As such, it indicates an attitude of loving care and stands in sharp contrast to all efforts to subject nature to the domination of man.⁴ Hence it does not only apply to tilling the soil but can also designate the "cult" of the gods, the taking care of what properly belongs to them. It seems it was Cicero who first used the word for matters of spirit and mind. He speaks of *excolere animum*, of cultivating the mind, and of *cultura animi* in the same sense in which we speak even today of a cultured mind, only that we are no longer aware of the full metaphorical content of this usage.⁵ For as far as Roman usage is concerned, the chief point always was the connection of culture with nature; culture originally

meant agriculture, which was held in very high regard in Rome in opposition to the poetic and fabricating arts. Even Cicero's *cultura animi*, the result of training in philosophy and therefore perhaps coined, as has been suggested, to translate the Greek *παιδεία*,⁶ meant the very opposite of being a fabricator or creator of art works. It was in the midst of a primarily agricultural people that the concept of culture first appeared, and the artistic connotations which might have been connected with this culture concerned the incomparably close relationship of the Latin people to nature, the creation of the famous Italian landscape. According to the Romans, art was supposed to rise as naturally as the countryside; it ought to be tended nature; and the spring of all poetry was seen in "the song which the leaves sing to themselves in the green solitude of the woods."⁷ But though this may be an eminently poetic thought, it is not likely that great art would ever have sprung from it. It is hardly the mentality of gardeners which produces art.

The great Roman art and poetry came into being under the impact of the Greek heritage, which the Romans, but never the Greeks, knew how to take care of and how to preserve. The reason why there is no Greek equivalent to the Roman concept of culture lies in the predominance of the fabricating arts in Greek civilization. While the Romans tended to regard even art as a kind of agriculture, of cultivating nature, the Greeks tended to consider even agriculture as part and parcel of fabrication, as belonging to the cunning, skillful, "technical" devices with which man, more awe-inspiring than all that is, tames and rules nature. What we, still under the spell of the Roman heritage, consider to be the most natural and the most peaceful of man's activities, the tilling of the soil, the Greeks understood as a daring, violent enterprise in which, year in year out, the earth, inexhaustible and indefatigable, is disturbed and violated.⁸ The Greeks did not know what culture is because they did not cultivate nature but rather tore from the womb of the earth the fruits which the gods had hidden from men (Hesiod); and closely connected with this was that the great Roman reverence for the testimony of the past as such, to which we owe not merely the preservation of the Greek heritage but the very continuity of our

tradition, was quite alien to them. Both together, culture in the sense of developing nature into a dwelling place for a people as well as in the sense of taking care of the monuments of the past, determine even today the content and the meaning we have in mind when we speak of culture.

Yet the meaning of the word "culture" is hardly exhausted by these strictly Roman elements. Even Cicero's *cultura animi* is suggestive of something like taste and, generally, sensitivity to beauty, not in those who fabricate beautiful things, that is, in the artists themselves, but in the spectators, in those who move among them. And this love for beauty the Greeks possessed, of course, to an extraordinary degree. In this sense we understand by culture the attitude toward, or, better, the mode of intercourse prescribed by civilizations with respect to the least useful and most worldly of things, the works of artists, poets, musicians, philosophers, and so forth. If we mean by culture the mode of intercourse of man with the things of the world, then we may try to understand Greek culture (as distinguished from Greek art) by recalling a much quoted saying, reported by Thucydides and attributed to Pericles, which reads as follows: *φιλοκαλοῦμεν γὰρ μετ' εὐτελείας καὶ φιλοσοφοῦμεν ἄνευ μαλακίας*⁹ The sentence, utterly simple, almost defies translation. What we understand as states or qualities, such as love of beauty or love of wisdom (called philosophy) is described here as an activity, as though to "love beautiful things" is no less an activity than to make them. Our translation of the qualifying words, furthermore, "accuracy of aim" and "effeminacy," fails to convey that both terms were strictly political, effeminacy being a barbarian vice and accuracy of aim the virtue of the man who knows how to act. Pericles therefore is saying something like this: "We love beauty within the limits of political judgment, and we philosophize without the barbarian vice of effeminacy."

Once the meaning of these words, which are so difficult to liberate from their hackneyed translation, begins to dawn upon us, there is much to be surprised at. First, we are told distinctly that it is the polis, the realm of politics, which sets limits to the love of wisdom and of beauty, and since we know that the

Greeks thought it was the polis and "politics" (and by no means superior artistic achievements) which distinguished them from the barbarians, we must conclude that this difference was a "cultural" difference as well, a difference in their mode of intercourse with "cultural" things, a different attitude toward beauty and wisdom, which could be loved only within the limits set by the institution of the polis. In other words, it was a kind of over-refinement, an indiscriminate sensitivity which did not know how to choose that was deemed to be barbarian—and neither any primitive lack of culture as we understand it nor any specific quality in the cultural things themselves. Even more surprising perhaps is that the lack of virility, the vice of effeminacy, which we would associate with too great a love of beauty or aestheticism, is mentioned here as the specific danger of philosophy; and the knowledge of how to aim or, as we said, of how to judge, which we would have expected to be a qualification of philosophy, which must know how to aim at truth, is considered here to be necessary for the intercourse with the beautiful.

Could it be that philosophy in the Greek sense—which begins with "wonder," with *θαυμάζειν*, and ends (at least in Plato and Aristotle) in the speechless beholding of some unveiled truth—is more likely to lead into inactivity than love of beauty? Could it be, on the other hand, that love of beauty remains barbarous unless it is accompanied by *εὐτελεία*, by the faculty to take aim in judgment, discernment, and discrimination, in brief, by that curious and ill-defined capacity we commonly call taste? And finally, could it be that this right love of beauty, the proper kind of intercourse with beautiful things—the *cultura animi* which makes man fit to take care of the things of the world and which Cicero, in contradistinction to the Greeks, ascribed to philosophy—has something to do with politics? Could it be that taste belongs among the political faculties?

To understand the problems which these questions raise it is important to keep in mind that culture and art are not the same. One way to remain aware of the difference between them is to recall that the same men who praised love of the beautiful

and the culture of the mind shared the deep ancient distrust of those artists and artisans who actually fabricated the things which then were displayed and admired. The Greeks, though not the Romans, had a word for philistinism, and this word, curiously enough, derives from a word for artists and artisans, *βάνανσοϛ*; to be a philistine, a man of banausic spirit, indicated, then as today, an exclusively utilitarian mentality, an inability to think and to judge a thing apart from its function or utility. But the artist himself, being a *βάνανσοϛ*, was by no means excluded from the reproach of philistinism; on the contrary, philistinism was considered to be a vice most likely to occur in those who had mastered a *τέχνη*, in fabricators and artists. To Greek understanding, there was no contradiction between praise of *φιλοκαλεῖν*, the love of the beautiful, and contempt for those who actually produced the beautiful. The mistrust and actual contempt of the artists arose from political considerations: fabrication of things, including the production of art, is not within the range of political activities; it even stands in opposition to them. The chief reason of the distrust of fabrication in all forms is that it is utilitarian by its very nature. Fabrication, but not action or speech, always involves means and ends; in fact, the category of means and ends derives its legitimacy from the sphere of making and fabricating where a clearly recognizable end, the final product, determines and organizes everything that plays a part in the process—the material, the tools, the activity itself, and even the persons participating in it; they all become mere means toward the end and they are justified as such. Fabricators cannot help regarding all things as means to their ends or, as the case may be, judging all things by their specific utility. The moment this point of view is generalized and extended to other realms than that of fabrication it will produce the banausic mentality. And the Greeks rightly suspected that this philistinism threatens not only the political realm, as it obviously does because it will judge action by the same standards of utility which are valid for fabrication, demand that action obtain a predetermined end and that it be permitted to seize on all means likely to further this end; it also threatens the cultural realm itself because it leads

to a devaluation of things as things which, if the mentality that brought them into being is permitted to prevail, will again be judged according to the standard of utility and thereby lose their intrinsic, independent worth, and finally degenerate into mere means. In other words, the greatest threat to the existence of the finished work arises precisely from the mentality which brought it into being. From which it follows that the standards and rules, which must necessarily prevail in erecting and building and decorating the world of things in which we move, lose their validity and become positively dangerous when they are applied to the finished world itself.

