

Negative Dialectics

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Part III. Models. Freedom: Metacritique of Practical Reason

“False Problem” [Scheinproblem] 211-213

The talk of false problems once wished to prevent, for the purposes of enlightenment, the unquestioned authority of dogmas to set the course of considerations, whose decisions would be impossible precisely to the thinking to which they were submitted. There is an echo of this in the pejorative use of the word scholastic. For some time however false problems are no longer presumed to be those which ridicule rational judgements and rational interests, but those which use concepts not clearly defined. A semantic taboo strangles substantive questions, as if they were only questions of meaning; the preliminary consideration degenerates into the ban on consideration altogether. The ground-rules of methods modeled without further ado on the current ones of exact science regulate what may be thought, no matter how urgent the matter; approved modes of procedure, the means, win primacy over what is to be cognized, the ends. Experiences which conflict with the explicit signs assigned to them are given a dressing-down. The difficulties which they cause are laid solely to lax pre-scientific nomenclature. – Whether the will would be free, is so relevant as the recalcitrance of the termini towards the desiderata of simply and clearly stating what they mean. Since justice and punishment, finally the possibility of what the tradition of philosophy has throughout called morality or ethics, depends on the answer, the intellectual need is not to be talked out of the naïve question as a false problem. The self-righteous tidiness of thinking offers it a poor substitute satisfaction. Nevertheless the semantic critique is not to be carelessly ignored. The urgency of a question cannot compel any answer, insofar as no true one is to be obtained; still less however can the fallible need, even the desperate one, indicate the direction of the answer. The objects under discussion are to be reflected upon, not by judging them as an existent or a not-existent, but by absorbing into their own determination the impossibility of making them tangibly thingly [dingfest], as much as the necessity to think them. This is attempted in the antinomy chapter of the Critique of Pure Reason and in great swathes of the Critique of Practical Reason, with the express intent or without it; admittedly Kant did not totally avoid therein the dogmatic usage, which he, like Hume, upbraids in other traditional concepts. He settled the conflict between facticity – “nature” – and what is necessary to thought – the intelligible world – in dichotomical fashion. If however the will or freedom cannot be pointed out as something existent, then this does not at all exclude, after the analogy to simple predialectical epistemology, individual impulses or individual experiences from being synthesized under concepts to which no naturalistic substrate corresponds, which however similarly reduce those impulses or experiences to a common denominator, comparable to how the Kantian “object” does to its appearances. According to its model, the will would be the lawful [gesetzmaessige] unity of all impulses, which prove themselves to be simultaneously spontaneous and rationally determined, as distinct from the natural causality in whose framework it in any case remains: no sequence of acts of will outside of the causal nexus. Freedom would be the word for the possibility of those impulses. But the snap epistemological answer is not adequate. The question as to

whether the will would be free or not, compels an either/or, just as dubious as conclusive, which the concept of the will as the lawful [gesetzmaessiges] unity of its impulses glosses over indifferently. And above all the monadological structure of will and freedom is tacitly assumed, as in the model of conceptual construction oriented to subjective immanence-philosophy. The simplest of things contradicts it: mediated through what analytic psychology calls the “reality check”, countless moments of externalized, indeed social reality go along together with the decisions designated by will and freedom; if the concept of what rationally accords in the will is supposed to say anything at all, then it refers to this, however stubbornly Kant may dispute this. What lends the immanence-philosophical determination of those concepts their elegance and their autarky is, in truth, in view of the factual decisions, whereby the question as to whether they are free or unfree can be asked, an abstraction; what it leaves over of what is psychological, is scanty in contrast to the real complexion of inner and outer. Nothing is to be read out of this impoverished, chemical extract, which might predicate freedom or its opposite. Put more strictly and at the same time more Kantian still, the empirical subject which makes those decisions – and only an empirical one can make them, the transcendental pure “I think” would not be capable of any impulse – is itself a moment of the spatio-temporal “external” world and has no ontological priority before it; that is why the attempt to localize the question of free will in it failed. It drew the line between what is intelligible and what is empirical in the midst of empiricism. That much is true in the thesis of the false problem. As soon as the question of free will shrinks into that of the decision of every individual, dissolving this out of its context and that which is individuated [Individuum] out of society, it hews to the deception of absolute pure being-in-itself: delimited subjective experience usurps the dignity of what is most certain of all. The substrate of the alternative has something fictive about it. The presumed subject, which is existing-in-itself, is in itself mediated by that which it separates itself from, by the context of all subjects. Through the mediation it becomes itself what, according to its consciousness of freedom, it does not wish to be, heteronomous. Even where unfreedom is positively assumed, its conditions, as those of an immanently closed psychic causality, are sought in the split-off individuated, which is essentially nothing split-off of the sort. If not even the individual can find the matter-at-hand of freedom in itself, just as little may the theorem of the determination of the naïve feeling of caprice be simply extinguished post festum; the doctrine of psychological determinism was carried out only in a late phase.

Interest in Freedom Split 213-215

Since the seventeenth century great philosophy has deemed freedom to be its most characteristic interest; under the unexpressed mandate of the bourgeois class, to transparently ground it. That interest however is antagonistic in itself. It goes against the old oppression and promotes the new one, which lies hidden in the rational principle itself. A common formulation is sought for freedom and oppression: the former is ceded to rationality, which delimits it, and removed from empiricism, in which one does not wish to see it realized at all. The dichotomy is also related to advancing scientization. The class is allied to it, insofar as it encourages production, and must fear it, as soon as it infringes upon the belief that their freedom, already resigned to sheer inwardness, would be existent. This is what really stands behind the doctrine of the antinomies. Already in

Kant and later in the idealists the idea of freedom appeared in opposition to specific scientific research, particularly psychology. Their objects were banished by Kant into the realm of unfreedom; positive science is supposed to have its place underneath speculation – in Kant: underneath the doctrine of the noumena. With the waning of the speculative power and the correlative development of the particular sciences, the opposition sharpened to an extreme. The particular sciences paid for this with hidebound pettiness, philosophy with non-committal emptiness. The more the particular sciences confiscated of its content – as psychology did to the genesis of the character, over which even Kant made wild guesses – the more embarrassingly do philosophemes on the freedom of the will degenerate into declamations. If the particular sciences seek ever more nomothetism [Gesetzmaessigkeit]; if they are thereby, before any fundamental views, driven to the party of determinism, then philosophy increasingly becomes the storehouse of pre-scientific, apologetic intuitions of freedom. The antinomies of freedom in Kant, just like the dialectics of freedom in Hegel, form an essential philosophical moment; after them academic philosophy, at least, swore by the idol of a higher realm beyond empiricism. The intelligible freedom of individuals is praised, so that one can hold the empirical ones even more ruthlessly accountable, to better curb them by the prospect of a metaphysically justified punishment. The alliance of the doctrine of freedom and repressive praxis distances philosophy ever further from genuine insight into the freedom and unfreedom of living beings. It approximates, anachronistically, that faded sublimity which Hegel diagnosed as the misery of philosophy. Because however the particular science – that of criminal justice is exemplary – cannot handle the question concerning freedom and must reveal its own incompetence, it seeks assistance precisely from the philosophy which through its bad and abstract opposition to scientivism cannot provide such assistance. Where science hopes for the decision on what it finds irresolvable from philosophy, it receives from the latter only the solace of the humdrum world-view. In it individual scientists orient then themselves according to taste and, one must fear, according to their own psychological drive-structure. The relationship to the complex of freedom and determinism is delivered helter-skelter over to irrationality, oscillating between inconclusive, more or less empirical specific findings and dogmatic generalities. Ultimately the attitude to that complex becomes dependent on political affiliation or the power recognized at the moment. Reflections on freedom and determinism sound archaic, as if dating from the early epoch of the revolutionary bourgeoisie. But that freedom grows obsolete, without being realized, is not to be accepted as a fatality; resistance must explain this. Not the least of the reasons why the idea of freedom lost its power over human beings is that it was conceived of so abstractly-subjectively in advance, that the objective social tendency could bury it without difficulty.

Freedom, Determinism, Identity 215-217

The indifference towards freedom, its concept and the thing itself, is caused by the integration of society, which the subjects experience as if it were irresistible. Their interest in being cared for has crippled the one in a freedom which they fear as defenselessness. The very mention of freedom, just like the appeal to it, already rings hollow. That is what an intransigent nominalism adjusts itself to. The fact that it relegates the objective antinomies, in keeping with the logical canon, into the realm of false problems, has for its part a social function: to conceal contradictions through denial. By

holding on to data or their contemporary heirs, protocol statements, consciousness is disburdened of what would contradict that which is external. According to the rules of that ideology, only the modes of conduct of human beings in various situations would need to be described and classified; any talk of the will or freedom would be conceptual fetishism. All determinations of the I ought thereby, as behaviorism in fact planned, to be simply translated back into modes of reaction and individual reactions, which could then be nailed down. What is left out of consideration is that what is nailed down produces new qualities in contrast to the reflexes, out of which the former may have originated. The positivists unconsciously obey the dogma of the preeminence of the first, which their metaphysical archenemies entertained: "What is specifically most revered is what is most ancient, the sworn witness is however the most honored of all."¹ In Aristoteles it is mythos; what survives of it in straight out anti-mythologists is the conception that everything which is would be reducible to what it once was. In the like for like of their quantifying methods there is as little room for the self-producing other as the bane of destiny. What however has been objectified in human beings out of their reflexes and against these, character or will, the potential organ of freedom, also undermines this last. For it embodies the dominating principle, to which humanity progressively submits. Identity of the self and self-alienation accompany each other from the very beginning; that is why the concept of self-alienation is badly romantic. The condition of freedom, identity is immediately at the same time the principle of determinism. The will is, insofar as human beings objectify themselves into character. Thereby they become, towards themselves – whatever that may be – something externalized, according to the model of the external world of things, subjugated to causality. – Moreover the positivistic concept of the "reaction", purely descriptive by its own intent, presupposes incomparably more than what it confesses: passive dependence on each given situation. What is spirited away a priori is the reciprocal influence of subject and object, spontaneity is already excluded by the method, in unison with the ideology of adjustment, which breaks human beings, ready to serve the course of the world, once more of the habit of that moment. If there remained only passive reactions, then there would remain, in the terminology of older philosophy, only receptivity: no thinking would be possible. If there is will only through consciousness, then consciousness is indeed, correlatively, also only where there is will. Self-preservation for its part demands, in its history, more than the conditioned reflex and thereby prepares for what it finally steps beyond. Therein it presumably resembles the biological individual [Individuum], which stipulates the form of its reflexes; the reflexes could scarcely be without any moment of unity. It reinforces itself as the self of self-preservation; freedom opens itself to the latter as its historically-become difference from the reflexes.

Freedom and Organized Society 217-221

Without any thought of freedom, organized society could scarcely be theoretically grounded. It would then once again cut short freedom. Both can be demonstrated in the Hobbesian construction of the state-contract. A factual, thorough-going determinism would sanction, in opposition to the determinist Hobbes, the bellum omnium contra omnes [Latin: war of all against all]; every criterion of treatment would fall asunder, if everyone were equally predetermined and blind. The perspective of something at an extremity is outlined; as to whether, in the demand for freedom for the sake of the possibility of living together, a paralognism lies hidden: freedom must be real, so that there

would not be horror. But rather there is horror, because there is not yet any freedom. The reflection on the question concerning will and freedom does not abolish the question, but turns it into one from the philosophy of history: why did the theses, “The will is free”, and, “The will is unfree”, become an antinomy? Kant did not overlook the fact that this reflection originated historically, and expressly founded the revolutionary claim of his own moral philosophy on its delay: “One saw human beings bound to laws by their duty, it did not however occur to anyone, that they would be subject only to their own and nevertheless universal legislation, and that they would only be bound to act according to their own yet generally legislated will, according to the purpose of nature.”² By no means however did it occur to him, as to whether freedom itself, to him an eternal idea, could be a historical essence; not merely as a concept but rather according to its experience-content. Entire epochs, entire societies lacked the concept of freedom as much as the thing. To ascribe this to them as an objective in-itself even where it was thoroughly concealed from human beings, would conflict with the Kantian principle of the transcendental, which is supposed to be founded in the subjective consciousness, and would be untenable to the degree that the presumed consciousness totally lacked any sort of living being at all. Hence no doubt Kant’s tenacious effort to demonstrate the moral consciousness as something ubiquitous, existent even in what is radically evil. Otherwise he would have had to reject, in the appropriate phases and societies in which there is no freedom, along with the character of rationally-endowed beings also that of humanity; the follower of Rousseau could scarcely have found comfort in that. Before that which is individuated in the modern sense formed, something self-evident for Kant, which is not meant simply as the biological individual being but as what is first constituted as a unity by the self-reflection,³ the Hegelian “self-consciousness”, it is anachronistic to speak of freedom, of the real kind as much as the demand for such. Freedom, to be established in its full dimensions solely under social conditions of an unfettered plenitude of goods, could on the other hand also be totally extinguished, perhaps without a trace. The trouble is not that free human beings act radically evil, as is being done far beyond any measure imaginable to Kant, but that there is not yet a world in which they, and this flashes in Brecht, would no longer need to be evil. Evil would be therefore their own unfreedom: what happens which is evil, would come from the latter. Society determines individuals, even according to their immanent genesis, as what they are; their freedom or unfreedom is not what is primary, as this appears under the veil of the principium individuationis [Latin: individuating principle]. For even the insight into its dependence is obscured to subjective consciousness by the ego, as Schopenhauer explained by the mythos of the veil of Maya. The individuation-principle, the law of particularization to which the universality of reason in individuals is tied, insulates this tendentially from the contexts which surround it and promotes thereby the flattering confidence in the autarky of the subject. Its epitome is contrasted under the name of the freedom to the totality which restricts individuality. The principium individuationis is however by no means that which is metaphysically ultimate and unalterable, and therefore also not freedom; this is rather a moment in a double sense: not isolatable but imbricated, and for the time being always only a moment of spontaneity, a historical intersection blocked under contemporary conditions. As little as the independence of the individuated, inappropriately emphasized by liberal ideology, prevails, so little is its utterly real separation from society to be denied, which that ideology wrongly interprets. At times the individuated has opposed

society as something self-realized although particular, which could pursue its own interests through reason. In that phase, and beyond it, the question of freedom was genuine, as to whether society permits the individuated to be as free, as the former promises the latter; thereby also, as to whether the former is itself so. The individuated temporarily towers above the blind context of society, helping however in its windowless isolation just that context to reproduce itself. – The thesis of the unfreedom of historical experience registers no less the irreconcilability of inner and outer: human beings are unfree in their bondage to what is external, and that which is external to them is in turn also themselves. Only in what is separated from this and necessarily against it, according to the cognition of Hegel's Phenomenology, does the subject acquire the concepts of freedom and unfreedom, which it can then relate back to its own monadological structure. The pre-philosophical consciousness is on this side of the alternative; to the naïvely acting subject, which posits itself against the immediate environment, its own conditionality is impenetrable. To master it, consciousness must make it transparent. The sovereignty of thought, which by virtue of its freedom turns back to itself as to its subject, realizes also the concept of unfreedom. Both are no simple opposition but in each other. The consciousness does not become aware of this out of the theoretical urge towards knowledge. The sovereignty which exploits nature and its social form, domination over human beings, suggests its opposite, the idea of freedom. Those who were at the top of hierarchies, but not visibly dependent, were its historical archetype. Freedom becomes, in the abstract general concept of something beyond nature, intellectualized into freedom from the realm of causality. Thereby however into self-deception. Put psychologically, the interest of the subject in the thesis, that it would be free, is narcissistic, as boundless as anything which is narcissistic. Even in Kant's argumentation, despite his localization of the sphere of freedom categorically above psychology, narcissism shows through. Every human being, even the "most malign ruffian", would wish, according to the Foundation for a Metaphysic of Morals, that "when one set forth examples of honesty in intent, of steadfastness in following good maxims, of compassion and of general good will", even he would like to be so minded. From this he could expect no "gratification of the desires", "no condition in which any other of his real or otherwise imaginable inclinations would be satisfied", "but only a greater inner worth of his person... He believes himself to be this better person however, when he puts himself in the standpoint of a member of the world of understanding, to which the idea of freedom, that is to say independence from the determining causes of the sensible world, involuntarily compels him..."⁴ Kant spares no effort to justify that expectation of a greater inner worth of the person, which would motivate the thesis of freedom, with that objectivity of the law of morality to which, for its part, consciousness would first need to rise on the grounds of that expectation. Nevertheless he cannot make us forget that the "practical usage of common human reason"⁵ in view of freedom is coupled with the need for self-exaltation, with the "worth" of the person. Meanwhile that immediate consciousness experiences the "common moral cognition of reason", from which the Kantian Foundation methodically starts out, no less than the interest to deny the self-same freedom which it proclaims. The more freedom the subject, and the community of subjects, ascribes to itself, the greater its responsibility, and before the latter it fails in a bourgeois life, whose praxis has never vouchsafed the undiminished autonomy to subjects which it was accorded in theory. That is why it must feel guilty. Subjects become aware of the limits of their freedom as their

own membership in nature, ultimately as their powerlessness in view of the society become autonomous before them. The universality of the concept of freedom, however, in which the oppressed also participate, recoils against domination as a model of freedom. In reaction to this, those who are privileged with freedom delight in discerning that others would not yet be mature enough for freedom. They rationalize this, revealingly enough, as natural causality. Subjects are not only fused with their own corporeality, but even in that which is psychological, painstakingly separated from the immediate world of the bodily by reflection, a thorough-going nomothetism prevails. The consciousness of this rose in proportion to the determination of the soul as something unitary. So little meanwhile does an immediately evident self-consciousness of freedom exist, as one of unfreedom; it always requires either the mirror-reflection of what is perceived in society upon the subject – the oldest is the so-called Platonic psychology – or one which is concretized by psychological science, in whose hands the life of the soul it discovered becomes a thing among things and ends up under the causality predicated by the world of things.