This, to be sure, does not tell the whole story of the relation between politics and art. Rome in her early period was so convinced that artists and poets pursued a childish game which did not accord with the *gravitas*, the seriousness and dignity, proper to a Roman citizen, that she simply suppressed whatever artistic talents might have flourished in the republic prior to Greek influence. Athens, on the contrary, never settled the conflict between politics and art unequivocally in favor of one or the other—which incidentally may be one of the reasons for the extraordinary display of artistic genius in classical Greece—and she kept the conflict alive and did not level it out to indifference of the two realms with regard to each other. The Greeks, so to speak, could say in one and the same breath: "He who has not seen the Zeus of Phidias at Olympia has lived in vain" and: "People like Phidias, namely sculptors, are unfit for citizenship." And Pericles, in the same oration in which he praises the right *φιλοσοφείν* and *φιλοκαλεῖν*, the active intercourse with wisdom and beauty, boasts that Athens will know how to put "Homer and his ilk" in their place, that the glory of her deeds will be so great that the city will be able to dispense with the professional fabricators of glory, the poets and artists who reify the living word and the living deed, transforming and converting them into things permanent enough to carry greatness into the immortality of fame.

We today are more likely to suspect that the realm of politics and active participation in public business give rise to philistinism and prevent the development of a cultivated mind which can

regard things in their true worth without reflection upon their function and utility. One of the reasons for this shift of emphasis is, of course, that—for reasons outside these considerations—the mentality of fabrication has invaded the political realm to such an extent that we take it for granted that action, even more than fabrication, is determined by the category of means and ends. This situation, however, has the advantage that the fabricators and artists have been able to give vent to their own view of these matters and to articulate their hostility against the men of action. There is more behind this hostility than competition for the public eye. The trouble is that *Homo faber* does not stand in the same relationship to the public realm and its publicity as the things he makes, with their appearance, configuration, and form. In order to be in a position to add constantly new things to the already existing world, he himself must be isolated from the public, must be sheltered and concealed from it. Truly political activities, on the other hand, acting and speaking, cannot be performed at all without the presence of others, without the public, without a space constituted by the many. The activity of the artist and of the craftsman is therefore subject to conditions very different from those surrounding political activities, and it is quite understandable that the artist, as soon as he begins to speak his mind on things political, should feel the same distrust for the specifically political realm and its publicity as did the polis for the mentality and conditions of fabrication. This is the true malaise of the artist, not in society but in politics, and his scruples and distrust of political activity are no less legitimate than the mistrust of men of action against the mentality of *Homo faber*. At this point the conflict between art and politics arises, and this conflict cannot and must not be solved.

However, the point of the matter is that the conflict, dividing the statesman and the artist in their respective activities, no longer applies when we turn our attention from the making of art to its products, to the things themselves which must find their place in the world. These things obviously share with political “products,” words and deeds, the quality that they are in need of some public space where they can appear and be seen;

they can fulfill their own being, which is appearance, only in a world which is common to all; in the concealment of private life and private possession, art objects cannot attain their own inherent validity, they must, on the contrary, be protected against the possessiveness of individuals—whereby it does not matter whether this protection takes the form of their being set up in holy places, in temples and churches, or placed in the care of museums and the keepers of monuments, although the place where we put them is characteristic of our “culture,” that is, of the mode of our intercourse with them. Generally speaking, culture indicates that the public realm, which is rendered politically secure by men of action, offers its space of display to those things whose essence it is to appear and to be beautiful. In other words, culture indicates that art and politics, their conflicts and tensions notwithstanding, are interrelated and even mutually dependent. Seen against the background of political experiences and of activities which, if left to themselves, come and go without leaving any trace in the world, beauty is the very manifestation of imperishability. The fleeting greatness of word and deed can endure in the world to the extent that beauty is bestowed upon it. Without the beauty, that is, the radiant glory in which potential immortality is made manifest in the human world, all human life would be futile and no greatness could endure.

The common element connecting art and politics is that they both are phenomena of the public world. What mediates the conflict between the artist and the man of action is the *cultura animi*, that is, a mind so trained and cultivated that it can be trusted to tend and take care of a world of appearances whose criterion is beauty. The reason Cicero ascribed this culture to a training in philosophy was that to him only philosophers, the lovers of wisdom, approached things as mere “spectators” without any wish to acquire something for themselves, so that he could liken the philosophers to those who, coming to the great games and festivals, sought neither “to win the glorious distinction of a crown” nor to make “gain by buying or selling” but were attracted by the “spectacle and closely watched what was done and how it was done.” They were, as we would

say today, completely disinterested and for this very reason those best qualified to judge, but also those who were most fascinated by the spectacle itself. Cicero calls them *maxime ingenuum*, the most noble group of the free-born men, for what they were doing: to look for the sake of seeing only was the freest, *liberalissimum*, of all pursuits.¹⁰

For lack of a better word that would indicate the discriminating, discerning, judging elements of an active love of beauty—that *φιλοκαλεῖν μετ' εὐτελείας* of which Pericles speaks—I used the word “taste,” and in order to justify this usage and, at the same time, to point out the one activity in which, I think, culture as such expresses itself, I should like to draw upon the first part of Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, which, as “Critique of Esthetic Judgment,” contains perhaps the greatest and most original aspect of Kant's political philosophy. At any rate, it contains an analytic of the beautiful primarily from the viewpoint of the judging spectator, as even the title indicates, and it takes its starting point from the phenomenon of taste, understood as an active relationship to what is beautiful.

In order to see the faculty of judgment in its proper perspective and to understand that it implies a political rather than a merely theoretical activity, we must shortly recall what is usually considered to be Kant's political philosophy, namely, the *Critique of Practical Reason*, which deals with the lawgiving faculty of reason. The principle of lawgiving, as laid down in the “categorical imperative”—“always act in such a manner that the principle of your action can become a general law”—is based upon the necessity for rational thought to agree with itself. The thief, for instance, is actually contradicting himself, for he cannot wish that the principle of his action, stealing other people's property, should become a general law; such a law would immediately deprive him of his own acquisition. This principle of agreement with oneself is very old; it was actually discovered by Socrates, whose central tenet, as formulated by Plato, is contained in the sentence: “Since I am one, it is better for me to disagree with the whole world than to be in disagreement with myself.”¹¹ From this sentence both Occidental ethics, with its stress upon being in agreement with one's

own conscience, and Occidental logic, with its emphasis upon the axiom of contradiction, took their starting point.

In the *Critique of Judgement*, however, Kant insisted upon a different way of thinking, for which it would not be enough to be in agreement with one's own self, but which consisted of being able to "think in the place of everybody else" and which he therefore called an "enlarged mentality" (*eine erweiterte Denkungsart*).¹² The power of judgment rests on a potential agreement with others, and the thinking process which is active in judging something is not, like the thought process of pure reasoning, a dialogue between me and myself, but finds itself always and primarily, even if I am quite alone in making up my mind, in an anticipated communication with others with whom I know I must finally come to some agreement. From this potential agreement judgment derives its specific validity. This means, on the one hand, that such judgment must liberate itself from the "subjective private conditions," that is, from the idiosyncrasies which naturally determine the outlook of each individual in his privacy and are legitimate as long as they are only privately held opinions, but which are not fit to enter the market place, and lack all validity in the public realm. And this enlarged way of thinking, which as judgment knows how to transcend its own individual limitations, on the other hand, cannot function in strict isolation or solitude; it needs the presence of others "in whose place" it must think, whose perspectives it must take into consideration, and without whom it never has the opportunity to operate at all. As logic, to be sound, depends on the presence of the self, so judgment, to be valid, depends on the presence of others. Hence judgment is endowed with a certain specific validity but is never universally valid. Its claims to validity can never extend further than the others in whose place the judging person has put himself for his considerations. Judgment, Kant says, is valid "for every single judging person,"¹³ but the emphasis in the sentence is on "judging"; it is not valid for those who do not judge or for those who are not members of the public realm where the objects of judgment appear.

That the capacity to judge is a specifically political ability in

exactly the sense denoted by Kant, namely, the ability to see things not only from one's own point of view but in the perspective of all those who happen to be present; even that judgment may be one of the fundamental abilities of man as a political being insofar as it enables him to orient himself in the public realm, in the common world—these are insights that are virtually as old as articulated political experience. The Greeks called this ability *φρόνησις*, or insight, and they considered it the principal virtue or excellence of the statesman in distinction from the wisdom of the philosopher.¹⁴ The difference between this judging insight and speculative thought lies in that the former has its roots in what we usually call common sense, which the latter constantly transcends. Common sense—which the French so suggestively call the “good sense,” *le bon sens*—discloses to us the nature of the world insofar as it is a common world; we owe to it the fact that our strictly private and “subjective” five senses and their sensory data can adjust themselves to a nonsubjective and “objective” world which we have in common and share with others. Judging is one, if not the most, important activity in which this sharing-the-world-with-others comes to pass.

What, however, is quite new and even startlingly new in Kant's propositions in the *Critique of Judgment* is that he discovered this phenomenon in all its grandeur precisely when he was examining the phenomenon of taste and hence the only kind of judgments which, since they concern merely aesthetic matters, have always been supposed to lie outside the political realm as well as the domain of reason. Kant was disturbed by the alleged arbitrariness and subjectivity of *de gustibus non disputandum est* (which, no doubt, is entirely true for private idiosyncrasies), for this arbitrariness offended his political and not his aesthetic sense. Kant, who certainly was not oversensitive to beautiful things, was highly conscious of the public quality of beauty; and it was because of their public relevance that he insisted, in opposition to the commonplace adage, that taste judgments are open to discussion because “we hope that the same pleasure is shared by others,” that taste can be subject to dispute, because it “expects agreement from everyone else.”¹⁵ Therefore

taste, insofar as it, like any other judgment, appeals to common sense, is the very opposite of "private feelings." In aesthetic no less than in political judgments, a decision is made, and although this decision is always determined by a certain subjectivity, by the simple fact that each person occupies a place of his own from which he looks upon and judges the world, it also derives from the fact that the world itself is an objective datum, something common to all its inhabitants. The activity of taste decides how this world, independent of its utility and our vital interests in it, is to look and sound, what men will see and what they will hear in it. Taste judges the world in its appearance and in its worldliness; its interest in the world is purely "disinterested," and that means that neither the life interests of the individual nor the moral interests of the self are involved here. For judgments of taste, the world is the primary thing, not man, neither man's life nor his self.

Taste judgments, furthermore, are currently held to be arbitrary because they do not compel in the sense in which demonstrable facts or truth proved by argument compel agreement. They share with political opinions that they are persuasive; the judging person—as Kant says quite beautifully—can only "woo the consent of everyone else" in the hope of coming to an agreement with him eventually.¹⁶ This "wooing" or persuading corresponds closely to what the Greeks called *πείθειν*, the convincing and persuading speech which they regarded as the typically political form of people talking with one another. Persuasion ruled the intercourse of the citizens of the polis because it excluded physical violence; but the philosophers knew that it was also distinguished from another non-violent form of coercion, the coercion by truth. Persuasion appears in Aristotle as the opposite to *διαλέγεσθαι*, the philosophical form of speaking, precisely because this type of dialogue was concerned with knowledge and the finding of truth and therefore demanded a process of compelling proof. Culture and politics, then, belong together because it is not knowledge or truth which is at stake, but rather judgment and decision, the judicious exchange of opinion about the sphere of public life and the common world, and the decision what manner of action is

to be taken in it, as well as to how it is to look henceforth, what kind of things are to appear in it.

To classify taste, the chief cultural activity, among man's political abilities sounds so strange that I may add another much more familiar but theoretically little-regarded fact to these considerations. We all know very well how quickly people recognize each other, and how unequivocally they can feel that they belong to each other, when they discover a kinship in questions of what pleases and displeases. From the viewpoint of this common experience, it is as though taste decides not only how the world is to look, but also who belongs together in it. If we think of this sense of belonging in political terms, we are tempted to regard taste as an essentially aristocratic principle of organization. But its political significance is perhaps more far-reaching and at the same time more profound. Wherever people judge the things of the world that are common to them, there is more implied in their judgments than these things. By his manner of judging, the person discloses to an extent also himself, what kind of person he is, and this disclosure, which is involuntary, gains in validity to the degree that it has liberated itself from merely individual idiosyncrasies. Now, it is precisely the realm of acting and speaking, that is, the political domain in terms of activities, in which this personal quality comes to the fore in public, in which the "who one is" becomes manifest rather than the qualities and individual talents he may possess. In this respect, the political realm is again opposed to the domain in which the artist and fabricator live and do their work and in which ultimately it is always quality that counts, the talents of the maker and the quality of the thing he makes. Taste, however, does not simply judge this quality. On the contrary, quality is beyond dispute, it is no less compellingly evident than truth and stands beyond the decisions of judgment, beyond the need of persuasion and wooing agreement, although there are times of artistic and cultural decay when only few are left who are still receptive to the self-evidence of quality. Taste as the activity of a truly cultivated mind—*cultura animi*—comes into play only where quality-consciousness is widely disseminated, the truly beautiful easily recognized; for taste discriminates and

decides among qualities. As such, taste and its ever-alert judgment of things of the world sets its own limits to an indiscriminate, immoderate love of the merely beautiful; into the realm of fabrication and of quality it introduces the personal factor, that is, gives it a humanistic meaning. Taste de-barbarizes the world of the beautiful by not being overwhelmed by it; it takes care of the beautiful in its own "personal" way and thus produces a "culture."

Humanism, like culture, is of course of Roman origin; there is again no word in the Greek language corresponding to the Latin *humanitas*.¹⁷ It will not be inappropriate, therefore, if—to conclude these remarks—I choose a Roman example to illustrate the sense in which taste is the political capacity that truly humanizes the beautiful and creates a culture. There exists an odd statement of Cicero which sounds as though it were deliberately framed to counter the then current Roman commonplace: *Amicus Socrates, amicus Plato, sed magis aestimanda veritas*. This old adage, whether one agrees with it or not, must have offended the Roman sense of *humanitas*, of the integrity of the person as person; for human worth and personal rank, together with friendship, are sacrificed here to the primacy of an absolute truth. Nothing, at any rate, could be further from the ideal of absolute, compelling truth than what Cicero has to say: *Errare mehercule malo cum Platone . . . quam cum istis (sc. Pythagoraeis) vera sentire*—"I prefer before heaven to go astray with Plato rather than hold true views with his opponents."¹⁸ The English translation blurs a certain ambiguity of the text; the sentence can mean: I would rather go astray with Platonic rationality than "feel" (*sentire*) the truth with Pythagorean irrationality, but this interpretation is unlikely in view of the answer given in the dialogue: "I should not myself be unwilling to go astray with such a man" (*Ego enim ipse cum eodem isto non invitus erraverim*), where the stress again is on the person with whom one goes astray. Thus, it seems safe to follow the English translation, and then the sentence clearly says: It is a matter of taste to prefer Plato's company and the company of his thoughts even if this should lead us astray from truth. Certainly a very bold, even an outrageously bold statement, especially because it

concerns truth; obviously the same could be said and decided with respect to beauty, which for those who have trained their senses as much as most of us have trained our minds is no less compelling than truth. What Cicero in fact says is that for the true humanist neither the verities of the scientist nor the truth of the philosopher nor the beauty of the artist can be absolutes; the humanist, because he is not a specialist, exerts a faculty of judgment and taste which is beyond the coercion which each specialty imposes upon us. This Roman *humanitas* applied to men who were free in every respect, for whom the question of freedom, of not being coerced, was the decisive one—even in philosophy, even in science, even in the arts. Cicero says: In what concerns my association with men and things, I refuse to be coerced even by truth, even by beauty.¹⁹

This humanism is the result of the *cultura animi*, of an attitude that knows how to take care and preserve and admire the things of the world. As such, it has the task of arbitrating and mediating between the purely political and the purely fabricating activities, which are opposed to each other in many ways. As humanists, we can rise above these conflicts between the statesman and the artist as we can rise in freedom above the specialties which we all must learn and pursue. We can rise above specialization and philistinism of all sorts to the extent that we learn how to exercise our taste freely. Then we shall know how to reply to those who so frequently tell us that Plato or some other great author of the past has been superseded; we shall be able to understand that even if all criticism of Plato is right, Plato may still be better company than his critics. At any rate, we may remember what the Romans—the first people that took culture seriously the way we do—thought a cultivated person ought to be: one who knows how to choose his company among men, among things, among thoughts, in the present as well as in the past.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. Cf. H. Arendt, *The Promise of Politics*, ed. J. Kohn (New York: Schocken Books, 2005) 173-198. Virgil's *Aeneid* is a far more political story of Rome's founding than that of Romulus.
2. Cf. *Physica* II, 8: 199a 10-15.
3. History is something like a living god to Marx, the only one he believed in, the only thing in which his faith never wavered. Certainly countless thousands have regarded Marx as History's messiah.
4. Quoted by Arendt in *The Jewish Writings of Hannah Arendt*, forthcoming from Schocken Books.
5. *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958) 247.
6. *The Human Condition*, 74-78.
7. *Eichmann Interrogated*, ed. J. von Lang, tr. R. Manheim (Toronto: Lester and Orpen Dennys, 1983) 281.
8. In an unpublished document. That is now in the Library of Congress, Arendt analyzes concepts of time from Plato to Augustine to Hegel to Kafka, and argues that Kafka's parable, after the break in the tradition, accurately reflects our mental experience of time.