The Pre-egoized Impulse 221-222

The dawning consciousness of freedom nourishes itself on the memory of the archaic impulse, not yet directed by a solidified ego. The more the ego curbs this, the more questionable pre-temporal freedom becomes to it as something chaotic. Without the anamnesis of the unbridled, pre-egoized impulse, which is later banished into the zone of unfree bondage to nature, the idea of freedom could not be created, even though it terminates for its part in the strengthening of the ego. In the philosophical concept, which raises freedom as a mode of conduct as the highest beyond empirical existence, namely that of spontaneity, the echo reverberates of that by which the ego of idealistic philosophy intends to secure its freedom, by controlling it all the way to its annihilation. Through the apology for its inverted form, society encourages individuals to hypostasize their own individuality and thereby their freedom. Insofar as such tenacious appearance [Schein] reaches, the consciousness is taught the moment of its unfreedom solely in pathogenic conditions, as in compulsory neuroses. They command it, in the midst of the circumference of its own immanence, to act according to laws which it experiences as “ego-alien”; the rejection of freedom in its own domestic realm. The pain of neurosis also has the metapsychological aspect, in that it destroys the simplistic notion: free inside, unfree outside, without the subject coming to realize the truth which its pathic condition communicates, and which it can reconcile neither with its drive nor with its rational interest. This truth-content of neuroses is, that they demonstrate the unfreedom of the ego in itself in what is ego-alien, the feeling of “But that’s not me at all”; there, where its domination over inner nature fails. Whatever falls under the unity of what traditional epistemology termed personal self-consciousness – itself compulsory essence, insofar as all moments of this unity are stamped with nomothetism – appears to be free to the self-retrieving ego, because it derives the idea of the freedom from the model of its own domination, first the one over human beings and things, then, innervated, the one over its own entire concrete content, over which it disposes by thinking it. This is not only the self-deception of the immediacy, which is inflated into the absolute. Solely where someone acts as an ego, not merely reactively, can their action in any sense be called free. Nevertheless that which is not bound to the ego as the principle of every

determination would be equally free, as that which appears to be unfree to the ego, as in Kant's moral philosophy, and which in fact has been equally unfree to this day. Freedom as a given fact becomes problematic through the progress of self-experience and, because the interest of the subject in it nevertheless does not wane, is sublimated into an idea. This is metapsychologically verified by the psychoanalytic theory of repression [Verdraengung: displacement]. According to this the repressing authority, the mechanism of compulsion, is, dialectically enough, one with the ego, the organon of freedom. Introspection discovers neither freedom nor unfreedom in itself as something positive. It conceives of both in the relation to something extra-mental: freedom as the polemical counter-image to the suffering under social compulsion, unfreedom as its mirror-image. That is how little the subject is the "sphere of absolute origins", which it is philosophized as; even the determinations, by virtue of which it lays claim to its sovereignty, always also need that which, according to their self-understanding, are supposed to need only them. What is decisive in the ego, its independence and autonomy, can only be judged in relationship to its otherness, to the not-ego. Whether or not autonomy exists, depends on its adversary and contradiction, the object, which grants or denies the subject autonomy; dissolved from this, autonomy is fictive.

Experimenta Crucis [Latin: decisive experiment] 222-226

How little the consciousness can discern of freedom by means of the recourse to its self-experience, is attested to by the *experimenta crucis* of introspection. It is not for nothing that the most popular one is saddled onto a donkey. Kant still follows its schema in the attempt to demonstrate freedom by the decision, something relevant to Beckett's plays, to stand up from a chair. In order to decide conclusively, empirically so to speak, as to whether the will would be free, situations must be rigorously cleansed of their empirical content; thought-experimental conditions established, in which as few determinants as possible can be observed. Every less clownish paradigm contains rational grounds for the self-deciding subject, which would have to be chalked up as determinants; the *experimenta* is damned by the principle, according to which it is supposed to decide, to silliness, and this devalues the decision. Pure situations in the style of Buridan are not likely to occur, except where they are thought out or established for the sake of demonstrating freedom. Even if something remotely similar to this could be discovered, it would be irrelevant to any person's life and hence *adiaphorou* [Greek: indifferent] for freedom. Indeed many of Kant's *experimenta crucis* have greater pretensions. He draws them up as empirical evidence of the right "to introduce freedom into science", since "the experience too confirms this order of concepts in us";⁶ whereas empirical evidence for something which is according to his own theory simply supra-empirical ought to make him suspicious, because the critical matter-at-hand is thereby localized in that sphere, from which it has been principally removed. The example is then also not stringent: "Supposing, that someone is given over to carnal desire, such that it would be completely irresistible for him, if the beloved object and the opportunity thereto presented themselves; ask whether if a gallows before the house, where he took this opportunity, were constructed in order to hang him immediately after the carnal pleasure, whether he then would not repress his desire. It would not take long to guess what he would answer. If he was asked however, whether his prince under the threats of the same immediate punishment of death required him to bear false witness against an honest man, which the

former is bent on ruining under a mere pretext, whether there, however great his love of life may be, he could consider it possible to overcome this latter. He will perhaps not trust himself to say whether he would do it or not; that it would be possible, however, he would admit without hesitation. He judges therefore, that he can do something, because he is conscious of it, that he ought to do it, and cognizes in himself the freedom, which without the moral law would otherwise have remained unknown to him.”⁷ That he could do it, might presumably be conceded by the person charged by Kant with “carnal desire” as much as the victim of extortion by the tyrant, who Kant respectfully names his prince; it would probably be the truth if both said, in the consciousness of the weight of self-preservation in these sorts of decisions, that they did not know how they would behave in the real situation. In the emergency situation, a psychological moment like the “ego-drive” and the fear of death would appear irrefutably differently than in the improbable thought-experiment, which neutralizes that moment to the cogitative affectless conception. No one can predict, not even those with the most integrity, how they would act under torture; this in the meantime by no means fictive situation denotes a limit upon what is self-evident to Kant. His example does not permit, as he hoped, the legitimation of the concept of freedom according to its practical use, but at most a shrugging of the shoulders. Not even that of the card-cheat serves anymore: “He who has lost at cards, can be angry at himself and his lack of cleverness, but if he is consciousness of having cheated in the game (although thereby winning), then he must despise himself, as soon as he compares himself with the moral law. This must therefore be something other, than the principle of one’s own happiness. For to be obliged to say to myself: I am a good-for-nothing, though I have lined my pockets, must have a different standard of judgement, than giving oneself applause and saying: I am a clever human being, for I have enriched myself.”⁸ Whether card-cheats despise themselves or not, even assuming they would reflect on the moral law, is a crassly empirical question. They may feel themselves, in an infantile fashion, to be exempt from every bourgeois obligation; even laughing up their sleeves at the successful stunt, their narcissism shielding them against the presumed self-loathing; and they may simply be following an ethical code approved among their own kind. The pathos, with which they are supposed to abuse themselves as unworthy, is based on the recognition of the Kantian moral law, which this latter wishes to ground with the example. In the group of all those covered for example by the concept of “moral insanity” [in English], it is suspended, yet they by no means lack reason; only metaphorically could they be classified as insane. What in propositions over the mundus intelligibilis [Latin: intelligible world] seeks consolation in the empirical one, must itself accord with empirical criteria, and this speaks against the consolation, in keeping with that aversion of speculative thought against the so-called example as something inferior, for which there is no lack of testimony in Kant: “This is also the sole and great use of examples, that they sharpen the power of judgement. For in regards to the correctness and precision of the insight of understanding, they commonly cause the latter some obstruction, because they only seldom adequately fulfill the condition of the rule (as casus in terminis [Latin: case in the end]) and moreover often weaken the corresponding effort of understanding, to look into the adequacy of the rules in general and independently of the particular circumstances of experience, and ultimately cultivate the habit of using these more as formulations than as foundations. Thus examples are the leading-strings of the power of judgement, which those, who lack the natural talent for

the same, can never dispense with.”⁹ Given that Kant did not, contrary to his own insight, disdain to use examples in the Critique of Practical Reason, one suspects that he needed them because the relation between the formal moral law and existence, and thereby the possibility of the imperative, could not have been achieved except by empirical subreption; his philosophy thereby revenges itself on him, in that the examples dissolve like smoke. The absurdity of moral experiments might have as their core, the fact that they couple what is incompatible; they claim to calculate out, what for its part explodes the realm of the calculable.*1*

The Supplementary [Hinzutretende] 226-230

Despite all this, they demonstrate a moment which, corresponding to its vague experience, may be termed the supplementary [Hinzutretende]. The decisions of the subject do not roll off as in a causal chain, but occur as a jolt. This supplementary, the factual, which realizes itself [sich entaeussert] in consciousness, is interpreted again by the philosophical tradition only as consciousness. It is supposed to intervene, as if the intervention were somehow conceivable by the pure Spirit. What is construed for the sake of the QED [quod erat demonstrandum: what is to be shown]: that solely the reflection of the subject would be able, if not to break through natural causality, then at least to add in other chains of motivations, to change its direction. The self-experience of the moment of freedom is bound up with consciousness; the subject knows itself to be free, only insofar as its action appears to be identical with it, and that is the case solely in conscious ones. In these alone subjectivity raises, laboriously and ephemerally, its head. But the insistence on this narrowed itself rationalistically. To this extent Kant was, in keeping with his conception of practical reason as that which is truly “pure”, namely sovereign in relation to every material, closely attached to the school which the critique of theoretical reason demolished. Consciousness, the rational insight, is not simply the same as the free act, is not to be flatly equated to the will. Exactly that occurs in Kant. The will is to him the epitome of freedom, the “capacity”, to act freely, the characteristic unity of all the acts, which can be conceived of as free. Of the categories which “in the field of the supra-sensory” stand in “necessary connection” with the “determining grounds of the pure will”, he teaches “that they always refer only to beings which are intelligent, and in these also only as the relationship of reason to the will, and therefore always only to what is practiced.”¹⁰ Reason would obtain reality through the will, untrammelled by any sort of material. The formulations scattered in Kant’s moral-philosophical texts ought to converge therein. In the Foundation for a Metaphysic of Morals the will is “thought of as a capacity, to determine oneself to act according to the conception of certain laws.”¹¹*2* According to a later passage of the same text, the will would be “a kind of causality of living beings, insofar as they are rational, and freedom would be the selfsame characteristic of this causality, since it can have an affect independent from alien fundamental causes which determine it.”¹² The oxymoron “causality through freedom”, appearing in the thesis of the Third Antinomy and explicated in the Foundation, becomes plausible solely due to the abstraction, which allows the will to be exhausted in reason. In fact freedom becomes for Kant a characteristic of the causality of living subjects, because it would be beyond the alien fundamental causes which determine them and would shrink into that necessity which coincides with reason. Even the treatment of the will as the “capacity of purposes”¹³ in the Critique of Practical Reason expounds this, in spite of its

orientation to the objective concept of the purpose, as theoretical reason, since the purposes “are at every time the determining grounds for the capacity of desire according to principles”;¹⁴ however, solely the laws of reason are to be conceived under principles, which are tacitly ascribed the capability of directing the capacity to desire, which for its part belongs to the world of the senses. As pure *logos* [Greek: logic] the will becomes a no-man’s land between the subject and the object, antinomical in a manner which was not envisioned by the critique of reason. – At the beginning of the self-reflection of the modern, self-emancipating subject, however, in Hamlet, the divergence between the insight and the act is paradigmatically displayed. The more the subject becomes an existent for itself and distances itself from an unbroken accord with pre-established order, the less are the deed and consciousness as one. The supplementary is possessed of an aspect which is irrational according to rationalistic ground-rules. It denies the Cartesian dualism of *res extensa* [Latin: extended substance] and *res cogitans* [Latin: thinking substance], in which the supplementary, as something mental, is lumped together with the *res cogitans* [Latin: thinking substance], without consideration of its difference from the thought. The supplementary is an impulse, the rudiment of a phase, in which the dualism of the extra- and intramental was not thoroughly nailed down, neither to be bridged as volition nor an ontological ultimate. The concept of the will is also touched by this, which has the so-called facts of consciousness as its content, which are simultaneously purely descriptive, and not only such; this lies hidden in the transition of the will into praxis. The impulse, intramental and somatic in one, drives beyond the sphere of consciousness, which it nevertheless belongs to. With it, freedom reaches deep into experience; this animates its concept as one of a condition, which would be so little blind nature as suppressed nature. Its phantasm, which reason does not allow to be withered by any proof of causal interdependence, is that of a reconciliation of Spirit and nature. It is not so alien to reason as it seems under the aspect of its Kantian equation with the will; it does not fall from the heavens. It appears as something simply and purely other to the philosophical reflection, because the will, reduced to the pure practical reason, is an abstraction. The supplementary is the name for what was stamped out of that abstraction; without it the will would not be real at all. It flashes like a bolt of lightning between the poles of something long past, which has become almost unrecognizable, and that which it one day could be. True praxis, the epitome of acts which would satisfy the idea of freedom, requires indeed full theoretical consciousness. The decisionism which cancels out reason in the transition to the action delivers this over to the automatism of domination: the unreflective freedom, which it adjusts to, becomes the servant of total unfreedom. Hitler’s realm, which united decisionism and social Darwinism, the affirmative extension of natural causality, taught this lesson. But praxis also requires something other, something not exhausted in consciousness, something corporeal, mediated into reason and qualitatively divergent from it. Both moments are by no means experienced separately; yet the philosophical analysis has clipped the phenomenon in such a manner that it can not otherwise be expressed in the language of philosophy, than as if something other were being added to rationality. By allowing only reason to be a *movens* [Latin: what moves] of praxis, Kant remained in the bane of that faded theoretic, against which he invented the primacy of practical reason as complementary. His entire moral philosophy labors under this. What is different in the action from the pure consciousness, which to Kant compels the former: that which abruptly springs out, is the

spontaneity, which Kant likewise transplanted into the pure consciousness, because otherwise the constitutive function of the “I think” would have been endangered. The memory of what has been expelled lives on in him only in the double interpretation of the intramentally interpreted spontaneity. It is on the one hand an achievement of the consciousness: thinking; on the other hand, unconscious and involuntary, the heartbeat of the *res cogitans* [Latin: thinking substance] beyond this latter. Pure consciousness – “logic” – is itself something which has become and something valid, in which its genesis perished. It has this latter in the moment glossed over by the Kantian doctrine, of the negation of the will, which according to Kant would be pure consciousness. Logic is a praxis sealed off from itself. Contemplative conduct, the subjective correlate of logic, is the conduct which wants nothing. Conversely every act of will breaks through the autarkic mechanism of logic; this jolts theory and praxis into opposition. Kant turns the matter-at-hand upside down. However more sublimated the supplementary may constantly become with increasing consciousness, indeed however the concept of the will may form thereby as something substantial and uniform – if the motor reaction-form were totally liquidated, if the hand no longer twitched, then there would be no will. What the great rationalistic philosophers conceived under this latter, already repudiates it, without giving an account of it, and the Schopenhauer of the fourth book was not wrong in feeling himself to be a Kantian. That without the will there is no consciousness, was blurred by the idealists into point-blank identity: as if the will were nothing other than consciousness. In the most profound concept of transcendental epistemology, that of the productive power of imagination, the trace of the will migrates into the pure intellectual function. Once this has occurred, then spontaneity is curiously glossed over in the will. It is not merely reason which has genetically developed itself out of drive-energy as its differentiation: without that willing, which manifests itself in the caprice of every such act of thinking and alone furnishes the ground for its distinction from the passive, “receptive” moment of the subject, there would be no thinking in the proper sense. Idealism however swore an oath to the opposite and may not permit this to speak, at the price of its annihilation; this explains the inversion of as well as its proximity to the true matter-at-hand.

Fiction of Positive Freedom 230-231

Freedom is solely to be grasped in determinate negation, in accordance with the concrete form of unfreedom. Positively it becomes an “as if”. Literally so in the Foundation for a Metaphysic of Morals: “I say now: every such being, which can not act otherwise than under the idea of freedom, is precisely thereby really free in the practical consideration, i.e. that all laws, which are inseparably bound to freedom, are applicable as much to the selfsame being, as if its will also in itself and in theoretical philosophy were validly declared free.”¹⁵ What is aporetic in this fiction, which perhaps precisely because of its weakness lends so much subjective stress to the “I say now”, is illuminated by a footnote, in which Kant apologizes, “freedom is sufficiently presumed by our intent only in that the actions of rational beings are founded merely in the idea”, “so that I may not be obliged, to prove freedom also in its theoretical intent”¹⁶. He has however the being in view, which cannot act otherwise than under that idea, therefore real human beings; and these, following the Critique of Pure Reason, are meant by that “theoretical intent” which records causality in its table of categories. To ascribe freedom to empirical human beings,

as if their will could also be demonstrated as free in theoretical philosophy, in that of nature, requires an immense effort on Kant's part; for if the moral law were simply incommensurable with them, then moral philosophy would be meaningless. It would be only too happy to shake off the fact that the Third Antinomy punished both possible answers in equal measure as border-violations, ending in a deadlock. While in the practical philosophy Kant rigorously proclaims the chorismos of the existent and that which ought to be, he is nevertheless driven to mediations. His idea of freedom becomes paradoxical: incorporated into the causality of the world of appearance, which is incompatible with its Kantian concept. With the magnificent innocence, which raises even Kant's errors far above all craftiness, he expresses this in the sentence on the beings, who could not act otherwise than under the idea of freedom, whose subjective consciousness would be chained to this idea. Their freedom has as its basis their unfreedom, on not being able to do otherwise, and at the same time on an empirical consciousness, which could deceive itself about its freedom just as much as about countless other details of its own psychological life out of amour propre [French: narcissism]; the being of freedom would be delivered over to the contingency of spatio-temporal existence. If freedom is posited as positive, as something given or unavoidable in the midst of what is given, then it immediately turns into unfreedom. But the paradox of Kant's doctrine of freedom corresponds strictly to its location in reality. The social emphasis on freedom as something existent coalesces with undiminished oppression, psychologically with compulsive traits. They are what the Kantian moral philosophy, antagonistic in itself, has in common with a criminological praxis in which the dogmatic doctrine of the free will is coupled with the necessity of harsh punishment, regardless of empirical conditions. All of the concepts in Kant's Critique of Practical Reason which, in honor of freedom, are supposed to fill in the cleft between the imperative and human beings, are repressive: law, constraint, respect, duty. Causality out of freedom corrupts the latter into obedience. Kant, like the idealists after him, cannot bear freedom without compulsion; its undistorted conception already provokes in him that fear of anarchy, which later recommended the liquidation of its own freedom to the bourgeois consciousness. This can be recognized in formulations taken at random from the Critique of Practical Reason, almost more by the tone than by the content: "The consciousness of a free submission of the will to the law, as nevertheless bound up with an unavoidable compulsion, which is exerted on all inclinations, but only through its own reason, is thus the respect for the law."¹⁷ The fearsome majesty of what Kant prioritized is what the analysts trace back to psychological conditions. In that deterministic science causally explains, what debased freedom to the non-deducible compulsion in idealism, it really contributes to freedom: a piece of its dialectic.

Unfreedom of Thought 231-234

Fully-developed German idealism chimes with one of the songs collected in the same period by The Boy's Magic Horn: thoughts are free. Since according to its doctrine everything which is, is supposed to be thought, that of the absolute, everything, which is, is supposed to be free. But this wishes only to assuage the consciousness that thoughts are by no means free. Even before all social controls, before all adjustment to relations of domination, their pure form, that of logical stringency, would be proof of unfreedom, of compulsion, in relation to what is thought as much as in relation to those who think, who

exact it from themselves through concentration. What does not fit into the consummation of the judgement is choked off; thinking practices in advance that violence which philosophy reflected in the concept of necessity. Through identification, philosophy and society mediate each other into the former's innermost core. The nowadays universal regimentation of scientific thought externalizes this Ur-old relationship in modes of conduct and organizational forms. Without the moment of compulsion however thinking could not be at all. The contradiction of freedom and thinking is so little to be removed by thinking as it is to be removed for thinking, but demands instead its self-reflection. Speculative philosophers from Leibniz to Schopenhauer were right to concentrate their efforts on causality. It is the crux of rationalism in that wider sense, which includes Schopenhauer's metaphysics, insofar as it knew itself to be on Kantian grounds. The nomothetism of the pure thought-forms, the *causa cognoscendi* [Latin: cause of cognition], is projected on the objects as *causa efficiens* [Latin: efficient cause]. Causality presupposes the formal-logical principle, actually the non-contradictoriness, that of naked identity, as the rule of the material cognition of objects, even though historical development proceeded in the other direction. Thus the equivocation in the word ratio: reason and ground. Causality must atone for this: it cannot, in keeping with Hume's insight, appeal to any sensory immediate. To this extent, it is severed from idealism as a dogmatic remainder, while without causality the former could not exert the domination over the existent, which it strives for. Freed of the compulsion of identity, thinking would perhaps escape the causality, which that compulsion is modeled after. This last hypostatizes the form as committal for a content, which does not assume this form by itself; metacritical reflection would have to absorb empiricism wholesale. In contrast to this, the entire philosophy of Kant stands under the sign of unity [Einheit]. This lends it, in spite of the heavy accentuation of the "material", which does not stem from the pure form, the character of a system: he expected no less from such a one than his successors. The prevailing unity however is the concept of reason itself, finally the logical one of pure non-contradictoriness. The Kantian doctrine of praxis adds nothing to it. The distinction suggested terminologically between the pure theoretical and the pure practical ones, just as much as between the formal-logical and the transcendental-logical and finally that of the doctrine of ideas in the narrow sense, are not differences inside of reason in itself; but are solely such in view of their usage, which either has nothing at all to do with objects, or simply refers to the possibility of objects, or, like practical reason, creates its objects, the free acts, out of itself. Hegel's doctrine, that logical and metaphysic would be the same, is inherent to Kant, without it yet becoming thematic. To the latter the objectivity of reason as such, the epitome of formal-logical validity, becomes the place of refuge for the ontology which was fatally assailed by critique in all material realms. This not only establishes the unity of the three Critiques: it is precisely as this moment of unity that reason achieves that double character, which later helped to motivate dialectics. To him reason is on the one hand, as distinct from thinking, the pure form of subjectivity; on the other hand, the summation of objective validity, the archetype of all objectivity. Its double character permits the turn taken by Kantian philosophy, as well as the German idealists: to teach the objectivity of the truth and of every content, which is nominalistically hollowed-out by subjectivity, by virtue of the same subjectivity, which destroyed it. In reason, both would be already as one; wherein indeed whatever is meant by objectivity, which opposes the subject, perishes through the

abstraction in this latter, however much this dismayed Kant. The structural double-jointedness of the concept of reason is shared however by that of the will. While in the name of spontaneity, of that which is at no price to be concretized in the subject, it is supposed to be nothing other than a subject, it becomes, solidified and identical like reason, concretized into a hypothetical, yet factual capacity in the midst of the factual-empirical world, and thus commensurable with this latter. It is only due to its a priori ontic nature, which is something available like a characteristic, that the judgement can be made, without absurdity, that it would create its objects, the actions. It belongs to the world, in which it has its effect. That this can be confirmed to it, is the fee for the installation of the pure reason as an indifferent concept. The will, from which all impulses which refuse their concretization are banished as heteronomous, has to pay for this.

“Formalism” 234-236

The system-immanent objection raised against Kant, that the subdivision of reason according to its objects would make it dependent, against the doctrine of autonomy, on what it is not supposed to be, on the extra-rational, ought not to weigh too heavily. What breaks through in that discrepancy, despite his intent, is what Kant shoos away, the innervated referentiality of reason to what is non-identical to it. Only Kant does not go that far: the doctrine of the unity of reason in all of its presumed districts of application presupposes a firm separation between reason and its “what about”. Because however it necessarily refers to such a “what about”, in order to be any sort of reason, it is also determined, against his theory, in itself by this. The constitution of objects enters for example into judgements about what is to be practically done qualitatively differently than in the Kantian theoretical founding propositions. Reason distinguishes itself according to its objects, it may not be superficially stamped, with varying degrees of validity, as always the same in various object-realms. This also informs the doctrine of the will. It is not *chôris* [Greek: separately] from its material, society. If it were, then the categorical imperative would violate itself; as nothing other than its material, other human beings would be used by the autonomous subject only as means, not as ends. That is the absurdity of the monadological construction of morality. Moral conduct, evidently more concrete than the merely theoretical kind, becomes more formal than this latter as a consequence of the doctrine, that practical reason would be independent from everything which is “alien” to it, from every object. To be sure the formalism of Kantian ethics is not merely damnable, as reactionary German scholastic philosophy since Scheler has branded it. While it provides no readily positive casuistic of what is to be done, it humanely prevents the misuse of qualitative-substantive differences for the benefit of privilege and ideology. It stipulates the general juridical norm; to this extent something of substance lives on in, it spite of and because of its abstraction, the idea of equality. The German critique, to which Kantian formalism was too rationalistic, has made its bloody colors known in Fascist praxis, which made who was to be killed dependent on blind appearance [Schein], on membership or non-membership in a designated race. The illusory character [Scheincharakter] of such concreity: that in the complete abstraction human beings are subsumed under arbitrary concepts and are treated accordingly, does not wipe away the stigma which has soiled the word concrete ever since. Therein however the critique of abstract morality is not abrogated. It suffices so little, in view of

the continuing irreconcilability of the particular and universal, as the allegedly material value ethics of short-term eternal norms. Raised to a principle, the appeal to one so much as the other does an injustice to the opposite. The depracticalization of Kant's practical reason, that is to say its rationalism, and its deobjectification are coupled; only as deobjectified does it become that which is absolutely sovereign, which is supposed to be able to have its effect in empiricism regardless of this latter, and regardless of the leap between the acting and the doing. The doctrine of pure practical reason prepares the re-translation of spontaneity into contemplation, which really occurred in the later history of the bourgeoisie and which culminated in political apathy, something utterly political. Its consummated subjectification produces the appearance [Schein] of the objectivity of practical reason, as existent-in-itself; it is no longer clear how it is supposed to reach, beyond the ontological abyss, into any sort of existent. This is also the root of what is irrational in the Kantian moral law, for which he chose the expression, the given fact [Gegebenheit], which denies all rational transparency: it commands the course of reflection to halt. Because freedom to him amounts to the invariant self-sameness of reason even in the practical realm, it forfeits what the linguistic usage distinguishes between reason and the will. By virtue of its total rationality the will becomes irrational. The Critique of Practical Reason moves in the context of delusion. It has the Spirit serve as surrogate of the action, which is not supposed to be anything other than the sheer Spirit there. This sabotages freedom: its Kantian bearer, reason, coincides with the pure law. Freedom would require what is heteronomous to Kant. Freedom would be so little, without something accidental according to the criterion of pure reason, as without the rational judgement. The absolute separation between freedom and accident [Zufall: chance, contingency] is as arbitrary as the absolute one between freedom and rationality. According to an undialectical standard of lawfulness, it always appears to freedom as something contingent; it demands reflection, which rises above the particular categories of law and accident.

The Will as Thing 236-237

The modern concept of reason was one of indifference. In it, the subjective thinking reduced to the pure form – and thereby potentially objectivated, detached from the ego – is balanced out with the validity of logical forms, removed from their constitution, which nevertheless could not in turn be conceived without subjective thinking. In Kant the expressions of the will, the actions, participate in such objectivity; they are thus called objects.*3* Their objectivity, copied from the model of reason, pays no attention to the differentia specifica of action and object. The will, the master-concept or moment of unity of the acts, is analogously concretized. What it thereby experiences theoretically, does not meanwhile in all flagrant contradiction completely lack truth-content. In view of the individual impulse the will is in fact independent, quasi thingly, to the extent that the principle of unity of the ego achieves a degree of independence in relation to its phenomena as what is “its”. One can talk of an independent and to this extent even objective will so much as of a strong ego or, in archaic terminology, of character; even outside of Kant's construction, it is that middle ground between nature and the mundus intelligibilis, which Benjamin contrasted to fate.¹⁸ The concretization of individual impulses in the will which synthesizes and determines them, is their sublimation, the successful, displaced redirection, involved as duration, of the primary drive-goal. It is

faithfully circumscribed in Kant by the rationality of the will. Through it the will becomes something other than its “material”, the diffuse excitations. To emphasize the will of a human being, means the moment of unity of their actions, and that is their subordination under reason. In the Italian title of Don Giovanni the libertine is named “il dissoluto”, the dissolute one; language opts for morality as the unity of the person according to the abstract rational law. Kant’s doctrine of ethics ascribes to the totality of the subject the predominance over the moments, in which they alone have their life and which yet outside of such totality would not be the will. The discovery was progressive: it prevented casuistic judgements from being made any longer over the particular impulses; it also inwardly prepared the end of the righteousness over texts. This contributed to freedom. The subject becomes moral for itself, cannot be weighed according to internal and external particulars, which are alien to it. By establishing the rational unity of the will as the sole moral authority, it is sheltered from the violence done to it by a hierarchical society, which – as even in Dante – judges its acts, without their law being accepted by its own consciousness. The individual actions become venial; no isolated one is absolutely good or evil, their criterion is “good will”, their principle of unity. The internalization of society as a whole steps into the place of the reflexes of a feudal order, whose apparatus, the tighter it becomes, fragments the generality of human beings all the more. The relegation of morality to the sober unity of reason was Kant’s bourgeois sublime, despite the false consciousness in the concretization of the will.

Objectivity of the Antinomy 238-239

The assertion of freedom as much as unfreedom terminates according to Kant in contradictions. That is why the controversy is supposed to be fruitless. Under the hypostasis of scientific-methodical criteria it is expounded as self-evident, that theorems, which cannot be safeguarded from the possibility of their contradictory opposite, are to be discarded by rational thinking. Since Hegel this is no longer tenable. Rather than blaming the procedure in advance, the contradiction may be one in the thing itself. The urgency of the interest in freedom suggests such objective contradictoriness. In that Kant demonstrated the necessity of the antinomies, he also disdained the excuse of the false problem, overhastily bowing however to the logic of contradictoriness.*4* The transcendental dialectic does not entirely lack the consciousness of this. To be sure the Kantian dialectic is expounded according to the Aristotelian model as one of trick statements [Fangschluessen]. But each time it develops thesis like antithesis non-contradictorily in itself. To that extent it by no means comfortably disposes of the antithesis, but wishes to demonstrate its inevitability. It would “be dissolved” only through a reflection on a higher level, as the hypostasis of logical reason in relation to that which, whose being-in-itself it knows nothing of, and over which it is therefore not entitled to positively judge. That the contradiction would be inescapable to reason, indicates it as something beyond that and its “logic”. In terms of content, this allows for the possibility that the bearer of reason, the subject, would be both free and unfree. Kant settles the contradiction with the means of undialectical logic, by the distinction between the pure and empirical subject, which ignores the mediatedness of both concepts. The subject is supposed to be unfree to the extent that it, too, is its own object, submitting to the lawful synthesis through categories. In order to be able to act in the empirical world, the subject cannot in fact be conceived as other than the “phenomenon”. Kant by no

means always denies this. The speculative critique grants, teaches the work on practical reason in unison with that on the pure one, that “the objects of experience as such and among these our own subject are valid only as appearance”.¹⁹ The synthesis, the mediation, cannot be subtracted from anything which can be positively judged. The moment of unity of thought, it grasps everything thought under itself and determines it as necessary. This would catch up even to the talk of the strong ego as firm identity, as the condition of freedom. It would have no power over the chorismos. The concretization of character would in Kantian terms be localizable only in the realm of the constitutum [Latin: what is constituted], not in that of the constituens [Latin: what constitutes]. Otherwise Kant would commit the same paralogism, for which he convicts the rationalists. The subject would however be free, in that it posits, “constitutes” in the Kantian sense, its own identity, the ground of its lawfulness. That the constituens is supposed to be the transcendental subject, the constitutum the empirical one, does not remove the contradiction, for there is no transcendental one which is not individuated in the unity of consciousness, hence as a moment of the empirical one. It requires what is irreducibly non-identical, which simultaneously delimits lawfulness. Without it, identity would be so little as an immanent law of subjectivity. Only for the non-identical is it one; otherwise, a tautology. The identifying principle of the subject is itself the internalized one of society. That is why in the realm of socially existent subjects unfreedom is preponderant over freedom to this day. Inside of the reality, which is modeled after the identity-principle, no freedom is positively available. Where, under the universal bane, human beings seem to be relieved of the identity-principle and thereby of comprehensible determinants, they are for the time being not more than but less than determined: as schizophrenia, subjective freedom is something destructive, which only incorporates human beings under the bane of nature that much more.

Dialectical Determination of the Will 240-241

The will without the bodily impulse, which lives on weakly in the imagination, would be none at all; at the same time however it arranges itself as a centralizing unity of the impulses, as the authority which restrains and potentially negates them. This necessitates its dialectical determination. It is the power of consciousness, by which it leaves its own magic circle and thereby transforms what merely is; its recoil is resistance. No doubt the memory of this always accompanied the transcendental rational doctrine of morals; as in the Kantian avowal of the given fact [Gegebenheit] of the moral law independent of philosophical consciousness. His thesis is heteronomous and authoritarian, but has its moment of truth in that it limits the pure rational character of the moral law. If one took the one reason strictly, it could be no other than the unabbreviated, philosophical one. The motif culminates in the Fichtean formulation of the self-evidence of what is moral. As the bad conscience of the rationality of the will, however, its irrationality becomes crumpled up and false. If it is once supposed as self-evident, exempt from rational reflection, then what is self-evident affords shelter to the unexamined residue and to repression. Self-evidence is the hallmark of what is civilized: good is what is one, immutable, identical. What does not fit into this, the whole legacy of the pre-logical natural moment, turns immediately into evil, as abstract as the principle of its opposite. Bourgeois evil is the post-existence of that which is older, subjugated, not entirely subjugated. It is however not unconditionally evil, any more than its violent counterpart.

Solely the consciousness, which reflects the moments as far and as consistently as they are accessible to it, can render judgements each time over this. Actually there is no other authority for correct praxis and for the good itself than the most advanced state of theory. An idea of the good, which is supposed to direct the will, without it being completely absorbed into the concrete rational determinations, unwittingly obeys the reified consciousness and what is socially approved. The will which is torn from reason and declared its own purpose, whose triumph the National Socialists [Nazis] themselves documented at each one of their party meetings, stands like all ideals which protest against reason ready for any atrocity. The self-evidence of good will grows obdurate in the mirage, the historical sediment of power, which the will should resist. In contrast to its pharisaism, the irrational moment of the will principally condemns everything moral to fallibility. Moral certainty does not exist; to posit it would already be immoral, the false exoneration of what is individuated from anything which might be called morality. The more pitilessly society gathers itself up objectively-antagonistically into every situation, the less is any sort of moral individual decision accorded the right to be the correct one. Whatever the individual or the group undertakes against the totality, which they form a part of, is infected by that evil, and no less are those who do nothing at all. That is what original sin has been secularized into. The individual subject, which imagines itself to be morally certain, fails and becomes culpable, because harnessed to the social order, is hardly able to do anything about the conditions, which appeal to moral ingenium [Latin: natural ability, talent]: crying out for its transformation. For such a decay, not of morality, but of what is moral, the canny neo-German after the war hatched the name of the "overdemand" [Ueberforderung], for its part once more an apologetic instrument. All thinkable determinations of what is moral, down to the most formal of all, the unity of the self-consciousness as reason, are squeezed out of that matter, with which moral philosophy did not wish to soil its hands. Today morality has once again been granted the hated heteronomy it loathes, and tendentially sublates itself. Without recourse to the material no Ought [Sollen] could issue from reason; however once it is forced to recognize its material in abstracto [Latin: in the abstract] as the condition of its possibility, then it may not cut off the self-reflection on the specific material; otherwise it would thereby become heteronomous. In hindsight the positivity of what is moral, the infallibility which the idealists attested to it, reveals itself as the function of a still somewhat closed society, or at least of its appearance [Schein] to the consciousness delimited by it. This is what Benjamin may have meant by the conditions and boundaries of humanity. The primacy taught by the doctrines of Kant and Fichte of practical reason over theory, actually of reason over reason, is valid only for traditionalistic phases, whose horizon does not even tolerate the doubt, which the idealists imagined they were dissolving.