PREFACE

1. For this quotation and the following, see René Char, *Feuillets à Hypnos*, Paris, 1946. Written during the last year of the Resistance, 1943 to 1944, and published in the *Collection Espoir*, edited by Albert Camus, these aphorisms, together with later pieces, appeared in English under the title *Hypnos Waking; Poems and Prose*, New York, 1956.
2. The quotation is from the last chapter of *Democracy in America*,

- New York, 1945, vol. II, p. 331. It reads in full: "Although the revolution that is taking place in the social condition, the laws, the opinions, and the feelings of men is still very far from being terminated, yet its results already admit of no comparison with anything that the world has ever before witnessed. I go back from age to age up to the remotest antiquity, but I find no parallel to what is occurring before my eyes; as the past has ceased to throw its light upon the future, the mind of man wanders in obscurity." These lines of Tocqueville anticipate not only the aphorisms of René Char; curiously enough, if one reads them textually, they also anticipate Kafka's insight (see the following) that it is the future that sends man's mind back into the past "up to the remotest antiquity."
3. The story is the last of a series of "Notes from the year 1920," under the title "HE." Translated from the German by Willa and Edwin Muir, they appeared in this country in *The Great Wall of China*, New York, 1946. I followed the English translation except in a few places where a more literal translation was needed for my purposes. The German original—in vol. 5 of the *Gesammelte Schriften*, New York, 1946—reads as follows:

Er hat zwei Gegner: Der erste bedrängt ihn von hinten, vom Ursprung her. Der zweite verwehrt ihm den Weg nach vorn. Er kämpft mit beiden. Eigentlich unterstützt ihn der erste im Kampf mit dem Zweiten, denn er will ihn nach vorn drängen und ebenso unterstützt ihn der zweite im Kampf mit dem Ersten; denn er treibt ihn doch zurück. So ist es aber nur theoretisch. Denn es sind ja nicht nur die zwei Gegner da, sondern auch noch er selbst, und wer kennt eigentlich seine Absichten? Immerhin ist es sein Traum, dass er einmal in einem unbewachten Augenblick—dazu gehört allerdings eine Nacht, so finster wie noch keine war—aus der Kampflinie ausspringt und wegen seiner Kampferfahrung zum Richter über seine miteinander kämpfenden Gegner erhoben wird.

1. TRADITION AND THE MODERN AGE

1. *Laws*, 775.
2. For Engels, see his *Anti-Dühring*, Zürich, 1934, p. 275. For Nietzsche, see *Morgenröte, Werke, München*, 1954, vol. I, aph. 179.
3. The statement occurs in Engels' essay on "The Part played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man," in Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, London, 1950, vol. II, p. 74. For similar formulations by Marx himself, see especially "Die heilige Familie" and

- "Nationalökonomie und Philosophie" in *Jugendschriften*, Stuttgart, 1953.
4. Quoted here from *Capital*, Modern Library Edition, p. 824.
 5. See *Götzendämmerung*, ed. K. Schlechta, München, vol. II, p. 963.
 6. In *Das Kapital*, Zürich, 1933, vol. III, p. 870.
 7. I refer here to Heidegger's discovery that the Greek word for truth means literally "disclosure"—ἀ-λήθεια.
 8. Op. cit., Zürich, p. 689.
 9. Ibid., pp. 697-698.
 10. That "the Cave is comparable with Hades" is also suggested by F. M. Cornford in his annotated translation of *The Republic*, New York, 1956, p. 230.
 11. See *Jugendschriften*, p. 274.

2. THE CONCEPT OF HISTORY

1. Cicero. *De legibus* I, 5; *De oratore* II, 55. Herodotus, the first historian, did not yet have at his disposal a word for history. He used the word ἱστορεῖν, but not in the sense of "historical narrative." Like εἰδέναι, to know, the word ἱστορία is derived from ἰδῆ, "to see," and ἵστωρ means originally "eyewitness," then the one who examines witnesses and obtains truth through inquiry. Hence, ἱστορεῖν has a double meaning: to testify and to inquire. (See Max Pohlenz, *Herodot, der erste Geschichtsschreiber des Abendlandes*, Leipzig and Berlin, 1937, p. 44.) For recent discussion of Herodotus and our concept of history, see especially C. N. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, New York, 1944, ch. 12, one of the most stimulating and interesting pieces in the literature on the subject. His chief thesis, that Herodotus must be regarded as belonging to the Ionian school of philosophy and a follower of Heraclitus, is not convincing. Contrary to ancient sources, Cochrane construes the science of history as being part of the Greek development of philosophy. See note 6, and also Karl Reinhardt, "Herodots Persegeschichten" in *Von Werken und Formen*, Godesberg, 1948.
2. "The Gods of most nations claim to have created the world. The Olympian gods make no such claim. The most they ever did was to conquer it" (Gilbert Murray, *Five Stages of Greek Religion*, Anchor edition, p. 45). Against this statement one sometimes argues that Plato in the *Timaeus* introduced a creator of the world. But Plato's god is no real creator; he is a demiurge, a world-builder

- who does not create out of nothing. Moreover, Plato tells his story in the form of a myth invented by himself, and this, like similar myths in his work, are not proposed as truth. That no god and no man ever created the cosmos is beautifully stated in Heraclitus, fragment 30 (Diels), for this cosmical order of all things "has always been and is and will be—an ever-living fire that blazes up in proportions and dies away in proportions."
3. *On the Soul*, 415b13. See also *Economics*, 1343b24: Nature fulfills the being-forever with respect to the species through recurrence (*περίοδος*) but cannot do this with respect to the individual. In our context, it is irrelevant that the treatise is not by Aristotle but by one of his pupils, for we find the same thought in the treatise *On Generation and Corruption* in the concept of Becoming, which moves in a cycle—*γένεσις ἐξ ἀλλήλων κύκλω*, 331a8. The same thought of an "immortal human species" occurs in Plato, *Laws*, 721. See note 9.
 4. Nietzsche, *Wille zur Macht*, Nr. 617, Edition Kröner, 1930.
 5. Rilke, *Aus dem Nachlass des Grafen C. W.*, first series, poem X. Although the poetry is untranslatable, the content of these verses might be expressed as follows: "Mountains rest beneath a splendor of stars, but even in them time flickers. Ah, unsheltered in my wild, darkling heart lies immortality." I owe this translation to Denver Lindley.
 6. *Poetics*, 1448b25 and 1450a16–22. For a distinction between poetry and historiography, see *ibid.*, ch. 9.
 7. For tragedy as an imitation of action, see *ibid.*, ch. 6, 1.
 8. *Griechische Kulturgeschichte*, Edition Kröner, II, p. 289.
 9. For Plato, see *Laws* 721, where he makes it quite clear that he thinks the human species only in a certain way to be immortal—namely insofar as its successive generations taken as a whole are "growing together" with the entirety of time; mankind as a succession of generations and time are coeval: *γένος οὖν ἀνθρώπων ἐστὶ τι ξυμφυῆς τοῦ παντὸς χρόνου, ὃ διὰ τέλους αὐτῶ ξυνέπεται καὶ συνέπεται, τούτῳ τῷ τρόπῳ ἀθάνατον ὄν*. In other words, it is mere deathlessness—*ἀθανασία*—in which the mortals partake by virtue of belonging to an immortal species; it is not the timeless being-forever—the *ἀεὶ εἶναι*—in whose neighborhood the philosopher is admitted even though he is but a mortal. For Aristotle, see *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1177b30–35 and further in what follows.
 10. *Ibid.*, 1143a36.
 11. *Seventh Letter*.