Contemplation 242-243

Marx received the thesis of the primacy of practical reason from Kant and German idealism and sharpened it into the demand to transform the world instead of merely interpreting it. He thereby underwrote the program of absolute control of nature, something Ur-bourgeois. The real model of the identity-principle breaks through, which dialectical materialism disputes as such, the effort, by which the subject makes what is dissimilar to it similar. However while turning that which is immanently real to the concept inside out, Marx is preparing a recoil. The telos of the long overdue praxis,

according to him, was the abolition of its primacy in the form which dominated bourgeois society through and through. Contemplation would be possible without inhumanity, just as soon as the productive forces were unfettered to the point that human beings were no longer devoured by a praxis, which scarcity extorts from them and which then automatizes itself in them. What is bad in contemplation to this day, which contents itself to this side of praxis, as Aristoteles was the first to develop it for the summum bonum [Latin: highest good], was that it became a piece of narrow-minded praxis precisely due to its indifference towards the transformation of the world: that it became a method and instrumentalized. The possible reduction of labor to a minimum ought to radically influence the concept of praxis. Whatever insights would befall a humanity emancipated through praxis, would be divergent from a praxis, which ideologically exalts itself and in one fashion or another keeps subjects running on a treadmill. A reflection of this falls on contemplation today. Against the current objection, extrapolated from the theses on Feuerbach, that the happiness of the Spirit would be impermissible amidst the increasing unhappiness of the exploding population of the poor countries, after the catastrophes of the past and those which threaten in the future, is not merely that it makes for the most part impotence into a virtue. Certainly there is no longer any justification for enjoying that of the Spirit, because a happiness forced to see through its own nullity, the borrowed time, which is given to it, would be none at all. Subjectively, too, it is undermined, even where it still bestirs itself. There is much to speak for the fact that cognition, whose possible relation to a transforming praxis is at least momentarily crippled, would not in itself be any sort of blessing. Praxis is put off and cannot wait; theory, too, ails from this. Those however who can do nothing, which does not at some point threaten to turn out for the worse even though it wishes for what is better, are constrained to thinking; that is their justification and that of the happiness of the Spirit. Its horizon need by no means be that of a transparent relation to a possible later praxis. The delayed thinking of praxis always has something inappropriate about it, even when it puts it off out of naked compulsion. However things go all too easily awry, for those who spoon-feed their thinking by the cui bono [Latin: who benefits]. What will one be incumbent upon and bestowed by a better praxis, thinking can so little foresee here and now, in keeping with the warning of utopianism, than praxis, according to its own concept, could ever exhaust itself in cognition. Without the practical visa-stamp, thinking should push against the façade, moving as far as it can possibly move itself. A reality which seals itself off against traditional theory, even against the best hitherto, demands this for the sake of the bane which shrouds it; it gazes at the subject with eyes so alien, that the latter, mindful of its failure, may not spare itself the effort of the reply. The desperate state of affairs, that the praxis on which everything depends is thwarted, paradoxically affords thinking the breathing-space which it would practically be criminal not to use. Ironically, thinking benefits from the fact that one may not absolutize its own concept: it remains, as conduct, a piece of praxis, however much this would be hidden from itself. But whoever contrasts literal, sensory happiness as something better than the impermissible one of the Spirit, fails to recognize that at the conclusion of historical sublimation, the split-off sensory happiness takes on the aspect of something regressive, similar to the way adults find the relationship of children to food off-putting. To not be similar to the latter in this respect, is a piece of freedom.

Structure of the Third Antinomy 243-244

According to the results of the transcendental analytic, the Third Antinomy would be cut off in advance: “Who called upon you, to think up a purely and simply first condition of the world and with this an absolute beginning of the gradual sequence of appearances, and thereby providing a resting-point for your imagination, by setting borders on boundless nature?”²⁰ Meanwhile Kant was not content with the summary observation, that the antinomy would be an avoidable mistake of the use of reason, and carried it out, like the others. The Kantian transcendental idealism contains the anti-idealistic ban on positing absolute identity. Epistemology is not supposed to behave as if the unforeseeable, “infinite” content of the experience could be garnered out of positive determinations of reason. Whoever violates this, would end up in a contradiction unbearable to “common sense” [in English]. This is plausible, but Kant bores further. The reason which proceeds, as he upbraids it for doing, must, according to its own meaning, and for the sake of its inexorable cognitive ideal, keep right on going where it shouldn’t, as if under a natural and irresistible temptation. It is whispered to reason, that the totality of the existent would nonetheless converge in it. On the other hand, what is authentic in the system-alien necessity, as it were, in the infinite continuation of the reason which searches for conditions, is the idea of the absolute, without which the truth could not be thought, in contrast to the cognition as a mere *adaequatio rei atque cogitationis* [Latin: making the thing equal with what is thought]. That the continuation, and thereby the antinomy, would be inalienable from the same reason, which nevertheless, as the critical one, must suppress these sorts of excesses in the transcendental analytic, documents with unintentional self-critique the contradiction of the critical approach to its own reason as of the organ of emphatic truth. Kant insists on the necessity of the contradiction and at the same time stops up the hole, by spiriting away that necessity, which presumably originated from the nature of reason, to its greater honor, explaining it as solely a false, but correctable, usage of concepts. – The explanation of freedom, as the “causality through freedom” mentioned in the thesis of the Third Antinomy, is referred to as “necessary”²¹. Its own practical doctrine of freedom, as unequivocally as its intention manifests, can accordingly not simply be acausal or anticausal. He modifies or expands the concept of causality, as long as he does not explicitly distinguish it from that employed in the antithesis. His theorem is fissured by what is contradictory even before all paradoxicality of the infinite. As a theory of the validity of scientific cognition, the Critique of Pure Reason cannot deal with its themes otherwise than under the concept of the law, not even those which are supposed to be beyond lawfulness.

On the Kantian Concept of Causality 245-246

The most famous, utterly formal Kantian definition of causality holds, that everything which happens, would presuppose a previous condition, “upon which it inexorably follows in keeping with a rule.”²² Historically it was directed against the school of Leibniz; against the interpretation of the sequence of conditions out of inner necessity, as something being-in-itself. On the other hand it distinguishes itself from Hume: without the rule-based nature [Regelhaftigkeit] of thought, which the latter delivers over to convention, to something accidental, unanimous experience would not be possible; Hume would then and there have to speak causally, in order to make what he is rendering indifferent as convention plausible. In Kant by contrast causality becomes the function of

subjective reason, and what is imagined thereunder becomes more and more watered down. It dissolves like a piece of mythology. It approximates the principle of rationality as such, of thinking according to rules. Judgements on causal contexts run out into tautology: reason observes in them, what it effects anyway as the capacity of laws. That it prescribes laws of nature or rather the law, says no more than the subsumption under the unity of reason. It transposes this unity, its own identity-principle, onto the objects and shuffles it off on them as their cognition. Once causality is thoroughly disenchanted, as if by the taboo on the inner determination of objects, then it also corrodes itself in itself. Kant's rescue has the sole advantage over Hume's denial, that what the latter swept away is regarded by the former as inborn to reason, as the necessity of its constitution, as it were, though not as an anthropological contingency. Causality is not supposed to originate in the objects and their relationship, but instead solely in the subjective thought-compulsion. That one condition could have something essential, something specific to do with the next, is dogmatic for Kant. However nomothetisms of successions, in keeping with the Kantian conception, could be set up, which recall nothing of the causal relationship. The relationship of the objects to each other, which have gone through what is inwards, virtually becomes something superficial to the theorem of causality. What is ignored is the simplest of utterances, that something would be the cause of something else. The causality which rigorously seals itself off from the inside of objects, is no more than its own shell. The *reductio ad hominem* [Latin: reduction to the person] in the concept of law reaches a borderline value, where the law no longer says anything about the object; the expansion of causality into the pure concept of reason negates it. Kantian causality is one without a *causa* [Latin: cause]. By curing it from the naturalistic prejudice, it melts away in his hands. That the consciousness cannot indeed escape causality, as its inborn form, certainly answers to Hume's weak point. But when Kant says that the subject must think causally, he also follows in the analysis of what is constituted, according to the literal meaning of "must", the causal proposition, to which he first ought to submit the *constituta* [Latin: things constituted]. If the constitution of causality through the pure reason, which for its part is nonetheless supposed to be freedom, is already subject to causality, then freedom is already compromised from the outset, that it has scarcely any other place than the complaisance of the consciousness towards the law. In the construction of the entire antithetics, freedom and causality intersect. Because the former in Kant is so much as to act out of reason, it is also lawful; even the free actions "follow rules". What has resulted from this is the unbearable mortgage of post-Kantian philosophy, that there would be no freedom without the law; that it would consist solely in the identification with this. Through German idealism this was, with unforeseeable political consequences, inherited by Engels:*5* the theoretical origin of the false reconciliation.

Plea for Order 247-249

That claim to totality which is staked on behalf of causality, so long as it coincides with the principle of subjectivity, would become untenable along with the epistemological compulsory character. What in idealism can appear as freedom only paradoxically, would thus become substantively that moment, which transcends the bracketing of the course of the world with fate. If causality was sought as a determination – however subjectively mediated – of the things themselves, then what would open itself up in such a

specification, in contrast to the indiscriminate One of pure subjectivity, is the perspective of freedom. It would be applicable to what is differentiated from compulsion. Compulsion would then no longer be praised as the factual action of the subject, its totality would no longer be affirmed. It would forfeit the a priori power, which was extrapolated from real compulsion. The more objective the causality, the greater the possibility of freedom; this is not the least reason why whoever wishes for freedom, must insist on necessity. By contrast Kant demands freedom and prevents it. The foundation of the thesis of the Third Antinomy, that of the absolute spontaneity of the cause, the secularization of the freely deified act of creation, is Cartesian in style; it is supposed to be valid, so as to satisfy the method. The completion of the cognition establishes itself as the epistemological criterion; without freedom, “even in the course of nature the sequence of appearances [would] never [be] complete on the side of the causes.”²³ The totality of cognition, which is tacitly equated therein with the truth, would be the identity of subject and object. Kant restricts it as a critic of cognition and teaches it as a theoretician of the truth. A cognition which disposes over the sort of complete sequence which according to Kant can only be conceived under the hypostasis of an originary act of absolute freedom; which therefore permits nothing which is sensibly given to be outside, would be one which is not confronted with anything divergent from it. The critique of such identity would strike the positive-ontological apotheosis of the subjective causal concept as well as the Kantian proof of the necessity of freedom, whose pure form has something contradictory about it anyway. That freedom must be, is the highest iniuria [Latin: injustice] of the legislating autonomous subject. The content of its own freedom – identity, which has annexed everything non-identical – is as one with the must, with the law, with absolute domination. This kindles the Kantian pathos. He construes even freedom as a special case of causality. What matters to him are “constant laws”. His deprecating bourgeois aversion to anarchy is not less than his self-conscious bourgeois antipathy against disenfranchisement. Even here society reaches deep into his most formal deliberations. What is formal in itself, which on the one hand emancipates the individuals from the restrictive determinations of what has become so and not otherwise, on the other hand confronts the existent with nothing, is based on nothing but domination raised to a pure principle, is something bourgeois. In the origins of the Kantian Metaphysic of Morals lies hidden the later sociological dichotomy of Comte between the laws of progress and to those of the social order, including the partisanship for this latter; by means of its lawfulness it is supposed to restrain progress. The sentence from the Kantian proof of the antithesis has such an overtone: “the freedom (independence) from the laws of nature is indeed an emancipation from compulsion, but also from the guidelines of all rules”.²⁴ It is supposed to be “torn down” through “unconditional causality”, that is to say: the free act of production; where Kant scientifically criticizes the latter in the antithesis, he scorns it, as elsewhere the stubborn fact, as “blind”.²⁵ That Kant hurriedly thinks of freedom as the law, betrays the fact that he takes it no more scrupulously than his class ever did. Even before they feared the industrial proletariat, they combined, for example in Smithian economics, praise of the emancipated individual with the apology for a social order, in which on the one hand the “invisible hand” [in English] takes care of the beggars as well as the king, while on the other hand even the free competitor was obliged to follow a code of – feudal – “fair play” [in English]. Kant’s popularizer did not falsify his philosophical teacher, when he named the social order the

“blessed daughter of heaven” [reference to Schiller’s poem, The Bell] in the same poem, which hammers home, that when peoples arise, well-being does not thrive. Both wished to know nothing of the fact that the chaos which that generation discerned in the comparatively modest terrors of the French Revolution – they displayed less outrage over the cruelty of the chouans [French: 18th century counter-revolutionaries] – was the monster of a repression, whose traces survive in those who rise up against it. Like all the other German geniuses who, as soon as Robespierre provided a pretext, fell over themselves in relief castigating the revolution which they at first had hailed, Kant praises “nomothetism” at the expense of “lawlessness” in the proof of the antithesis and even speaks of a “mirage of freedom”.²⁶ Laws are lent the glorifying epithet “constant”, which is supposed to raise them above the specter of anarchy, without a glimmer of the suspicion, that exactly these would be the old ill of what is unfree. But what demonstrates the primacy of the concept of law in Kant, is that he calls upon it in the proof for the thesis as much as for the antithesis, as their alleged higher unity.

Demonstrating the Antithesis 249-252

The entire section on the antithetics of pure reason argues, as is well known, *e contrario* [Latin: to the contrary]; in the thesis, that the counter-thesis would be guilty of that transcendental usage of causality, which violates the doctrine of categories in advance; that the causal category in the antithesis would overstep the borders of the possibility of experience. What is overlooked therein in terms of content, is that a consistent scientivism guards itself from such a metaphysical usage of the causal category. In order to escape from the agnostic consequences of scientivism, which the doctrine of the theoretical reason unmistakably sympathizes with, Kant constructs an antithesis which does not at all correspond to the scientivistic position: freedom is achieved by the destruction of a straw-man made to order. What is proven is only that causality ought not to be seen as something positively given into infinity – a tautology, according to the tenor of the Critique of Pure Reason, which the positivists would be the last to object to. By no means however, not even in the context of the argumentation of the thesis, does it follow that the causal chain would break with the supposition of a freedom, which is presumed no less positively than the former. The paralogism is of indescribable import, because it allows it to positively reinterpret the non liquet [Latin: not proven]. Positive freedom is an aporetic concept, conceived, in order to conserve the being-in-itself of something intellectual in contrast to nominalism and scientification. At a central moment in the Critique of Practical Reason Kant confessed what this was all about, namely the salvation of a residue: “Since this law however unavoidably concerns all causality of things, insofar as their existence is determinable in time, so would freedom, if this were the manner in which one had to conceive of the existence of these things, have to be rejected as a nugatory and impossible concept. Consequently if one still wishes to rescue it, no other way is left than to attribute the existence of a thing, insofar as it is determinable in time, consequently also causality according to the laws of natural necessity, merely to the appearance; to attribute to freedom, however, the same essence as the things in themselves.”²⁷ The construction of freedom confesses to being inspired by what Elective Affinities later called the salvational desire, while the former, relegated to the characteristic of the intratemporal subject, is revealed as “nugatory and impossible”. The aporetic essence of the construction, not the abstract possibility of the antithesis in the

infinite, speaks against the positive doctrine of freedom. The critique of reason apodictically rejects all talk of a subject beyond space and time as an object of cognition. At first even the moral philosophy argues this: “Even of itself and indeed according to the knowledge, which the human being has through inner sensation, it may not presume to cognize, how it would be in itself.”²⁸ The forward to the Critique of Practical Reason repeats this, by citing that of the pure reason.²⁹ That the “objects of experience”, as Kant stipulates, would “nevertheless be grounded as things in themselves”,³⁰ sounds crassly dogmatic after that. Aporetic meanwhile is by no means only the question of the possibility, of cognizing what the subject would be in and for itself. Every merely thinkable, in the Kantian sense “noumenal”, determination of the subject ends up this way, too. In order to share in freedom, this noumenal subject must, according to Kant’s doctrine, be extratemporal, “as a pure intelligence, which is not determinable in its existence according to time”.³¹ The salvational desire makes this noumenal into an existence – because nothing at all of this could be predicated otherwise – even though it is not supposed to be determinable according to time. Existence however, as anything which is given, which has not faded into the pure idea, is according to its own concept intratemporal. In the Critique of Pure Reason – in the deduction of the pure concept of understanding as well as in the chapter on schematism*6* – the unity of the subject becomes a pure temporal form. It integrates the facts of consciousness, as those of the same person. No synthesis without the intratemporal interrelation of the synthesized moments to each other; it would be the condition of even the most formal logical operations and of their validity. Accordingly however timelessness could not be ascribed to an absolute subject either, so long as something under the name of the subject is supposed to be thought. At most, rather, it would be absolute time. It is unfathomable, how freedom, the principal attribute of the temporal act and realized solely temporally, is supposed to be predicated by something radically non-temporal; equally unfathomable, how something non-temporal of this sort could have an affect in the spatio-temporal world, without itself becoming temporal and straying into the Kantian realm of causality. The concept of the thing-in-itself steps in as a *deus ex machina* [Latin: automatic god]. Hidden and indeterminate, it marks a blind spot of thought; solely its indeterminacy permits it to be utilized as needed for the explanation. The only peep out of the thing in itself which Kant permits is that it “affects” the subject. Thereby however it would be sharply opposed to this, and only by an irredeemable speculation, nowhere performed by Kant, could it be thrown together with the moral subject as something which likewise exists in itself. Kant’s critique of cognition prevents the summoning of freedom into existence; he helps himself by conjuring up a sphere of existence, which indeed would be exempt from that critique, but also from every judgement, over what it would be. His attempt to concretize the doctrine of freedom, to ascribe freedom to living subjects, is caught in paradoxical assertions: “One can thus concede, that if it were possible for us to have a deep insight into the manner of thinking of a human being, as to how it shows itself through inner as well as outer actions, that every last mainspring thereof would be known to us, along with all the external causes which affect them, one could calculate the behavior of a human being in the future with certainty, just like the lunar or solar eclipse and nevertheless maintain, that the human being would be free.”³² That Kant even in the Critique of Practical Reason cannot do without termini like mainspring, is relevant in terms of content. The attempt to make freedom comprehensible, insofar as a doctrine of

freedom cannot afford to do without this, inescapably leads through the medium of its metaphors to conceptions from the empirical world. "Mainspring" is a causal-mechanical concept. Even if the previous proposition were valid, however, then the one afterwards would be nonsense. It would serve solely to relate what is being metaphysically related to, which is empirically in total causality, through the mythical context of destiny, by burdening it in the name of freedom with the guilt, which would be nothing of the sort in the totally given determination. Through its culpability this would be reinforced into the innermost core of its subjectivity. Nothing is left to such a construction of freedom other than, under the sacrifice of the reason on which it is supposed to rest, to cow in authoritarian fashion those who attempt to think it in vain. Reason for its part however is nothing other to him than the legislating capacity. That is why he must conceive of freedom from the very beginning as a "special kind of causality".³³ By positing it, he takes it back.

Ontic and Ideal Moments 252-257

In fact the aporetic construction of freedom is based not on the noumenal but on the phenomenal. There, that given fact of moral law can be observed, by which Kant believes, despite everything, freedom to be warranted as something existent. Meanwhile the given fact, as the very word hints, is the opposite of freedom, naked compulsion, exerted in space and time. For Kant freedom means so much as the pure practical reason, which produces its objects itself; this would have to do "not with objects, to recognize them, but with their own capacity, to really make these (according to the cognition of the same)."³⁴ The absolute autonomy of the will implied therein would be so much as absolute domination over inner nature. Kant continues: "To be consistent, is the greatest obligation of a philosopher and yet is the most seldom met."³⁵ This not only passes off the formal logic of pure consistency as the highest moral authority, but at the same time the subordination of every impulse under the logical unity, its primacy over what is diffuse in nature, indeed over all diversity of the non-identical; that always appears inconsistent in the closed circle of logic. In spite of the resolution of the Third Antinomy, Kantian moral philosophy remains antinomic: it is capable, according to the entire conception, of conceiving of the concept of freedom solely as repression. The entirety of the concretizations of morality in Kant bear repressive features. Their abstractness is substantive, because they exclude from the subject, what does not correspond to its pure concept. Thus the Kantian rigorism. The hedonistic principle is argued against, not because it is evil in itself, but because it would be heteronomous to the pure ego: "The pleasure from the conception of the existence of a thing, insofar as it is supposed to be a grounds of determination of desire of this thing, is based on the sensitivity of the subject, because it depends on the existence of an object; it thus belongs the senses (feelings) and not to the understanding, which expresses a relation of a concept of an object according to concepts, but not of a subject according to feelings."³⁶ But the honor with which Kant sanctifies freedom, by wishing to purify it from everything which impinges on it, simultaneously condemns the person to unfreedom in principle. It cannot experience such a freedom, tightened to an extreme pitch, otherwise than as the restriction of its own impulses. If Kant inclines nevertheless towards happiness in many passages, as in the magnificent second note of the second theorem from the foundations of practical reason, then his humanity breaks through the norm of consistency. It may have dawned on him,

that without such clemency one could not live according to moral law. The pure principle of reason of personality ought to converge with that of the self-preservation of the person, with the totality of its “interests”, which includes happiness. Kant’s position to this is as ambivalent as the bourgeois Spirit as a whole, which would like to guarantee “the pursuit of happiness” [in English] to the individual [Individuum] and would forbid it through the work-ethic. Such sociological reflection is not introduced from the outside, in a classificatory manner, into the Kantian a priorism. The fact that termini of social content appear over and over again in the Foundation and in the Critique of Practical Reason, may be incompatible with the a prioristic intention. But without such a metabasis Kant would have to fall silent before the question concerning the compatibility of moral law with empirical human beings. He would have to capitulate to heteronomy, as soon as he confessed that autonomy was unrealizable. If in the service of systematic validity one wished to expropriate those socially content-based termini of their simple meaning and sublimate them to ideas, then one would ignore not only their wording. The true origin of moral categories is registered in them with greater power, than Kant’s intention is able to handle. Thus the famed variant of the categorical imperative from the Foundation: “Act so, that you always use the humanity in your person, as much as in every other person, at the same time as an end, never merely as means”,³⁷ then “humanity”, the human potential in human beings, may have been meant only as a regulative idea; humanity, the principle of human existence, by no means the sum of all human beings, is not yet realized. Nevertheless the addition of the factual content in the word is not to be shaken off: every individual is to be respected as the representative of the socialized species humanity, no mere function of the exchange-process. The decisive distinction urged by Kant between means and ends is social, that between subjects as commodities of labor-power, out of which value is economically produced, and the human beings who even as such commodities remain subjects, for whose sake the entire operation, which forgets them and only incidentally satisfies them, is set into motion. Without this perspective the variant of the imperative would lose itself in a void. The “never merely” however is, as Horkheimer put it, one of those usages of a sublime sobriety, in which Kant, in order to not spoil the chance of the realization of utopia, accepts empiricism even in its most degraded form, that of exploitation, as the condition of what is better, insofar as he then develops it in the philosophy of history, under the concept of antagonism. This reads: “The means, by which nature serves to bring the development of all its predispositions into existence, is the antagonism of the same in society, insofar as this latter in the end becomes nonetheless the cause of a lawful social order of the same. What I understand here under antagonism is the unsociable sociability of human beings, i.e. the tendency of the same to enter into society, which however is tied to a thorough-going resistance, which constantly threatens to separate this society. This predisposition evidently lies in human nature. Human beings have an inclination to be socialized: because they feel themselves to be more of a human being in such a condition, i.e. the development of their natural predispositions. They have however also a great tendency to particularize (isolate) themselves: because they find in themselves simultaneously the unsociable characteristic, the wish to arrange everything merely according to their mind, and hence expect resistance everywhere, just as they know themselves, that they for their part are inclined to resistance against others. Now this resistance is that which awakens all powers of humanity, bringing it thereby to overcome its tendency towards laziness and, driven by

the desire for honor, for lordship or for property, to establish a position amongst their fellows, which they most likely cannot stand, but cannot do without, either.”³⁸ The “principle of humanity as an end in itself”³⁹ is, despite all meditative ethics to the contrary, nothing merely innervated, but a promissory note on the realization of a concept of human beings, which has its place only as the social, albeit innervated, principle in every individual. Kant must have noticed the double meaning of the word humanity, as the idea of being human and of the epitome of all humanity. With dialectical profundity he introduced it into theory, even if only playfully. Consequently his usage of speech continues to oscillate between ontic and idea-related modes of parlance. “Rational beings”⁴⁰ are just as certainly living human subjects, as the “general realm of ends in themselves”⁴¹, which are supposed to be identical with rational beings, transcends these in Kant. He would like neither to cede the idea of humanity to the existent society nor to dissolve such into a phantasm. The tension rises to the breaking point in his ambivalence towards happiness. On the one hand he defends such in the concept of being worthy of happiness, on the other hand he disparages it as heteronomous, especially where he finds “universal happiness”⁴² to be of no use to the law of the will. How little Kant, in spite of the categorical character of the imperative, would dream of ontologizing this posthaste, is confirmed by the passage, “that... the concept of good and evil must be determined not before the moral law (on which it superficially seems it ought to be grounded), but only (as also happens here) after the selfsame and through the selfsame.”⁴³ Good and evil are no mere existents-in-themselves of some intellectual-moral hierarchy but are something posited by reason; that is how deeply nominalism still reaches into Kantian rigorism. However by fastening the moral categories to self-preserving reason, they are no longer thoroughly incompatible with that happiness, against which Kant so harshly expounded them. The modifications of his stance towards happiness in the course of the Critique of Practical Reason are no backpedaling concessions to the tradition of the ethics of goods; rather, preceding Hegel, the model of a movement of the concept. The moral universality passes, whether willed or no, over into society. This is formally documented by the first note to the fourth theorem of Practical Reason: “Therefore the mere form of a law, which restricts the matter, must at the same time be a grounds, to add this matter to the will, but not to presuppose it. The material may be for example my own happiness. This, if I attribute it to everyone (as I may in fact do in finite beings), can thus only become an objective practical law, if I include that of others in the same. Thus the law to promote the happiness of others originates not from the presupposition, that this would be an object for everyone’s caprice, but merely from the fact that the form of universality, which reason requires as a condition of giving a maxim of self-love the objective validity of a law, becomes the grounds of the determination of the will, and therefore the grounds of the determination of the pure will was not the object (the happiness of others), but solely the mere lawful form of it, by which I restricted my maxim grounded on my inclination, in order to obtain the universality of a law and to make it fit for the pure practical reason, solely out of whose restriction, and not from the addition of an external mainspring, could the concept of what is committal – to extend the maxims of self-love also to the happiness of others – originate.”⁴⁴ The doctrine of the absolute independence of the moral law of the empirical being and indeed of the pleasure-principle is suspended, by the incorporation of the thought of living creatures in the radical, general formulation of the imperative.

Doctrine of Freedom Repressive 257-258

Adjacent to this, Kant's ethics, fragile in itself, retains its repressive aspect. It triumphs in unmitigated form in the need for punishment.*7* The following lines stem not from the late works but from the Critique of Practical Reason: "Likewise if someone, who otherwise is an honest man (or is only placed in thought in the position of an honest man), confronts the moral law, in which he recognizes the unworthiness of a liar, his practical reason (in the judgement over that, which he is supposed to do) immediately departs from the advantage, unifying itself with what preserves the respect for his own person (truthfulness), and the advantage will now, after it has been separated from everything extraneous to reason (which is solely and totally on the side of duty) and cleansed, is weighed by everyone, in order to bring in all likelihood still other cases into connection with reason, only not where it could run counter to the moral law, which reason never departs from, but thereby unites its innermost core with it."⁴⁵ In the contempt for compassion, the pure practical reason accords with the "Grow hard" of Nietzsche, its antipode: "Even the feeling of compassion and soft-hearted participation, if it precedes the consideration of what duty would be and becomes a grounds of determination, burdens the well-meaning person, bringing their considered maxims into confusion and causes them to wish to be rid of them and to submit solely to the legislating reason."⁴⁶ At times, the intermixed heteronomy of the inner composition of autonomy boils over into rage against the same reason, which is supposed to be the origin of freedom. Then Kant takes the side of the antithesis of the Third Antinomy: "Where however determination according to natural laws ceases, there cease also all explanations, and nothing remains but the defense, that is the driving away of the objections of those, who pretend to have seen deeper into the essence of things and hence blithely declare freedom to be impossible."⁴⁷ Obscurantism entwines itself with the cult of reason as that which rules absolutely. The compulsion, which according to Kant proceeds from the categorical imperative, contradicts the freedom, which is supposed to be constituted in it as its highest determination. This is not the least of the reasons why the imperative, stripped of all empiricism, is presented as a "factum"⁴⁸ which needs no test by reason, in spite of the chorismos between facticity and the idea. The antinomies of the Kantian doctrine of freedom is sharpened to the point that the moral law counts as rational for it and as not rational; rational, because it reduces itself to pure logical reason without content; not rational, because it would be accepted as a given fact, it would no longer be analyzed; every attempt to do so is anathema. This antinomy is not to be shuffled off onto the philosopher: the pure logic of consistency, compliant to self-preservation without self-reflection, is deluded in itself, irrational. The hideous Kantian expression of "rationalizing" [Vernunfteln: reasoning], which still echoes in Hegel's "raisonnement" [Raisonnieren: reasoning], which denounces reason without any valid grounds of distinction, and whose hypostasis is beyond all rational ends, is consistent despite its glaring contradiction. The ratio turns into irrational authority.

Self-experience of Freedom and Unfreedom 258-262

The contradiction dates back to the objective one between the experience of consciousness of itself and its relationship to the totality. The individuated feels free, insofar as it is opposed to society and may undertake something against it or other individuals, although incomparably less than it believes. Its freedom is primarily that of

pursuing its own ends, which are not immediately exhausted in social ones; to this extent it coincides with the principle of individuation. Freedom of this type has escaped the natural-rootedness of society; within an increasingly rational one it has achieved a degree of reality. At the same time it remains appearance [Schein] in the midst of bourgeois society, no less than individuality generally. The critique of the freedom of the will, like that of determinism, means critique of this appearance [Schein]. The law of value realizes itself over the heads of formally free individuals. They are unfree, according to Marx's insight, as its involuntary executors, and indeed all the more thoroughly, the more the social antagonisms grow, in which the conception of freedom first formed. The process by which what is individuated becomes autonomous, the function of the exchange-society, terminates in its abolition through integration. What produced freedom, recoils into unfreedom. The individuated was free as the economically active bourgeois subject, to the extent that autonomy was promoted by the economic system, so that it would function. Its autonomy is thereby already potentially repudiated at its origin. The freedom of which it boasted was, as Hegel first discerned, also something negative, the mockery of the true one; the expression of the contingency of the social fate of each and every individual. The real necessity in freedom, which had to maintain itself and, as ultra-liberal ideology praised it, prevailed by elbowing its way through, was the cover-image [Deckbild] of the total social necessity, which compels the individual towards *ruggedness* [in English and in italics in the original], so that it survives. Even concepts which are so abstract, that they appear to approximate invariance, prove themselves to be historical. Just so that of life. While it reproduces itself further under conditions of unfreedom, its concept presupposes, according to its own meaning, the possibility of what is not yet included, of the open experience, which has been so much more lessened, that the word life already sounds like empty consolation. The freedom of the bourgeois individuated is no less of a caricature, however, than the necessity of its action. It is not, as the concept of the law commands, transparent, but strikes every individual subject as an accident, the continuation of mythical fate. Life has retained this negativity, an aspect which furnished the title for a duet piano piece of Schubert, Storms of Life. In the anarchy of commodity production the natural-rootedness of society reveals itself, as it vibrates in the word life, as a biological category for something essentially social. If the process of production and reproduction of society were transparent to subjects and determined by them, then they would also no longer be passively buffeted to and fro by the ominous storms of life. What is called life would thereby disappear, including the fatal aura, with which the Jugendstil surrounded the word in the industrial age, as the justification of a bad irrationality. At times the transience of that surrogate cast out its friendly shadow beforehand: today the adultery literature of the nineteenth century is already rubbish, excepting its greatest products, which cite the historical Ur-images of that epoch. Just as no theater director would dare to play Hebbel's Gyges before an audience which does not wish to dispense with their bikinis – the fear of what is materially anachronistic, the lack of aesthetic distance, has at the same time something barbaric about it – something similar will transpire, once humanity worked it out, for nearly everything which counts today as life and merely deceives one over how little life there really is. Until then the prevailing lawfulness is contrary to the individual and its interests. Under the conditions of the bourgeois economy this is not to be shaken; the question concerning the freedom or unfreedom of the will, as something available, cannot be answered in it. It is for its part

the molded cast of bourgeois society: the in truth historical category of the individual deceptively exempts that question from the social dynamic and treats every individual as an Ur-phenomenon. Obediently freedom has innervated the ideology of individualistic society badly within itself; this bars every definitive answer to ideology. If the thesis of the freedom of the will burdens the dependent individuals with the social injustice, over which they can do nothing, and humiliates them unceasingly with desiderata, before which they must fail, then on the other hand the thesis of unfreedom metaphysically prolongs the primacy of the given, declares itself to be immutable and encourages individuals, insofar as they are not already prepared to do so, to cower, since indeed nothing else is left for them to do. Determinism acts as if dehumanization, the commodity character of labor-power developed into a totality, were human essence pure and simple, incognizant of the fact that the commodity character finds its borders in labor-power, which is not mere exchange-value but also has use-value. If the freedom of the will is merely denied, then human beings are reduced without reservations to the normal form of the commodity character of their labor in developed capitalism. No less topsy-turvy is a prioristic determinism as the doctrine of the freedom of the will, which in the middle of commodity society abstracts from this. The individuated itself forms a moment of it; the former is ascribed the pure spontaneity, which society expropriates. The subject needs only to pose the inescapable alternative of the freedom or unfreedom of the will, and it is already lost. Each drastic thesis is false. That of determinism and that of freedom coincide in their innermost core. Both proclaim identity. Through the reduction to pure spontaneity, the empirical subjects are subjected to the same law, which expands itself into the category of causality of determinism. Free human beings would perhaps also be emancipated from the will; surely only in a free society would individuals be free. Along with external repression, the inner one would disappear, probably after a long interim period and under the permanent threat of regression. If the philosophical tradition, in the Spirit of repression, confounded freedom and responsibility, then this latter would pass over into the fearless, active participation of every individual: in a whole, which would no longer institutionally harden the participation, in which however they would have real consequences. The antinomy between the determination of the individuated and the social responsibility which contradicts it is no false usage of concepts but real, the moral form of the irreconcilability of universal and particular. That even Hitler and his monsters, according to all psychological insight, are slaves of their earliest childhood, products of mutilation, and that nevertheless the few, which were able to be caught, ought not to be allowed to go free, if the atrocity is not to repeat itself into the indefinite future, which the unconscious of the masses thereby justifies, in that no ray of light fell from the heavens – this is not to be glossed over by jury-rigged constructions such as a utilitarian necessity, which quarrels with reason. What is individuated befalls humanity only when the entire sphere of individuation, including its moral aspect, is seen through as an epiphenomenon. At times the total society, out of the despair of its condition, represents the freedom, against individuals, which goes into protest in their unfreedom. On the other hand, in the epoch of universal social oppression the picture of freedom against society lives only in the torn-apart, maimed traits of the individuated. Where this hides away each time in history, is not decreed for once and for all. Freedom becomes concrete in the changing forms of repression: in resistance against these. There was so much freedom of the will, as human beings wished to free themselves. However freedom itself is so tangled up with

unfreedom, that it is not merely inhibited by the latter, but has it as the condition of its own concept. This is no more to be separated out as an absolute than any other individual one. Without the unity and the compulsion of reason, nothing which is similar to freedom could ever have been thought, let alone come to be; this is documented in philosophy. No model of freedom is available, except as consciousness, as in the social total constitution, intervening through this in the complexion of what is individuated. That is why this is not thoroughly chimerical, because consciousness for its part is branched-off drive-energy, itself also impulse, is a moment, too, of what it intervenes in. If there were not that affinity, which Kant frantically denies, nor would there be the idea of freedom, for whose sake he wishes to hush up the affinity.