12. W. Heisenberg, *Philosophic Problems of Nuclear Science*, New York, 1952, p. 24.
13. Quoted from Alexandre Koyré, "An Experiment in Measurement," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 97, no. 2, 1953.
14. The same point was made more than twenty years ago by Edgar Wind in his essay "Some Points of Contact between History and Natural Sciences" (in *Philosophy and History, Essays Presented to Ernst Cassirer*, Oxford, 1939). Wind already showed that the latest developments of science which make it so much less "exact" lead to the raising of questions by scientists "that historians like to look upon as their own." It seems strange that so fundamental and obvious an argument should have played no role in the subsequent methodological and other discussions of historical science.
15. Quoted in Friedrich Meinecke, *Vom geschichtlichen Sinn und vom Sinn der Geschichte*, Stuttgart, 1951.
16. Erwin Schroedinger, *Science and Humanism*, Cambridge, 1951, pp. 25-26.
17. *De nostri temporis studiorum ratione*, iv. Quoted from the bilingual edition by W. F. Otto, *Vom Wesen und Weg der geistigen Bildung*, Godesberg, 1947, p. 41.
18. No one can look at the remains of ancient or medieval towns without being struck by the finality with which their walls separated them from their natural surroundings, whether these were landscapes or wilderness. Modern city-building, on the contrary, aims at the landscaping and urbanization of whole areas, where the distinction between town and country becomes more and more obliterated. This trend could possibly lead to the disappearance of cities even as we know them today.
19. In *De doctrina Christiana*, 2, 28, 44.
20. *De Civitate Dei*, XII, 13.
21. See Theodor Mommsen, "St. Augustine and the Christian Idea of Progress," in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, June 1951. A close reading shows a striking discrepancy between the content of this excellent article and the thesis expressed in its title. The best defense of the Christian origin of the concept of history is found in C. N. Cochrane, op. cit., p. 474. He holds that ancient historiography came to an end because it had failed to establish "a principle of historical intelligibility" and that Augustine solved this problem by substituting "the *logos* of Christ for that of classicism as a principle of understanding."
22. Especially interesting is Oscar Cullman, *Christ and Time*, London,

1951. Also Erich Frank, "The Role of History in Christian Thought" in *Knowledge, Will and Belief, Collected Essays*, Zürich, 1955.
23. In *Die Entstehung des Historismus*, München and Berlin, 1936, p. 394.
24. John Baillie, *The Belief in Progress*, London, 1950.
25. *De Re Publica*, 1.7.
26. The word seems to have been rarely used even in Greek. It occurs in Herodotus (book IV, 93 and 94) in the active sense and applies to the rites performed by a tribe that does not believe in death. The point is that the word does not mean "to believe in immortality," but "to act in a certain way in order to assure the escape from dying." In the passive sense (*ἀθανατίζεσθαι*, "to be rendered immortal") the word also occurs in Polybius (book VI, 54, 2); it is used in the description of Roman funeral rites and applies to the funeral orations, which render immortal through "constantly making new the fame of good men." The Latin equivalent, *aeternare*, again applies to immortal fame. (Horace, *Carmines*, book IV, c. 14, 5.)

Clearly, Aristotle was the first and perhaps the last to use this word for the specifically philosophic "activity" of contemplation. The text reads as follows: οὐ χρὴ δὲ κατὰ τοὺς παραινούντας ἀνθρώπινα φρονεῖν, ἀνθρώπων οὐτὰ οὐδὲ θνητὰ τὸν θνητόν, ἀλλ' ἐφ' ὅσον ἐνδέχεται ἀθανατίζειν. . . . (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1177b31). "One should not think as do those who recommend human things for those who are mortals, but immortalize as far as possible. . . ." The medieval Latin translation (*Eth. X, Lectio XI*) does not use the old Latin word *aeternare* but translates "immortalize" through *immortalem facere*—to make immortal, presumably one's self. (*Oportet autem non secundum suadentes humana hominem entem, neque mortalia mortalem; sed in quantum contingit immortalem facere. . . .*) Modern standard translations fall into the same error (see for instance the translation by W. D. Ross, who translates: "we must . . . make ourselves immortal"). In the Greek text, the word *ἀθανατίζειν*, like the word *φρονεῖν*, is an intransitive verb, it has no direct object. (I owe the Greek and Latin references to the kind help of Professors John Herman Randall, Jr., and Paul Oscar Kristeller of Columbia University. Needless to say, they are not responsible for translation and interpretation.)

27. It is rather interesting to note that Nietzsche, who once used the term "eternize"—probably because he remembered the passage in Aristotle—applied it to the spheres of art and religion. In *Vom*

Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben, he speaks of the "aeternisierenden Mächten der Kunst und Religion."

28. Thucydides II, 41.
29. How the poet, and especially Homer, bestowed immortality upon mortal men and futile deeds, we can still read in Pindar's *Odes*—now rendered into English by Richmond Lattimore, Chicago, 1955. See, for instance, "Isthmia" IV: 60 ff.; "Nemea" IV: 10, and VI: 50–55.
30. *De Civitate Dei*, XIX, 5.
31. Johannes Gustav Droysen, *Historik* (1882), München and Berlin, 1937, para. 82: "Was den Tieren, den Pflanzen ihr Gattungsbegriff—denn die Gattung ist ἴσχυροῦ ἀεὶ καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ μετέχουσιν—das ist den Menschen die Geschichte." Droysen does not mention author or source of the quotation. It sounds Aristotelian.
32. *Leviathan*, book I, ch. 3.
33. *Democracy in America*, 2nd part, last chapter, and 1st part, "Author's Introduction," respectively.
34. The first to see Kant as the theorist of the French Revolution was Friedrich Gentz in his "Nachtrag zu dem Rasonnement des Herrn Prof. Kant über das Verhältnis zwischen Theorie und Praxis" in *Berliner Monatsschrift*, December 1793.
35. *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*, Introduction.
36. Op. cit., Third Thesis.
37. Hegel in *The Philosophy of History*, London, 1905, p. 21.
38. Nietzsche, *Wille zur Macht*, no. 291.
39. Martin Heidegger once pointed to this weird fact in a public discussion in Zürich (published under the title: "Ausprache mit Martin Heidegger am 6. November 1951," Photodruck Jurisverlag, Zürich, 1952): ". . . der Satz: man kann alles beweisen [ist] nicht ein Freibrief, sondern ein Hinweis auf die Möglichkeit, dass dort, wo man beweist im Sinne der Deduktion aus Axiomen, dies jederzeit in gewissem Sinne möglich ist. Das ist das unheimlich Rätselhafte, dessen Geheimnis ich bisher auch nicht an einem Zipfel aufzuheben vermochte, dass dieses Verfahren in der modernen Naturwissenschaft stimmt."
40. Werner Heisenberg in recent publications renders this same thought in a number of variations. See for example *Das Naturbild der heutigen Physik*, Hamburg, 1956.

3. WHAT IS AUTHORITY?

1. The formulation is Lord Acton's in his "Inaugural Lecture on the 'Study of History,'" reprinted in *Essays on Freedom and Power*, New York, 1955, p. 35.
2. Only a detailed description and analysis of the very original organizational structure of totalitarian movements and the institutions of totalitarian government could justify the use of the onion image. I must refer to the chapter on "Totalitarian Organization" in my book *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 2nd edition, New York, 1958.
3. This was already noticed by the Greek historian Dio Cassius, who, when writing a history of Rome, found it impossible to translate the word *auctoritas*: *ἑλληνίσοι αὐτὸ καθάπαξ ἀδύνατον ἔστι*. (Quoted from Theodor Mommsen, *Römisches Staatsrecht*, 3rd edition, 1888, vol. III, p. 952, n. 4.) Moreover, one need only compare the Roman Senate, the republic's specifically authoritarian institution, with Plato's nocturnal council in the *Laws*, which, being composed of the ten oldest guardians for the constant supervision of the State, superficially resembles it, to become aware of the impossibility of finding a true alternative for coercion and persuasion within the framework of Greek political experience.
4. *πόλις γὰρ οὐκ ἔσθ' ἦτις ἀνδρὸς ἔσθ' ἐνός*. Sophocles, *Antigone*, 737.
5. *Laws*, 715.
6. Theodor Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte*, book I, chap. 5.
7. H. Wallon, *Histoire de l'Esclavage dans l'Antiquité*, Paris, 1847, vol. III, where one still finds the best description of the gradual loss of Roman liberty under the Empire caused by the constant increase of power of the imperial household. Since it was the imperial household and not the emperor who gained in power, the "despotism" which always had been characteristic of the private household and family life began to dominate the public realm.
8. A fragment from the lost dialogue *On Kingship* states that "it was not only not necessary for a king to become a philosopher, but actually a hindrance to his work; that, however, it was necessary [for a good king] to listen to the true philosopher and to be agreeable to their advice." See Kurt von Fritz, *The Constitution of Athens, and Related Texts*, 1950. In Aristotelian terms, both Plato's philosopher-king and the Greek tyrant rule for the sake of their own interest, and this was for Aristotle, though not for Plato, an outstanding characteristic of tyrants. Plato was not aware of the resemblance, because for him, as for Greek current opinion, the