On the Crisis of Causality 262-266

What is happening to the idea of freedom meanwhile appears also to be happening to its counterpart, the concept of causality; that in keeping with the universal trend towards the false sublation of the antagonisms, the universal liquidates the particular from above, through identification. This is not to be short-circuited by returning to the crisis of causality in natural sciences. It applies there expressly only in the micro-realm; on the other hand the formulations of causality in Kant, at least those of the Critique of Pure Reason, are so “large” [in English], that they presumably have room even for merely statistical nomothetisms. The natural sciences, which content themselves with operational definitions immanent to their mode of procedure, even with respect to causality, and philosophy, which cannot dispense with an accounting of causality, if it wishes to do more than merely abstractly repeat natural-scientific methodology, are miserably broken from each other, and the need alone will not glue them back together. The crisis of causality is visible however even in what philosophical experience can still reach, in contemporary society. Kant accepted as the unquestionable method of reason, that every condition is traced back to “its” cause. The sciences, which philosophy for the most part moves further and further away from, the more enthusiastically it recommends itself as the former’s spokesperson, may operate less with causal chains than causal networks. This is however more than an incidental concession to the empirical ambiguity of causal relations. Even Kant had to acknowledge that the consciousness of all causal sequences which intersect in every phenomenon, instead of being unequivocally determined by causality in temporal succession, is essential to the category itself, in his words, is a priori: no individual event is excepted from that multiplicity. The infinity of what is interwoven and which intersects in itself makes it impossible in principle, by no means merely practically, to form unequivocal causal chains, as the Thesis and Antithesis of the Third Antinomy stipulate in equal measure. Even tangible historical inquiries, which in Kant still remained in a finite course, involve, horizontally as it were, that positive infinity which applies in the critique in the antinomy chapter. Kant ignores this, as if he were transposing relationships clearly visible in small towns to all possible objects. No path leads from his model to full-fledged causal determinations. Because he treats the causal relationship solely as a principle, he thinks past what is interwoven in principle. This omission is conditioned by the relocation of causality into the transcendental subject. As the pure form of lawfulness it shrinks to one-dimensionality. The inclusion of the ill-famed “reciprocal effect” in the table of categories is the retrospective attempt to answer for that lack, attesting also to the dawning crisis of causality. Its schemata

replicated, as did not escape the Durkheim school, the simple generational relationship, so very much as its explanation requires causality. It takes on an aspect of something feudal, if not, as in Anaximander and Heraclitus, of an archaic juridical relationship of vengeance. Causality, the inheritor of the activating spirits in things, has been as delimited by the process of demythologization as much as reinforced by such in the name of the law. If causality is the actual unity in the polyvalence, which led Schopenhauer to favor it among the categories, then the bourgeois era was throughout as much causality as system. The more unequivocal the relationships were, the easier it was to speak of it in history. Hitler's Germany caused the Second World War more precisely than the Wilhelmine one did the First. But the tendency recoils on itself. Ultimately there is a level of system – the social keyword is: integration – in which the universal dependence of all moments on all other ones makes the talk of causality obsolete; the search for what inside a monolithic society is supposed to be the cause is in vain. The cause is only this latter itself. Causality has withdrawn as it were into the totality; in the midst of its system it becomes indistinguishable. The more its concept, under scientific mandate, dilutes itself to abstraction, the less the simultaneous threads of the universally socialized society, which are condensed to an extreme, permit one condition to be traced back with evidence to others. Each one hangs together horizontally as vertically with all others, tinctures all, is tinctured by all. The latest doctrine in which enlightenment employed causality as a decisive political weapon, the Marxist one of superstructure and infrastructure, lags almost innocently behind a condition, in which the apparatuses of production, distribution and domination, as well as economic and social relations and ideologies are inextricably interwoven, and in which living human beings have turned into bits of ideology. Where these latter are no longer added to the existent as something justifying or complementary, but pass over into the appearance [Schein], that what is, would be inescapable and thereby legitimated, the critique which operates with the unequivocal causal relation of superstructure and infrastructure aims wide of the mark. In the total society everything is equally close to the midpoint; it is as transparent, its apologetics as threadbare, as those who see through it, who die out. Critique could portray, in every administration building and every airport, to what extent the infrastructure has become its own superstructure. For this it needs on the one hand the physiognomics of the total condition and of the extended individual data, on the other hand the analysis of economic structural transformations; no longer the derivation of an ideology, which is not at all available as something independent or even with its own truth-claim, out of its causal conditions. That the validity of causality decomposes correlative to the downfall of the possibility of freedom, is the symptom of the transformation of a society, rational in its means, into that openly irrational one, which latently, according to its ends, it was long ago. The philosophy of Leibniz and Kant, by means of the separation of the final cause from the phenomenally valid causality in the narrow sense, and the attempt at unifying both, felt something of that divergence, without getting to its root in the ends-means antinomy of bourgeois society. But the disappearance of causality today signals no realm of freedom. In the total reciprocal effect, the old dependence reproduces itself on an expanded level. Through its million-fold web it prevents the long overdue, palpably graspable rational penetration, which causal thinking wished to promote in the service of progress. Causality itself makes sense only in a horizon of freedom. It seemed to be protected from empiricism, because without

its assumption the cognition organized into science did not seem possible; idealism possessed no stronger argument. Kant's effort however, to raise causality as a subjective thought-necessity to a constitutive condition of objectivity, was no more binding than its empiricist denial. Even he had to distance himself from the assumption of an innervated context of phenomena, without which causality becomes an if-then relation, which glides away precisely from that emphatic lawfulness – “a priority” – which the doctrine of subjective-categorical essence of causality wishes to conserve; scientific development then fulfilled the potential of Kant's doctrine. Another makeshift substitute is the foundation of causality through its immediate self-experience in the motivation. Meanwhile psychology has substantively demonstrated that self-experience not only can deceive, but must.

Causality as Bane 266-267

If causality as a subjective thought-principle is tainted with absurdity, if there is no cognition however completely without the former, then one would need to seek out a moment in it, which is itself not thinking. What is to be learned from causality, is what identity perpetrated upon the non-identical. The consciousness of causality is, as that of lawfulness, the consciousness of this; as the critique of cognition, also that of the subjective appearance [Schein] in the identification. Reflective causality points to the idea of freedom as the possibility of non-identity. Objectively causality would be, in a provocatively anti-Kantian sense, a relationship between things in themselves, insofar and only insofar as these are subordinated to the principle of identity. It is, objectively and subjectively, the bane of controlled nature. It has its fundamentum in re [Latin: fundamental basis] in identity, which as an intellectual principle is only the reflection of the real control of nature. In the reflection on causality, which finds this everywhere in nature there, where the latter is dominated by the former, reason also becomes aware of its own natural-rootedness, of the bane-casting principle. In such self-consciousness, progressive enlightenment separates itself from the regression into mythology, which it unreflectively subscribed to. It escapes the omnipotence of the schemata of its reduction, “that is what human beings are”, in that human beings recognize themselves, for what they are otherwise insatiably reduced to. Causality is nothing other however than the natural-rootedness of humanity, which the latter perpetuates as domination over nature. If the subject once comes to know the moment of its equality with nature, then it would no longer turn nature into what resembles itself. That is the secret and inverted truth-content of idealism. For the more thoroughly the subject, according to idealistic custom, makes nature the same as itself, the further it distances itself from all equality with it. Affinity is the razor's edge of dialectical enlightenment. It recoils into delusion, the nonconceptual execution from outside, as soon as it completely cuts through the affinity. No truth without the latter: this is what idealism caricatured in identity-philosophy. Consciousness knows as much about its other as it is similar to the latter, not by canceling itself out along with the similarity. Objectivity as the residue after the subtraction of the subject is a mere aping. It is the schemata, unconscious to itself, to which the subject reduces its other. The less it tolerates the affinity to things, the more ruthlessly it identifies. But even affinity is no positive ontological individual determination. If it turns into an intuition, into an immediate, empathically cognized truth, then it is ground up as an archaicism by the dialectic of the enlightenment, as warmed-over mythos; in accordance with the

mythology which reproduces itself out of pure reason, with domination. Affinity is no remainder, which cognition would hold in its hands after the mandatory leveling [Gleichschaltung] of identification-schemata of the categorical apparatus, but rather their determinate negation. Causality is reflected upon in such critique. In it thinking consummates the mimicry of the bane of things, which it cast around these, on the threshold of a sympathy, which would cause the bane to vanish. The subjectivity of causality has an elective affinity to objects, as the premonition of what the subject caused them to experience.

Reason, Ego, Superego 267-271

The Kantian turn of moral law into the factum draws its suggestive power from the fact that he can cite such a given fact in the sphere of the empirical person. This is advantageous for the mediation, always problematic, between what is intelligible and what is empirical. The phenomenology of empirical consciousness, and indeed the psychology, runs into precisely that conscience which is the voice of moral law in the Kantian doctrine. The descriptions of its efficacy, for example that of “constraint”, are no mental phantoms. The traits of compulsion, which Kant carved into the doctrine of freedom, are to be read out of the real compulsion of the conscience. The empirical irresistibility of the psychologically existent conscience, of the superego, vouchsafes for the facticity of the moral law against its transcendental principle, which nonetheless ought to disqualify it as the foundation of autonomous morality for Kant as much as the heteronomous drive. That Kant tolerates no critique of the conscience, brings him into conflict with his own insight, that in the phenomenal world all motivations are those of the empirical, psychological ego. That is why he removed the genetic moment from moral philosophy and replaced it with the construction of the intelligible character, which indeed the subject would initially give to itself.*8* The temporal-genetic and in spite of everything once again “empirical” claim of that “initially”, is however not to be redeemed. Whatever one knows of the genesis of the character, is incompatible with the assertion of such an act of moral Ur-generation. The ego, which is supposed to consummate it in Kant, is not anything immediate but itself something mediated, something originated, in psychoanalytic termini: branched off from diffuse libido-energy. Not only is all specific content of the moral law constitutively related to factual existence but also its presumably pure, imperative form. It presupposes the innervation of repression as much as the prior development of the fixed, identical self-maintaining authority of the ego, which is absolutized by Kant as the necessary condition of morality. Every interpretation of Kant, which would complain about his formalism and which would undertake to demonstrate, with its help, the empirical relativity of the morality this eliminated in the content, does not reach far enough. Even in its most extreme abstraction, the law is something which has come to be; the anguish of its abstraction, sedimented content, domination reduced to its normal form, that of identity. Psychology has concretely caught up with what in Kant’s time it did not yet know and which it therefore did not specifically need to concern itself with: the empirical genesis of what Kant glorified, unanalyzed, as timelessly intelligible. In its heroic period the Freudian school, in agreement on this point with the other, enlightening Kant, demanded the ruthless critique of the superego as something alien to the ego, something truly heteronomous. It saw through it as the blind and unconscious innervation of social

compulsion. Sandor Ferenczi's Building Blocks of Psychoanalysis states, with a caution which is best explained as fear of social consequences, "that a real character-analysis must remove, at least provisionally, every kind of superego, and thus even that of the analyst. Ultimately the patient must indeed become free of all emotional bonds, insofar as they go beyond reason and the former's own libidinous tendencies. Only this sort of demolition of the superego can lead at all to a radical healing; successes, which consist merely of substituting one superego for another, must be characterized as merely transference-successes; they certainly do not do justice to the end-goal of therapy, which is to be rid of the transference, too."⁴⁹ Reason, in Kant the ground of the conscience, is supposed to refute it by dissolving it. For the unreflective domination of reason, that of the ego over the id, is identical with the repressive principle, which psychoanalysis, whose critique was silenced by the reality-principle of the ego, displaced into the latter's unconscious reign. The separation of ego and superego, which its topology insists upon, is dubious; genetically both lead equally to the innervation of the father-image. That is why the analytic theories of the superego waned so quickly, however boldly they were raised: otherwise they would have to infringe on the cherished ego. Ferenczi immediately qualifies his critique: "his struggle" is directed "only against the part of the superego which has become unconscious and thus impervious to influence"⁵⁰. But this does not suffice: the irresistibility of the compulsion of the conscience consists, as Kant observed, in such becoming unconscious, just like the archaic taboos; if a condition of universally rational topicality were conceivable, no superego would establish itself. Attempts, like that of Ferenczi and particularly psychoanalytic revisionism, which subscribe along with other healthy viewpoints also to that of the healthy superego, to divide it into an unconscious and a preconscious and therefore more harmless part, are in vain; the concretization and process of becoming independent, through which the conscience becomes an authority, is constitutively a forgetting and to this extent ego-alien. Ferenczi emphasizes in agreement that "the normal human being continues to retain in their preconscious furthermore a sum of positive and negative models"⁵¹. If however a concept in the strict Kantian understanding is heteronomous, in psychoanalytical terms is one of a libidinous cathexis, it is that of the model, the correlate of that "normal human being", who Ferenczi equally respects, who deliver themselves over actively and passively to every social repression and who psychoanalysis uncritically draws, out of the disastrous faith in the division of labor, from the existing society. How closely psychoanalysis comes to that repression, as soon as the critique it inaugurated of the superego was braked out of social conformism, which to this day disfigures all doctrines of freedom, is shown most clearly by passages from Ferenczi like this: "So long as this superego takes care in a moderate manner, that one feels oneself as a moral citizen and acts as such, it is a useful institution, which ought not to be disturbed. But pathological exaggerations of the formation of the superego..."⁵² The fear of exaggerations is the mark of the same ethical bourgeois nature, which may at no price renounce the superego along with its irrationalities. How the normal and the pathic superego would be subjectively distinguished, according to psychological criteria, is something which psychoanalysis, coming to its senses all too quickly, is just as silent about as the upstanding citizenry [Spiessbuerger] are about the border between what they cherish as their natural national feeling and nationalism. The sole criterion of the distinction is the social effect, whose *quaestiones iuris* [Latin: legal question] psychoanalysis declares to be outside its realm of

competence. Reflections on the superego are, as Ferenczi says, though in contradiction to his words, truly “metapsychological”. The critique of the superego ought to become the critique of the society, which produced it; if it falls silent before this, then it accommodates the prevailing social norm. To recommend the superego for the sake of its social utility or inalienability, while it itself, as a mechanism of compulsion, does not confer that objective validity, which it claims in the context of affective psychological motivations, repeats and reinforces the irrationalities inside of psychology, which the latter made itself strong enough to “remove”.

Potential of Freedom 271-272

What however has been occurring in the most recent epoch, is the externalization of the superego into unconditional adjustment, not its sublation in a more rational whole. The ephemeral traces of freedom, the emissaries of possibility in empirical life, are becoming tendentially fewer; freedom into a borderline value. Not even as a complementary ideology is it entrusted to present itself; the functionaries, who meanwhile also administer ideology with a firm hand, evidently have little confidence in the attractive power of freedom as propaganda-technicians. It is being forgotten. Unfreedom is consummated in its invisible totality, which tolerates nothing “outside”, out of which it could look and break through. The world as it is, is becoming the sole ideology, and human beings, its inventory. Even therein however dialectical justice reigns: it transpires over the individuated, the prototype and agent of a particularistic and unfree society. The freedom, for which it must hope, could not be merely its own, it would have to be that of the whole. The critique of the individuated leads beyond the category of freedom insofar as this is created in the image of what is unfreely individuated. The contradiction, that no freedom of will and thus no morality can be proclaimed for the sphere of the individuated, while without them not even the life of the species can be preserved, is not to be settled through the imposition of so-called values. Its heteronomous posited being, the Nietzschean new commandments, would be the opposite of freedom. It need not however remain, what it originated from and what it was. Rather what matures in the innervation of social compulsion in the conscience, along with the resistance against the social authority, which critically measures this by its own principles, is a potential which would get rid of compulsion. The critique of the conscience envisions the salvation of such potential, only not in the psychological realm but in the objectivity of a reconciled life among the free. If Kantian morality ultimately converges, apparently against its rigorous claim to autonomy, with the ethics of goods, then what it maintains therein is the juridical truth of the break, which can be bridged by no conceptual synthesis, between the social ideal and the subjective one of self-preserving reason. The reproach, that subjective reason puts on airs as an absolute in the objectivity of moral law, would be subaltern. Kant expresses, fallibly and distortedly, what ought indeed to be demanded from society. Such objectivity is not to be translated into the subjective sphere, that of psychology and that of rationality, but will continue to exist for good and ill separated from it, until the particular and general interest really and truly concord. The conscience is the mark of shame of unfree society. The arcanum of his philosophy was necessarily hidden from Kant: that the subject, in order to be able to constitute objectivity or objectivate itself in the act, as he entrusted it, must always for its part be something objective. The transcendental subject, the pure reason which objectively interprets itself, is haunted by

the preponderance of the object, without which, as a moment, even the Kantian objectivating achievements of the subject would not be. His concept of subjectivity has at the core apersonal features. Even the personality of the subject, what is immediate to this, what is nearest, most certain, is something mediated. No ego-consciousness without society, just as no society is beyond its individuals. The postulates of practical reason, which transcend the subject, God, freedom, immortality, imply the critique of the categorical imperative, that of pure subjective reason. Without those postulates it could not even be thought, however much Kant avers to the contrary; there is nothing good without hope.

Against Personalism 272-275

The nominalistic tendency entices thought, which may not renounce the protection of morality in view of the immediate violence breaking out everywhere, to anchor morality in the person like an indestructible good. Freedom, which would arise solely in the institution of a free society, is sought there, where the institution of the existing one denies it, in each individual, who needs it, but does not guarantee it, as they are. Reflection on society does not occur in ethical personalism any more than that on the person itself. Once this latter is torn completely from the universal, then it is not capable of constituting anything universal either; it is then drawn in secret from existing forms of domination. In the pre-fascist era personalism and the twaddle about bonds were hardly averse to sharing the platform of irrationality. The person, as something absolute, negates the universality which is supposed to be read out of it, and yields its threadbare legal title to caprice. Its charisma is borrowed from the irresistibility of the universal, while it, losing faith in its legitimacy, withdraws into itself in the privation of thought. Its principle, the unshakeable unity which makes out its selfness defiantly repeats domination in the subject. The person is the historically tied knot, which is to be loosened out of freedom, not perpetuated; the old bane of the universal, ensconced in the particular. Anything moral which is deduced from it remains as accidental as immediate existence [Existenz]. Otherwise than in Kant's old-fashioned talk of personality, the person became a tautology for those, who indeed were left nothing more than the nonconceptual here-and-now of their existence. The transcendence which many neo-ontologists hope from the person, exalts solely their consciousness. This latter would however not be without that universal, which the recourse to the person would like to exclude as an ethical ground. That is why the concept of the person as well as its variants, for example the I-you relation, have taken on the oily tone of a theology lacking credibility. As little as the concept of a right human being can be presumed in advance, so little would it resemble the person, the sanctified duplicate of its own self-preservation. In the philosophy of history that concept presupposes the subject objectivated into the character on the one hand, as assuredly as its disassembly [Zerfall] on the other hand. The consummated ego-weakness, the transition of the subjects into passive and atomistic, reflex-based behavior, is at the same time the judgement which the person deserved, in which the economic principle of appropriation has become anthropological. What could be thought in human beings as the intelligible character, is not the persona [Personhafte] in them, but how they distinguish themselves from their existence. In the person this distinction necessarily appears as what is non-identical. Every human impulse contradicts the unity of what harbors it; every impulse for the better is not only, in Kantian terms,

reason, but before this also stupidity. Human beings are human only where they do not act as persons and are not at all posited as such; what is diffuse in nature, in which they are not persons, resembles the delineation of an intelligible being, that self, which would be delivered from the ego; contemporary art innervates something of this. The subject is the lie, because it denies its own objective determinations for the sake of the unconditionality of its own domination; the subject would be only what detached itself from such lies, what had thrown off, out of its own power, which it owes to identity, its shell. The ideological bad state of affairs of the person is immanently criticizable. What is substantial, which according to that ideology would lend the person their dignity, does not exist. Human beings are above all, and without exception, not yet themselves. Their possibility is justifiably to be thought under the concept of the self, and it stands polemically against the reality of the self. This is not the least reason that the talk of self-alienation is untenable. It has, in spite of its better Hegelian and Marxist*9* days, or for their sake, succumbed to apologetics, because it gives us to understand with a fatherly mien that human beings would have fallen from an existent-in-itself, which it always was, while they have never been such and thus have nothing to hope from recourse to its *archai* [Greek: ancient, old] except submission to authority, precisely what is alien to them. That this concept no longer figures in the Marxist Capital, is conditioned not only by the economic thematics of the work but makes philosophical sense. – Negative dialectics does not halt before the conclusiveness of existence, the solidified selfness of the ego, any more than before its no less hardened antithesis, the role, which is used by contemporary subjective sociology as a universal nostrum, as the latest determination of socialization, analogous to the existence [Existenz] of selfness in many ontologists. The concept of roles sanctions the topsy-turvy bad depersonalization of today: the unfreedom which, in the place of the autonomy which was achieved with such toil and was subject to repeal, steps forwards merely for the sake of complete adjustment, is beneath freedom, not beyond it. The privation of the division of labor is hypostasized as a virtue. With it the ego ordains, what society has damned it to, once more to itself. The emancipated ego, no longer locked up in its identity, would no longer be damned to roles, either. What would be socially left behind of the division of labor, given radically reduced labor-time, would lose the horror which forms individual beings through and through. The thingly hardness of the self and its readiness to be deployed and its availability for socially desired roles are accomplices. In what is moral, too, identity is not to be negated abstractly, but is to be valorized in resistance, if it is ever to cross over into its other. The contemporary state of affairs is destructive: the loss of identity for the sake of abstract identity, of naked self-preservation.

Depersonalization and Existential Ontology 275-277

The double-jointedness of the ego has found its expression in existential ontology. The recourse to existence just as the draft of authenticity against the “man” transfigure the idea of the strong, enclosed in itself, “decisive” ego into metaphysics; Being and Time acted as a manifesto of personalism. In Heidegger’s interpretation of subjectivity as a mode of being, precedent to thinking, personalism already crossed over into its opposite. That apersonal expressions like being-there [Dasein: existence] and existence [Existenz] were chosen for the subject, indicates this linguistically. What returns imperceptibly in such usage is the idealistic German, state-besotted [staatsfromme] predominance of

identity beyond its own bearer, that of the subject. In depersonalization, in the bourgeois devaluation of the individual, which is glorified in the same breath, already lies the difference between subjectivity as the universal principle of the individual ego – in Schelling's words, egoity – and the individualized ego itself. The essence of subjectivity as being-there, thematic in Being and Time, resembles what remains of the person, when they are no longer a person. The motives for this are not to be censured. What is commensurable in the universal-conceptual scope of the person, its individual consciousness, is always also appearance [Schein], imbricated in that transsubjective objectivity, which according to idealistic as well as ontological doctrine is supposed to be founded in the pure subject. Whatever the ego is capable of experiencing introspectively as ego, is also not-ego, unexperienceable by absolute egoity; hence the difficulty noted by Schopenhauer, of its becoming conscious of itself. The ultimate is no ultimate. The objective turn of Hegel's absolute idealism, the equivalent of absolute subjectivity, does justice to this. The more thoroughly however the individual loses what was once called its self-consciousness, the more depersonalization increases. That in Heidegger death became the essence of existence [Dasein], codifies the nullity of being, which is merely for itself.*10* The sinister decision in favor of depersonalization however bows regressively to a doom, felt as inescapable, instead of pointing beyond the person through the idea, that it might achieve what is its own. Heidegger's apersonality is linguistically instituted; won too easily, by the mere leaving out of what makes the subject alone the subject. He thinks past the knot of the subject. The perspective of depersonalization would not be opened by the abstract evaporation of existence into its pure possibility but solely by the analysis of the existing innerworldly subject existing there. Heidegger's analysis of existence holds off from it; that is why his apersonal existentialia can be so easily attached to persons. The micro-analysis of the latter is unbearable to authoritarian thinking: in selfness it would strike the principle of all domination. By contrast existence generally, as something apersonal, is unhesitatingly treated as if it were something beyond human beings and nevertheless human. In fact the total constitution of living human beings as their functional context, which objectively precedes them all, moves towards the apersonal in the sense of anonymity. Heidegger's language bemoans this as much as it affirmatively reflects that matter-at-hand as suprapersonal. Only the insight into what is thingly in the person itself would overtake the horror of depersonalization, in the limitations of the egoity, which were commanded by the equality of the self with self-preservation. In Heidegger ontological apersonality always remains the ontologization of the person, without reaching this latter. The cognition of what consciousness became, under the sacrifice of its living aspect, has a reciprocal power: egoity has always been so thingly. In the core of the subject dwell objective conditions, which it must deny for the sake of the unconditionality of its domination and which are its own. The subject ought to get rid of these. The prerequisite of its identity is the end of the identity-compulsion. In existential ontology this appears only distortedly. Nothing however is intellectually relevant any longer, which does not press into the zone of depersonalization and its dialectic; schizophrenia is the truth in the philosophy of history about the subject. In Heidegger that zone, which he touches, turns unnoticed into a parable of the administered world, and complementarily into the despairing rigidified determination of subjectivity. Solely its critique would find its object, which he, under the name of destruction, reserves to the history of philosophy. The anti-metaphysical Freud's doctrine of the id is closer to

the metaphysical critique of the subject than Heidegger's metaphysics, which wishes to be none. If the role, the heteronomy ordained by autonomy, is the most recent objective form of the unhappy consciousness, then conversely there is no happiness, except where the self is not itself. If, under the unbearable pressure which weighs on it, it falls schizophrenically back into the condition of dissociation and ambiguity, which the subject historically escaped from, then the dissolution of the subject is at the same time the ephemeral and condemned picture of a possible subject. Once its freedom commanded mythos to halt, then it would emancipate itself, as from the ultimate mythos, from itself. Utopia would be the non-identity of the subject without sacrifice.

The Universal and Individual in Moral Philosophy 277-281

The Kantian zeal against psychology expresses, besides fear of once more losing the scraps of the mundus intelligibilis [Latin: intelligible world], achieved so laboriously, also the authentic insight, that the moral categories of the individuated are more than only individual. What becomes evident in them, in keeping with the model of the Kantian concept of law, as what is universal, is secretly something social. Not the slightest of the functions of the admittedly enigmatic concept of humanity in the Critique of Practical Reason is that pure reason would count as universal for all rational beings: a point of indifference of Kant's philosophy. If the concept of the universality in the diversity of subjects was won and then becomes autonomous in the logical objectivity of reason, into which all individual subjects and superficially even subjectivity disappear as such, then Kant, on the narrow ridge between logical absolutism and empirical validity, would like to go back to that existent, which the system's logic of consistency previously banished. Anti-psychological moral philosophy converges therein with later psychological findings. By unveiling the superego as an innervated social norm, psychology breaks through its monadological limitations. These are for their part socially produced. The conscience draws its objectivity in relation to human beings out of that of society, in which and through which they live and which reaches all the way into the core of their individuation. The antagonistic moments are indistinguishably interwoven in such objectivity: the heteronomous compulsion and the idea of a solidarity, which surpasses divergent individual interests. What in the conscience reproduces the tenaciously persisting, repressive bad state of affairs of society, is the opposite of freedom and to be disenchanting through the proof of its own determination. By contrast the universal norm, which is unconsciously appropriated by the conscience, attests to that which points beyond the particularity in society as the principle of its totals. This is its moment of truth. The question of the right and wrong of the conscience admits to no conclusive reply, because right and wrong dwells within it and no abstract judgement could separate them: only in its repressive form does the solidaristic one form, which sublates the former. It is essential to moral philosophy that the individuated and society are neither separated by a simple difference, nor reconciled. What is bad in the universality has declared itself in the socially unfulfilled claim of the individuated. This is the supra-individual truth-content of the critique of morality. But the individuated which, at fault due to privation, turns into the ultimate and absolute, degenerates thereby for its part into the appearance [Schein] of the individualistic society, and mistakes itself; Hegel once more discerned this, and indeed most acutely where he gave impetus to the reactionary misuse of such. The society, which does injustice to the individuated in its

universal claim, also does justice to it, insofar as the social principle of unreflected self-maintenance, itself the bad universal, is hypostasized in what is individuated. Society metes it out, measure for measure. The sentence of the late Kant, that the freedom of every human being must be restricted only insofar as it impinges on the freedom of another,*11* is the cipher of a reconciled condition, which would be not only beyond the bad universal, the mechanism of compulsion, but also beyond the obdurate individuated, in which that mechanism of compulsion repeats itself microcosmically. The question of freedom demands no yes or no but theory, which raises itself above the existing society as well as above the existing individuality. Instead of sanctioning the innervated and hardened authority of the superego, it carries out the dialectic of the individual being and species. The rigorism of the superego is solely the reflex of the fact that the antagonistic condition prevents this. The subject would only be emancipated as reconciled with the not-ego, and thereby also beyond freedom, insofar as this latter is in league with its counterpart, repression. How much aggression hitherto lies in freedom, becomes visible whenever human beings act as if they are free in the midst of the universal unfreedom. So little however would the individuated frantically protect the old particularity in a state of freedom – individuality is as much the product of pressure as the power-center, which resists it – so little would that condition be compatible with the contemporary concept of the collective. That in the countries which today monopolize the name of socialism, an immediate collectivism is commanded as the subordination of the individual to society, gives the lie to their socialism and reinforces the antagonism. The weakness of the ego through a socialized society, which unremittingly drives human beings together and, literally and figuratively, makes them incapable of being alone, manifests itself in the complaints about isolation no less than in the truly unbearable coldness which spreads everywhere along with the expanding exchange-relationship, and which is merely prolonged by the authoritarian and ruthless regimentation of the alleged peoples' democracies against the needs of their subjects. That a union of free human beings would have to continually gang themselves up, belongs in the conceptual realm of maneuvers, of marching, flag-waving, orations of leaders. They thrive only so long as society irrationally wishes to cobble together its compulsory members; objectively they are not needed. Collectivism and individualism complete one another in what is false. Speculative historical philosophy since Fichte protested against both, in the doctrine of the condition of consummated sinfulness, later in that of lost meaning. Modernity is equated with a deformed world, while Rousseau, the initiator of retrospective hostility towards one's own time, set it alight on the last of the great styles: what spurred his revulsion was too much form, the denaturalization of society. The time has come to dismiss the imago of the meaningless world, which degenerated from a cipher of longing to the slogan of those who fetishize order. Nowhere on earth is contemporary society, as its scientific apologists vouchsafe, "open"; nowhere deformed, either. The belief that it would be so, originated in the devastation of the cities and landscapes by planlessly self-expanding industry, in a lack of rationality, not its oversupply. Whoever traces back deformation to metaphysical processes instead of relationships of material production, virtually delivers ideologies. With their change, the picture of violence could be softened, which the world presents to the human beings who do violence to it. That supra-individual bonds disappeared – they by no means disappeared – would indeed not itself be bad; the truly emancipated works of art of the twentieth century are no worse than those, which

thrived in the styles which modernity discarded with reason. The experience inverts itself as if in a mirror, that according to the state of consciousness and of the material productive forces, it is expected that human beings would be free, that they also expect it themselves, and that they are not so, while nevertheless no model of thinking, behavior and, in that most denigrating of terms, “value”, is left in the state of their radical unfreedom, as those who are unfree desire it. The lament over the lack of bonds has a constitution of society for its substance, which simulates freedom, without realizing such. Freedom exists only, dimly enough, in the superstructure; its perennial failure deflects the longing towards unfreedom. Probably the question of the meaning of existence in its entirety is the expression of that discrepancy.

On the Condition of Freedom 281-283

The horizon of a condition of freedom, which would need no repression and no morality, because the drive would no longer have to express itself destructively, is veiled in gloom. Moral questions are stringent not in their dreadful parody, sexual repression, but in sentences like: torture ought to be abolished; concentration camps ought not to exist, while all this continues in Africa and Asia and is only repressed because civilized humanity is as inhuman as ever against those which it shamelessly brands as uncivilized. If a moral philosopher seized these lines and exulted, at having finally caught up with the critics of morality – in that these, too, cite the values comfortably proclaimed by moral philosophers – then the definitive conclusion would be false. The sentences are true as impulse, when they register, that somewhere torture is occurring. They may not be rationalized; as an abstract principle they would end up immediately in the bad infinity of their derivation and validity. The critique of morality is applicable to the transposition of the logic of consistency onto the behavior of human beings; that is where the stringent logic of consistency becomes the organ of unfreedom. The impulse, the naked physical fear and the feeling of solidarity with, in Brecht’s words, tormentable bodies, which is immanent to moral behavior, would be denied by attempts at ruthless rationalization; what is most urgent would once more become contemplative, the mockery of its own urgency. The distinction of theory and praxis involves theoretically, that praxis can no more be purely reduced to theory than *chôris* [Greek: separately] from it. Both are not to be glued together into a synthesis. That which is undivided lives solely in the extremes, in the spontaneous impulse which, impatient with the argument, does not wish to permit the horror to continue, and in the theoretical consciousness unterrorized by any functionary, which discerns why it nonetheless goes unforeseeably on. This contradiction alone is, in sight of the real powerlessness of all individuals, the staging-grounds of morality today. The consciousness will react spontaneously, to the extent it cognizes what is bad, without satisfying itself with the cognition. The incompatibility of every general moral judgement with the psychological determination, which nevertheless does not dispense with the judgement, that something would be evil, does not originate in thinking’s lack of logical consistency, but in the objective antagonism. Fritz Bauer has noted that the same types who call for clemency for the torturers of Auschwitz with a hundred lazy arguments, are friends of the reintroduction of the death penalty. The newest state of moral dialectics is concentrated therein: clemency would be naked injustice, the justified atonement would be infected by the principle of brute force, while humanity consists solely of resisting this last. Benjamin’s remark, that the execution of the death penalty might be moral, but never

its legitimation, prophesized this dialectic. If the ones in charge of the torture including their chief assistants had been immediately shot, it would have been more moral, than putting a few on trial. The fact that they succeeded in fleeing, hiding for twenty years, qualitatively transforms the justice which was missed at that time. As soon as a juridical machine has to be mobilized with court procedure, black robes and understanding defense lawyers, justice, which in any case is capable of no sanction which would fit the atrocities committed, is already false, compromised by the same principle according to which the murderers once acted. The Fascists are clever enough, to exploit such objective insanity with their devilishly insane reason. The historical grounds of the aporia is that the revolution against the Fascists failed in Germany, or rather that in 1944 there was no revolutionary mass movement. The contradiction of teaching empirical determinism and nevertheless condemning the normal monsters – according to the former, perhaps one should let them loose – is not to be settled by any supraordinated logic. Theoretically reflected justice may not shy away from this. If it does not help this to become aware of itself, then it encourages, as politics, the continuation of the methods of torture, which in any case the collective unconscious hopes for and for whose rationalization this latter lies in wait; this much in any case is true of the theory of deterrence. In the confessed breach between a reason of law, which for the last time does the guilty the honor of a freedom which they do not deserve, and the insight into their real unfreedom, the critique of consistency-logical identity-thinking becomes moral.