principal characteristic of the tyrant was that he deprived the citizen of access to a public realm, to a "market place" where he could show himself, see and be seen, hear and be heard, that he prohibited the *ἀγορεύειν* and *πολιτεύεσθαι*, confined the citizens to the privacy of their households, and demanded to be the only one in charge of public affairs. He would not have ceased to be a tyrant if he had used his power solely in the interests of his subjects—as indeed some of the tyrants undoubtedly did. According to the Greeks, to be banished to the privacy of household life was tantamount to being deprived of the specifically human potentialities of life. In other words, the very features which so convincingly demonstrate to us the tyrannical character of Plato's republic—the almost complete elimination of privacy and the omnipresence of political organs and institutions—presumably prevented Plato from recognizing its tyrannical character. To him, it would have been a contradiction in terms to brand as tyranny a constitution which not only did not relegate the citizen to his household but, on the contrary, did not leave him a shred of private life whatsoever. Moreover, by calling the rule of law "despotic," Plato stresses its non-tyrannical character. For the tyrant was always supposed to rule over men who had known the freedom of a polis and, being deprived of it, were likely to rebel, whereas the despot was assumed to rule over people who had never known freedom and were by nature incapable of it. It is as though Plato said: My laws, your new despots, will not deprive you of anything you rightfully enjoyed before; they are adequate to the very nature of human affairs and you have no more right to rebel against their rule than the slave has a right to rebel against his master.

9. "Eternal Peace," *The Philosophy of Kant*, ed. and trans. C. J. Friedrich, Modern Library Edition, 1949, p. 456.
10. Von Fritz, op. cit., p. 54, rightly insists on Plato's aversion to violence, "also revealed by the fact that, wherever he did make an attempt to bring about a change of political institutions in the direction of his political ideals, he addressed himself to men already in power."
11. Werner Jaeger's statement in *Paideia*, New York, 1943, vol. II, p. 416n; "The idea that there is a supreme art of measurement and that the philosopher's knowledge of values (*phronesis*) is the ability to measure, runs through all Plato's work right down to the end" is true only for Plato's political philosophy. The very word *φρόνησις* characterizes in Plato and Aristotle the insight of the statesman rather than the "wisdom" of the philosopher.

12. *The Republic*, book VII, 516–517.
13. See especially *Timaeus*, 31, where the divine Demiurge makes the universe in accordance with a model, a *παράδειγμα*, and *The Republic*, 596 ff.
14. In *Protrepticus*, quoted from von Fritz, op. cit.
15. *Laws*, 710–711.
16. This presentation is indebted to Martin Heidegger's great interpretation of the cave parable in *Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit*, Bern, 1947. Heidegger demonstrates how Plato transformed the concept of truth (*ἀλήθεια*) until it became identical with correct statements (*ὀρθότης*). Correctness indeed, and not truth, would be required if the philosopher's knowledge is the ability to measure. Although he explicitly mentions the risks the philosopher runs when he is forced to return to the cave, Heidegger is not aware of the political context in which the parable appears. According to him, the transformation comes to pass because the subjective act of vision (the *ιδεῖν* and the *ιδέα* in the mind of the philosopher) takes precedence over objective truth (*ἀλήθεια*), which, according to Heidegger, signifies *Unverborgenheit*.
17. *Symposion*, 211–212.
18. *Phaedrus*, 248: *φιλόσοφος ἢ φιλόκαλος*, and 250.
19. In *The Republic*, 518, the good, too, is called *φανότατον*, "the most shining one." Obviously it is precisely this quality which indicates the precedence which the beautiful originally had over the good in Plato's thought.
20. *The Republic*, 475–476. In the tradition of philosophy, the result of this Platonic repudiation of the beautiful has been that it was omitted from the so-called transcendentals or universals, that is, those qualities possessed by everything that is, and which were enumerated in medieval philosophy as *unum*, *alter*, *ens*, and *bonum*. Jacques Maritain, in his wonderful book, *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, Bollingen Series XXXV, I, 1953, is aware of this omission and insists that beauty be included in the realm of transcendentals, for "Beauty is the radiance of all transcendentals united" (p. 162).
21. In the dialogue *Politicus*: "for the most exact measure of all things is the good" (quoted from von Fritz, op. cit.). The notion must have been that only through the concept of the good do things become comparable and hence measurable.
22. *Politics*, 1332b12 and 1332b36. The distinction between the younger and older ones goes back to Plato; see *Republic*, 412, and *Laws*, 690 and 714. The appeal to nature is Aristotelian.

23. *Politics*, 1328b35.
24. *Economics*, 1343a1-4.
25. Jaeger, op. cit., vol. I, p. 111.
26. *Economics*, 1343b24.
27. The derivation of *religio* from *religare* occurs in Cicero. Since we deal here only with the political self-interpretation of the Romans, the question whether this derivation is etymologically correct is irrelevant.
28. See Cicero, *De Re Publica*, III, 23. For the Roman belief in the eternity of their city, see Viktor Poeschl, *Römischer Staat und griechisches Staatsdenken bei Cicero*, Berlin, 1936.
29. *Annals*, book 43, ch. 13.
30. *De Re Publica*, I, 7.
31. Cicero, *De Legibus*, 3, 12, 38.
32. *Esprit des Lois*, book XI, ch. 6.
33. Professor Carl J. Friedrich drew my attention to the important discussion of authority in Mommsen's *Römisches Staatsrecht*; see pp. 1034, 1038-1039.
34. This interpretation is further supported by the idiomatic Latin use of *alicui auctorem esse* for "giving advice to somebody."
35. See Mommsen, op. cit., 2nd edition, vol. I, pp. 73 ff. The Latin word *numen*, which is nearly untranslatable, meaning "divine command" as well as the divine modes of acting, derives from *nuere*, to nod in affirmation. Thus the commands of the gods and all their interference in human affairs are restricted to approval or disapproval of human actions.
36. Mommsen, *ibid.*, p. 87.
37. See also the various Latin idioms such as *auctores habere* for having predecessors or examples; *auctoritas maiorum*, signifying the authoritative example of the ancestors; *usus et auctoritas* as used in Roman law for property rights which come from usage. An excellent presentation of this Roman spirit as well as a very useful collection of the more important source materials are to be found in Viktor Poeschl, op. cit., especially pp. 101 ff.
38. R. H. Barrow, *The Romans*, 1949, p. 194.
39. A similar amalgamation of Roman imperial political sentiment with Christianity is discussed by Erik Peterson, *Der Monotheismus als politisches Problem*, Leipzig, 1935, in connection with Orosius, who related the Roman Emperor Augustus to Christ. "Dabei ist deutlich, dass Augustus auf diese Weise christianisiert und Christus zum civis romanus wird, romanisiert worden ist" (p. 92).

40. *Duo quippe sunt . . . quibus principaliter mundus hic regitur, : auctoritas sacra pontificum et regalis potestas.* In Migne, PL, vol. 59, p. 42a.
41. Eric Voegelin, *A New Science of Politics*, Chicago, 1952, p. 78.
42. See *Phaedo* 80 for the affinity of the invisible soul with the traditional place of invisibility, namely, Hades, which Plato construes etymologically as “the invisible.”
43. *Ibid.*, 64–66.
44. With the exception of the *Laws*, it is characteristic of Plato’s political dialogues that a break occurs somewhere and the strictly argumentative procedure has to be abandoned. In *The Republic*, Socrates eludes his questioners several times; the baffling question is whether justice is still possible if a deed is hidden from men and gods. The discussion of what justice is breaks down at 372a and is taken up again in 427d, where, however, not justice but wisdom and *εὐβουλία* are defined. Socrates comes back to the main question in 403d, but discusses *σωφροσύνη* instead of justice. He then starts again in 433b and comes almost immediately to a discussion of the forms of government, 445d ff., until the seventh book with the cave story puts the whole argument on an entirely different, nonpolitical level. Here it becomes clear why Glaukon could not receive a satisfactory answer: justice is an idea and must be perceived; there is no other possible demonstration.

The Er-myth, on the other hand, is introduced by a reversion of the whole argument. The task had been to find justice as such, even if hidden from the eyes of gods and men. Now (612) Socrates wishes to take back his initial admission to Glaukon that, at least for the sake of the argument, one would have to assume that “the just man may appear unjust and the unjust just” so that no one, neither god nor man, could definitely know who is truly just. And in its stead, he puts the assumption that “the nature both of the just and the unjust is truly known to the gods.” Again, the whole argument is put on an entirely different level—this time on the level of the multitude and outside the range of argument altogether.

The case of *Gorgias* is quite similar. Once more, Socrates is incapable of persuading his opponent. The discussion turns about the Socratic conviction that it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong. When Kallikles clearly cannot be persuaded by argument, Plato proceeds to tell his myth of a hereafter as a kind of *ultima ratio*, and, in distinction to *The Republic*, he tells it with great diffidence, clearly indicating that the teller of the story, Socrates, does not take it seriously.

45. Imitation of Plato seems to be beyond doubt in the frequent cases where the motif of apparent death recurs, as in Cicero and Plutarch. For an excellent discussion of Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, the myth which concludes his *De Re Publica*, see Richard Harder, "Ueber Ciceros Somnium Scipionis" (*Kleine Schriften*, München, 1960), who also shows convincingly that neither Plato nor Cicero followed Pythagorean doctrines.
46. This is especially stressed by Marcus Dods, *Forerunners of Dante*, Edinburgh, 1903.
47. See *Gorgias*, 524.
48. See *Gorgias*, 522/3 and *Phaedo*, 110. In *The Republic*, 614, Plato even alludes to a tale told by Ulysses to Alcinous.
49. *The Republic*, 379a.
50. As Werner Jaeger once called the Platonic god in *Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers*, Oxford, 1947, p. 194n.
51. *The Republic*, 615a.
52. See especially the *Seventh Letter* for Plato's conviction that truth is beyond speech and argument.
53. Thus John Adams in *Discourses on Davila*, in *Works*, Boston, 1851, vol. VI, p. 280.
54. From the draft Preamble to the Constitution of Massachusetts, *Works*, vol. IV, 221.
55. John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, ch. 2.
56. *The Prince*, ch. 15.
57. *The Prince*, ch. 8.
58. See especially the *Discourses*, book III, ch. 1.
59. It is curious to see how seldom Cicero's name occurs in Machiavelli's writings and how carefully he avoided him in his interpretations of Roman history.
60. *De Re Publica*, VI, 12.
61. *Laws*, 711a.
62. These assumptions, of course, could be justified only by a detailed analysis of the American Revolution.
63. *The Prince*, ch. 6.

4. WHAT IS FREEDOM?

1. I follow Max Planck, "Causation and Free Will" (in *The New Science*, New York, 1959) because the two essays, written from the standpoint of the scientist, possess a classic beauty in their non-simplifying simplicity and clarity.

2. Ibid.
3. John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*.
4. See "On Freedom" in *Dissertationes*, book IV, I, § I.
5. 1310a25 ff.
6. Op. cit., § 75.
7. Ibid., § 118.
8. §§ 81 and 83.
9. See *Esprit des Lois*, XII, 2: "*La liberté philosophique consiste dans l'exercice de la volonté. . . . La liberté politique consiste dans la sûreté.*"
10. *Intellectus apprehendit agibile antequam voluntas illud velit; sed non apprehendit determinate hoc esse agendum quod apprehendere dicitur dictare.* Oxon. IV, d. 46, qu. 1, no. 10.
11. John Stuart Mill, op. cit.
12. Leibniz only sums up and articulates the Christian tradition when he writes: "*Die Frage, ob unserem Willen Freiheit zukommt, bedeutet eigentlich nichts anderes, als ob ihm Willen zukommt. Die Ausdrücke 'frei' und 'willensgemäss' besagen dasselbe.*" (*Schriften zur Metaphysik I*, "Bemerkungen zu den cartesischen Prinzipien." Zu Artikel 39.)
13. Augustine, *Confessions*, book VIII, ch.8.
14. We find this conflict frequently in Euripides. Thus Medea, before murdering her children, says: "and I know which evils I am about to commit, but *θυμός* is stronger than my deliberations" (1078 ff.); and Phaedra (*Hippolytus*, 376 ff.) speaks in a similar vein. The point of the matter is always that reason, knowledge, insight, etc., are too weak to withstand the onslaught of desire, and it may not be accidental that the conflict breaks out in the soul of women, who are less under the influence of reasoning than men.
15. "Insofar as the mind commands, the mind wills, and insofar as the thing commanded is not done, it wills not," as Augustine put it, in the famous ch. 9 of book VIII of the *Confessions*, which deals with the will and its power. To Augustine, it was a matter of course that "to will" and "to command" are the same.
16. Augustine, *ibid.*
17. Pythian Ode IV, 287-289:

φαντι δ'ἔμμεν
τοῦτ' ἀνιαρότατου, καλὰ γινώσκοντ' ἀνάγκη
ἔχτος ἔχειν πόδα.
18. *Esprit des Lois*, XII, 2 and XI, 3.
19. Op. cit., *ibid.*
20. Ibid.

21. See the first four chapters of the second book of *The Social Contract*. Among modern political theorists, Carl Schmitt is the most able defender of the notion of sovereignty. He recognizes clearly that the root of sovereignty is the will: Sovereign is who wills and commands. See especially his *Verfassungslehre*, München, 1928, pp. 7 ff., 146.
22. Book XII, ch. 20.

6. THE CRISIS IN CULTURE

1. Harold Rosenberg in a brilliantly witty essay, "Pop Culture: Kitsch Criticism," in *The Tradition of the New*, New York, 1959.
2. See Edward Shils, "Mass Society and Its Culture" in *Daedalus*, Spring 1960; the whole issue is devoted to "Mass Culture and Mass Media."
3. I owe the story to G. M. Young, *Victorian England. Portrait of an Age*, New York, 1954.
4. For etymological origin and usage of the word in Latin, see, in addition to the *Thesaurus linguae latinae*, A. Walde, *Lateinisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, 1938, and A. Ernout & A. Meillet, *Dictionnaire Etymologique de la Langue Latine. Histoire des Mots*, Paris, 1932. For the history of word and concept since antiquity, see Joseph Niedermann, *Kultur—Werden und Wandlungen des Begriffes und seiner Ersatzbegriffe von Cicero bis Herder*, in *Biblioteca dell' Archivum Romanum*, Firenze, 1941, vol. 28.
5. Cicero, in his *Tusculan Disputations*, I, 13, says explicitly that the mind is like a field which cannot be productive without proper cultivation—and then declares: *Cultura autem animi philosophia est*.
6. By Werner Jaeger in *Antike*, Berlin, 1928, vol. IV.
7. See Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte*, book I, ch. 14.
8. See the famous chorus in *Antigone*, 332 ff.
9. Thucydides, II, 40.
10. Cicero, op. cit., V, 9.
11. Plato, *Gorgias*, 482.
12. *Critique of Judgment*, § 40.
13. *Ibid.*, introduction, VII.
14. Aristotle, who (*Nicomachean Ethics*, book 6) deliberately set the insight of the statesman against the wisdom of the philosopher, was probably following, as he did so often in his political writings, the public opinion of the Athenian polis.
15. *Critique of Judgment*, §§ 6, 7, 8.

16. *Ibid.* § 19.
17. For the history of word and concept, see Niedermann, *op. cit.*, Rudolf Pfeiffer, *Humanitas Erasmiana*, Studien der Bibliothek Warburg, no. 22, 1931, and "Nachträgliches zu Humanitas" in Richard Harder's *Kleine Schriften*, München, 1960. The word was used to translate the Greek *φιλανθρωπία*, a word originally used of gods and rulers and therefore with altogether different connotations. *Humanitas*, as Cicero understood it, was closely connected with the old Roman virtue of *clementia* and as such stood in a certain opposition to Roman *gravitas*. It certainly was the sign of the educated man but, and this is important in our context, it was the study of art and literature rather than of philosophy which was supposed to result in "humanity."
18. Cicero, *op. cit.*, I, 39-40. I follow the translation by J. E. King in Loeb's Classical Library.
19. Cicero speaks in a similar vein in *De Legibus*, 3, 1: He praises Atticus *cuius et vita et oratio consecuta mihi videtur difficillimam illam societatem gravitatis cum humanitate*—"whose life and speech seem to me to have achieved this most difficult combination of gravity with humanity"—whereby, as Harder (*op. cit.*) points out, Atticus's gravity consists in his adhering with dignity to Epicurus's philosophy, whereas his humanity is shown by his reverence for Plato, which proves his inner freedom.

7. TRUTH AND POLITICS

1. *Eternal Peace*, Appendix I.
2. I quote from Spinoza's *Political Treatise* because it is noteworthy that even Spinoza, for whom the *libertas philosophandi* was the true end of government, should have taken so radical a position.
3. In the *Leviathan* (ch. 46) Hobbes explains that "disobedience may lawfully be punished in them, that against the laws teach even true philosophy." For is not "leisure the mother of philosophy; and Commonwealth the mother of peace and leisure"? And does it not follow that the Commonwealth will act in the interest of philosophy when it suppresses a truth which undermines peace? Hence the truth-teller, in order to cooperate in an enterprise which is so necessary for his own peace of body and soul, decides to write what he knows "to be false philosophy." Of this Hobbes suspected Aristotle of all people, who according to him "writ it as a thing consonant to, and corroborative of [the Greeks'] religion; fearing the fate of Socrates." It never oc-

curred to Hobbes that all search for truth would be self-defeating if its conditions could be guaranteed only by deliberate falsehoods. Then, indeed, everybody may turn out to be a liar like Hobbes' Aristotle. Unlike this figment of Hobbes' logical fantasy, the real Aristotle was of course sensible enough to leave Athens when he came to fear the fate of Socrates; he was not wicked enough to write what he knew to be false, nor was he stupid enough to solve his problem of survival by destroying everything he stood for.

4. *Ibid.*, ch. 11.
5. I hope no one will tell me any more that Plato was the inventor of the "noble lie." This belief rested on a misreading of a crucial passage (414C) in *The Republic*, where Plato speaks of one of his myths—a "Phoenician tale"—as a *ψεύδος*. Since the same Greek word signifies "fiction," "error," and "lie" according to context—when Plato wants to distinguish between error and lie, the Greek language forces him to speak of "involuntary" and "voluntary" *ψεύδος*—the text can be rendered with Cornford as "bold flight of invention" or be read with Eric Voegelin (*Order and History: Plato and Aristotle*, Louisiana State University, 1957, vol. 3, p. 106) as satirical in intention; under no circumstances can it be understood as a recommendation of lying as we understand it. Plato, of course, was permissive about occasional lies to deceive the enemy or insane people—*The Republic*, 382; they are "useful . . . in the way of medicine . . . to be handled by no one but a physician," and the physician of the polis is the ruler (388). But, contrary to the cave allegory, no principle is involved in these passages.
6. *Leviathan*, Conclusion.
7. *The Federalist*, no. 49.
8. *Theologico-Political Treatise*, ch. 20.
9. See "What Is Enlightenment?" and "Was heisst sich im Denken orientieren?"
10. *The Federalist*, no. 49.
11. *Timaeus*, 51D–52.
12. See *The Republic* 367. Compare also *Crito* 49 D: "For I know that only a few men hold, or ever will hold, this opinion. Between those who do and those who don't there can be no common deliberation; they will necessarily look upon each other with contempt as to their different purposes."
13. See *Gorgias* 482, where Socrates tells Callicles, his opponent, that he will "not be in agreement with himself but that throughout his life, he will contradict himself." He then adds: "I would much rather that the whole world be not in agreement with me and talk

- against me than that I, *who am one*, should be in discord with myself and talk in self-contradiction."
14. For a definition of thought as the silent dialogue between me and myself, see especially *Theaetetus* 189-190, and *Sophist* 263-264. It is quite in keeping with this tradition that Aristotle calls the friend, with whom you speak in the form of dialogue an *αὐτὸς ἄλλος*, another self.
 15. *Nicomachean Ethics*, book 6, especially 1140b9 and 1141b4.
 16. See Jefferson's "Draft Preamble to the Virginia Bill Establishing Religious Freedom."
 17. This is the reason for Nietzsche's remark in "Schopenhauer als Erzieher": "*Ich mache mir aus einem Philosophen gerade so viel, als er imstande ist, ein Beispiel zu geben.*"
 18. In a letter to W. Smith, November 13, 1787.
 19. *Critique of Judgment*, Paragraph 32.
 20. *Ibid.*, Paragraph 59.
 21. For France, see the excellent article "De Gaulle: Pose and Policy," in *Foreign Affairs*, July 1965. The Adenauer quotation is from his *Memoirs 1945-1953*, Chicago, 1966, p. 89, where, however, he puts this notion into the minds of the occupation authorities. But he has repeated the gist of it many times during his chancellorship.
 22. Parts of the archive were published in Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk Under Soviet Rule*, Cambridge, Mass., 1958. See p. 374.

8. THE CONQUEST OF SPACE AND THE STATURE OF MAN

1. This question was asked for a "Symposium on Space" by the editors of *Great Ideas Today* (1963) with special emphasis on what "the exploration of space is doing to man's view of himself and to man's condition. The question does not concern man as a scientist, nor man as a producer or consumer, but rather man as *human*."
2. *Nicomachean Ethics*, book VI, ch. 7, 1141a20 ff.
3. Max Planck, *The Universe in the Light of Modern Physics*, 1929. Quoted from *Great Ideas Today*, 1962, p. 494.
4. As quoted by J. W. N. Sullivan, *Limitations of Science*, Mentor Books, 1949, p. 141.
5. See Sullivan's *Atomic Physics and Human Knowledge*, New York, 1958, p. 88.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

7. Planck, op. cit., p. 503.
8. See Planck's *Science and Humanism*, London, 1951, pp. 25-26.
9. John Gilmore, in a sharply critical letter when this article first appeared in 1963, puts the matter very nicely: "During the last several years we have in fact succeeded in writing computer programs that enable these machines to exhibit behavior that anyone not familiar with the makeup of the programs would unhesitatingly describe as intelligent, even highly intelligent. Alex Bernstein, for example, has devised a program that enables a machine to play spectacular good checkers. In particular, it can play better checkers than Bernstein. This is an impressive achievement; but it is Bernstein's and not the machine's." I had been misled by a remark of George Gamow—see note 10—and have changed my text.
10. George Gamow, "Physical Sciences and Technology," in *Great Ideas Today*, 1962, p. 207. Italics added.
11. Sergio de Benedetti, as quoted by Walter Sullivan, "Physical Sciences and Technology," in *Great Ideas Today*, 1961, p. 198.
12. Bohr, op. cit., pp. 70 and 61 respectively.
13. Planck, op. cit., pp. 493, 517, and 514 respectively.
14. Bohr, op. cit., pp. 31 and 71 respectively.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 82.
16. Planck, op. cit., pp. 509 and 505 respectively.
17. See J. Bronowski, *Science and Human Values*, New York, 1956, p. 22.
18. See *The Starry Messenger*, translation quoted from *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo*, New York, 1957, p. 28.
19. See Einstein's *Relativity, The Special and General Theory* (1905 & 1916), quoted in *Great Ideas Today*, 1961, pp. 452 and 465 respectively.
20. Walter Sullivan, op. cit., p. 189.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 202.
22. I quote from Descartes' dialogue "The Search after Truth by the Light of Nature," where his central position in this matter of doubting is more in evidence than in the *Principles*. See E. S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross edition of his *Philosophical Works*, London, 1931, vol. I, pp. 324 and 315.
23. I owe this definition to John Gilmore's letter, mentioned in note 9. Mr. Gilmore, however, does not believe that this imposes limitations on the knowledge of the practicing physicist. I think that Heisenberg's own "popular" statements bear me out on this point. But this is by no means the end of this controversy. Mr. Gilmore as well as Mr. Denver Lindley believes that the great scientists may

very well be wrong when it comes to evaluating philosophically their own work. Mr. Gilmore and Mr. Lindley accuse me of using the scientists' statements uncritically, as though they could speak about the implications of their work with the same authority as they talk about their subjects properly speaking. ("Your confidence in the great figures in the scientific community is touching," says Mr. Gilmore.) This argument, I think, is valid; no scientist, no matter how eminent, can ever claim the same soundness for "philosophical implications" he or somebody else discovers in his work or in his utterances about it as he could claim for the discoveries themselves. Philosophic truth, whatever it may be, is certainly not scientific truth. Still, it is difficult to believe that Planck and Einstein, Niels Bohr, Schroedinger and Heisenberg, all of whom were puzzled and greatly worried about the consequences and general implications of their work as practicing physicists, should all have been subject to the delusions of self-misunderstanding.

24. In *Philosophic Problems of Nuclear Science*, New York, 1952, p. 73.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

26. In *The Physicist's Conception of Nature*, New York, 1958, p. 24.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

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