Intelligible Character in Kant 283-287

Kant mediates between existence and the moral law through the construction of the intelligible character. It leans on the thesis, “the moral law proves its reality”⁵³ – as if what is given, what is there, would thereby be legitimated. When Kant talks of this, “that the determining ground of that causality can also be assumed outside of the world of the senses in freedom as the characteristic of an intelligible being”,⁵⁴ then the intelligible being turns, through the concept of the characteristic, into something which is positively conceived in the life of the individuated, something “real”. This however is, within of the axiomatic of non-contradictoriness, contrary to the doctrine of what is intelligible as something beyond the world of the senses. Kant immediately and unabashedly recalls: “By contrast the moral good is something suprasensible in relation to the object, for which therefore no sensory intuition of something corresponding to it” – most certainly therefore no “characteristic” – “can be found, and the power of judgement under laws of the pure practical reason seems thus to be subjected to especial difficulties, which rest on the fact that a law of freedom is supposed to be applied to acts as events, which occur in the world of the senses and to this extent belong to nature.”⁵⁵ In the spirit of the critique of reason, the passage is directed not only against the ontology of good and evil, stringently criticized in the Critique of Practical Reason, as of goods which exist in themselves, but also against the subjective capacity ascribed to them, which, removed from the phenomena, would vouchsafe to that ontology a character of simply and purely supernatural essence. If in order to save freedom Kant introduces the utterly exposed doctrine of the intelligible character, which shrank from all experience and which nevertheless was conceived as the mediation to the empirical, then one of the strongest motives for this, objectively speaking, was the fact that the will is not disclosed as an existent from the phenomena, nor can it be defined by its conceptual synthesis, but would

have to be presupposed as its condition, with the defects of a naïve realism of inwardness, which he, in other hypostases of what is psychological, destroyed in the paralogism chapter. The proof, that character would neither be exhausted in nature nor absolutely transcendent to it, as its concept by the way dialectically implies, is supposed to take care of the precarious mediation. Motivations however have their psychological moment, without which no such mediation would be, while those of the human will, according to Kant, can “never be anything other than the moral law”.⁵⁶ This is what the antinomy prescribes for every possible answer. It is bluntly worked out by Kant: “For how a law could be for itself and the immediate ground of determination of the will (which is nonetheless what is essential in all morality), this is an insoluble problem for human reason and as one with: how a free will would be possible. Thus we will not have to show a priori the grounds, of why the moral law would in itself constitute a mainspring, but what, insofar as it is such a one, it effects in the mind (put even better, must effect).”⁵⁷ Kant’s speculation falls silent where it should start, and resigns itself to a mere description of immanent effect-contexts, which, had he not been overwhelmed by his intention, he would scarcely have hesitated to call a mirage: something empirical worms itself into supraempirical authority through the power of the affection, which it exerts. An “intelligible existence [Existenz]”,⁵⁸ of an existence without time, which according to Kant aids in constituting what is in the existent, is dealt with without fear of the *contradictio in adjecto* [Latin: added contradiction], without articulating it dialectically, indeed without saying what exactly might be thought under that existence. The furthest he dares to go is the discussion “of the spontaneity of the subject as a thing in itself”.⁵⁹ According to the critique of reason, this could no more be spoken of positively than the transcendental causes of the phenomena of external senses, while without the intelligible character, the moral act in what is empirical, the effect on this – and thereby morality – would be impossible. He must toil desperately, for what the basic outline of the system prevents. What comes to his assistance is the fact that reason is capable of intervening against the causal automatism of physical as well as psychic nature, of producing a new nexus. If he permits himself to think what, in the explicated moral philosophy, is no longer the intelligible realm, secularized into pure practical reason, as absolutely divergent, then this is, in view of that observable influx of reason, by no means the miracle it would seem to be according to the abstract relationship of the Kantian founding theses to each other. That reason would be something other than nature and yet would be a moment of this latter, is its prehistory, which has become its immanent determination. It is nature-like as psychic power, branched-off for the ends of self-preservation; once split off and contrasted to nature, however, it turns into its Other. Ephemeraly escaping this latter, reason is identical with nature and non-identical, dialectical according to its own concept. The more ruthlessly however reason makes itself into the absolute opposite of nature in that dialectic and forgets itself in this, the more it regresses, as self-preservation run wild, to nature; solely as its reflection would reason be supranature. No interpretive guile [Kunst] is capable of removing the immanent contradictions of the determinations of the intelligible character. Kant is silent over how for its own part it would have an influence on what is empirical; whether it is supposed to be nothing but the pure act of its positing or to continue on next to that, however jury-rigged this sounds, but which is not without plausibility for self-experience. He contents himself with the description of how that influence appears in what is empirical. If the intelligible character is conceived

entirely as *chôris* [Greek: separately], which the word suggests, then it is as impossible to speak of it as of the thing in itself, which Kant, cryptically enough, equated to the intelligible character in an utterly formal analogy, not even explaining whether “a” thing in itself, one in each person, would be the unknown cause of the phenomena of the inner senses or, as Kant occasionally put it, “the” thing in itself, identical with all, Fichte’s absolute I. By having an effect, such a radically divided subject would become a moment of the phenomenal world and would succumb to its determinations, therefore to causality. Kant, the traditional logician, ought never to have accepted that the same concept is subject to causality as much as it is not subject.*12* If the intelligible character were no longer *chôris* [Greek: separately], then it would no longer be intelligible but, in the sense of the Kantian dualism, contaminated by the *mundus sensibilis* [Latin: sensible world] and would be no less self-contradictory. Where Kant feels obliged to explicate the doctrine of the intelligible character more closely, he must on the one hand ground it in an action in time, on that which is empirical, which it is simply not supposed to be; on the other hand, neglecting the psychology, with which he embroils himself: “There are cases, where human beings from childhood onwards, even under an education, which was of an advantageous nature to others of the sort, nevertheless show such malignity early on and proceed to increase it into their mature years, that one considers them born evil-doers and completely incorrigible in the mode of their thinking, nevertheless because their actions and omissions are so judged, that the guilt of their crimes is proven, indeed they (the children) themselves find this proof so thoroughly founded, as if they, regardless of the hopeless natural constitution of their apportioned inner character, remained just as responsible, as any other human being. This could not happen, if we did not presuppose that everything which originates from its arbitrariness (as every intentionally perpetrated act undoubtedly does), would have a free causality for its grounds, which expresses its character in its appearances (the acts) from early youth onwards, which because of the uniformity of conduct indicates a natural context, which however does not make the ill-starred constitution of the will necessary, but rather the consequence of the free-willed acceptance of evil and unchangeable principles, which only make them that much more reprehensible and worthy of punishment.”⁶⁰ It does not occur to Kant, that the moral verdict might err over psychopaths. The allegedly free causality is relocated into early childhood, entirely fitting by the way to the genesis of the superego. It is ludicrous however that “babies” [in English], whose reason is only just forming, are attested that autonomy, which is attached to the fully developed reason. By backdating the moral responsibility of the individual act of the adult to its earliest, dawning prehistory, an unmoral pedagogic sentence of punishment is meted out to those who are not yet grown up in the name of adulthood. The processes, which decide in the first years of life over the formation of the ego and superego or, as in the Kantian paradigm, over their failure, can evidently neither be a prioritized for the sake of their ancientness, nor can their extremely empirical content be ascribed that purity, which Kant’s doctrine of the moral law demands. In his enthusiasm for the necessity of punishing childhood criminals, he leaves the intelligible realm solely in order to raise mischief in the empirical one.

The Intelligible and the Unity of Consciousness 287-292

What Kant thought in the concept of the intelligible character, is despite the ascetic reticence of his theory not beyond all conjecture: the unity of the person, the equivalent

of the epistemological unity of the self-consciousness. Behind the scenes of the Kantian system, it is expected that the highest concept of practical philosophy would coincide with the highest one of the theoretical kind, the ego-principle, which theoretically produces the unity as well as practically restraining and integrating the drives. The unity of the person is the location of the doctrine of the intelligible. According to the architecture of the form-content dualism endemic to Kant it counts as a form: the principle of particularization is, in an involuntary dialectic which was first explicated by Hegel, something universal. For the honor of universality, Kant distinguishes terminologically between the personality and the person. The former would be “the freedom and independence of the mechanism of all of nature, yet simultaneously considered as a capacity of a being whose peculiar, pure practical laws, given from its own reason, the person therefore, is in thrall to the world of the senses, is subject to its own personality, insofar as it belongs at the same time to the intelligible world.”⁶¹ In personality [Persoenlichkeit], the subject as pure reason, indicated by the suffix “-ity” [“-keit”, the German equivalent of the English suffix “-ness”] as the index of a conceptual generality, the person, the subject, is supposed to be subordinated as an empirical, natural individual being. What Kant meant by the intelligible character might come very close to the personality in an older usage of speech, which “belongs to the intelligible world”. The unity of self-consciousness genetically presupposes not only the psychological-factual contents of consciousness, but its own pure possibility; indicating a zone of indifference of pure reason and spatio-temporal experience. Hume’s critique of the I glosses over the fact that the facts of consciousness would not be available, without being determined inside of an individual consciousness, rather than in some other thing chosen at random. Kant corrects him, but neglects however for his part the reciprocity: his critique of Hume is personality rigidified into a principle beyond individual persons, into their framework. He grasps the unity of consciousness independent of every experience. Such independence exists to some degree in relation to the variable individual facts of consciousness, not however radically against all existing being of factual contents of consciousness. Kant’s Platonism – in the *Phaedo* the soul was something similar to an idea – epistemologically repeats the eminently bourgeois affirmation of personal unity in itself at the expense of its content, which under the name of personality ultimately left behind nothing but the strongman. The formal achievement of integration, by no means a priori formal but substantive, the sedimented exploitation of inner nature, usurps the rank of the good. The more a personality would be, it is suggested, the better it would be, heedless of the dubiousness of the being-of-one-self. The great novels of the eighteenth century intuited this. Fielding’s Tom Jones, the orphan child, someone who was a “compulsive character” in the psychological sense, stood for the human being unmutated by convention and becomes at the same time comical. The latest echo of this is the rhinoceros of Ionesco: the only one, who resists bestial standardization and to this extent preserves a strong ego, is an alcoholic and a professional failure, not strong at all according to the verdict of life. In spite of the example of the radically evil little child, one ought to ask, as to whether an evil intelligible character is even conceivable for Kant; as to whether he seeks evil in the fact that the formal unity fails. Where there is no unity at all, one could probably no more speak of good than among animals, nor of evil either; he may have conceived of the intelligible character as closest to the strong I, which can rationally control all its

impulses, as was taught in the entire tradition of modern rationalism, especially by Spinoza and Leibniz, who were in agreement at least on this point.*13* Great philosophy hardens itself against the idea of a humanity which is not modeled after the reality-principle, not hardened in itself. This gives Kant the thought-strategical advantage, of being able to carry out the thesis of freedom parallel to consistent causality. For the unity of the person is not merely the formal a priori, which appears in the Kantian system, but against his will, and for the benefit of his demonstrandum [Latin: what is demonstrated], the moment of all individual contents of the subject. Each of its impulses is “its” impulse just as much as the subject is the totality of impulses, and thus their qualitative Other. In the utterly formal region of self-consciousness both melt together. From it one can predicate, without distinction, what is not exhausted in each other: the factual content and the mediation, the principle of its context. The matter-at-hand, tabooed according to the traditional-logical manner of argumentation, but all the more really dialectical for that, is vindicated in the indifference-concept of personality through the most extreme abstraction, by the fact that in the antagonistic world the individual subjects are also antagonistic in themselves, free and unfree. In the night of indifference, the palest ray of light falls on freedom as personality in itself, a Protestant inwardness, removed even from itself. The subject is justified, in Schiller’s pithy saying, by what it is, not by what it does, just as the Lutherans once were by faith, not by works. The involuntary irrationality of the Kantian intelligible character, its indeterminacy, which is mandated by the system, tacitly secularizes the explicitly theological doctrine of the irrationality of election by grace. This latter was admittedly conserved in advancing enlightenment, always more oppressively. If God was once pushed by the Kantian ethics into the as it were provident [dienende: serving, providing] role of the postulate of practical reason – this too is anticipated in Leibniz and even Descartes – then it is difficult to conceive of something under the intelligible character, irrationally existent-as-such, as anything else except the same blind fate, against which the idea of freedom took exception. The concept of character always oscillated between nature and freedom.⁶² The more ruthlessly the absolute being-so of the subject is equated with its subjectivity, the more impenetrable its concept. What formerly seemed to be the election by grace of divine counsel, can scarcely be thought anymore as one by objective reason, which nevertheless would have to appeal to the subjective one. The pure being-in-itself of human beings, excluding every empirical content, which is sought in nothing but its own rationality, does not permit rational judgement about why it succeeded here, and failed there. The authority however to which the intelligible character is attached, pure reason, is itself something becoming and to this extent also something conditional, not anything absolutely conditioning. That it posits itself outside of time as what is absolute – an anticipation of the same Fichte, with whom Kant was feuding – is far more irrational than any creation doctrine. This rendered an essential contribution to the alliance between the idea of freedom and real unfreedom. Irreducibly existent, the intelligible character duplicates itself in the concept of that second nature, as which society stamps the characters of all of its members anyway. If one translated Kant’s ethics into judgements over real human beings, its only criterion is: how someone would now once be, therefore their unfreedom. Schiller’s pithy saying certainly wished primarily to announce the revulsion evoked by the subjugation of all human relationships under the exchange-principle, the evaluation of one act against another. Kantian moral philosophy registers the same motif in the opposition of dignity

and price. In the right society however the exchange would not only be abolished but fulfilled: no one would be shortchanged of the yield of their labor. As little as the isolated act can be weighed, so little is there something good which is not expressed in acts. Absolute reflection, exclusive of any specific intervention, would degenerate into absolute indifference, into what is inhuman. Both Kant and Schiller objectively anticipated the loathsome concept of a free-floating nobility, which self-appointed elites could later attest to at will as their selfsame characteristic. In the Kantian moral philosophy lurks a tendency towards its sabotage. In it the totality becomes indistinguishable from the preestablished status of the elect. That the right or wrong of an act is no longer to be casuistically asked, also has its sinister moment: the competency of judgement crosses over into the compulsions of empirical society, which the Kantian *agathon* [Greek: the good] wished to transcend. The categories noble and mean are, like all doctrines of bourgeois freedom, ingrown with familial and natural relationships. In late bourgeois society their natural-rootedness breaks through once again, as biologism and finally race-theory. The reconciliation of morality and nature envisioned by the philosophizing Schiller, against Kant and secretly in unison with him, is not at all as human and innocent in the existent, as it gives itself to know. Nature, once outfitted with meaning, is substituted in place of that possibility, which the construction of the intelligible character was aimed at. In Goethe's *kalokagathia* [Greek: noble character, goodness] the ultimately homicidal recoil is unmistakable. Already a letter of Kant, concerning his portrait by a Jewish painter, made use of a despicable anti-Semitic thesis, later popularized by the Nazi Paul Schultze-Naumburg.*14* Freedom is really and truly restricted by society, not only from outside but in itself. As soon as it is utilized, it multiplies unfreedom; the placeholder of what is better is always also the accomplice of what is worse. Even where human beings feel themselves to be most free from society, in the strength of their ego, they are at the same time its agents: the ego-principle is implanted in them by society, and the latter honors it, although restraining it. Kant's ethics is not yet aware of this awkwardness, or posits itself as beyond such.

Truth-content of the Doctrine of the Intelligible 292-294

If one dared to wager as to what the Kantian X of the intelligible character owes its true content, which maintained itself against the total indeterminacy of the aporetic concept, it would probably be the historically most advanced, periodically flaring, swiftly fading consciousness, which is inherent in the impulse to do the right thing. It is the concrete, intermittent anticipation of the possibility, neither alien to human beings nor identical with them. They are not only the substrates of psychology. For they are not exhausted by the concretized exploitation of nature, which has become autonomous, which they projected back on themselves from external nature. They are things in themselves, insofar as the things are only something artificially made by them; to this extent the world of phenomena is truly an appearance [Schein]. The pure will of the Kantian Foundation is for that reason not so different from the intelligible character. The verse of Karl Kraus, "What has the world made of us" ponders ruefully on it; it is falsified by anyone who imagines they possess it. It breaks through negatively in the pain of the subject, that all human beings, in what they became, in their reality, are mutilated. What would be different, the no longer inverted essence, rejects a language which bears the stigmata of the existent: theology spoke once of mystical names. However the separation of the

intelligible from the empirical character is experienced in the eons-old block, which slides that which is supplementary before the pure will: external considerations of all conceivable kinds, the many times over subaltern, irrational interests of subjects of the false society; in general the principle of the particular self-interest, which prescribes to everything individuated without exception its actions in the society, as it is, and which is the death of all. The block prolongs itself from within, in the narrow-minded egoistic cravings, then in neuroses. These absorb, as everyone knows, an immeasurable quantum of available human power and prevent, on the line of least resistance, with the cunning of the unconscious, that which is right, which irrefutably contradicts biased self-preservation. Therein the neuroses have it so much the easier, can rationalize themselves so much the better, as the self-preserving principle in a state of freedom would come to that which is its own just as much as the interests of others, which damages it a priori. Neuroses are the pillars of society; they frustrate the better possibilities of human beings and thereby what is objectively better, which might be brought about by humanity. They tendentially dam up the instincts, which press beyond the false condition, into narcissism, which satisfies itself in the false condition. This is a hinge in the mechanism of evil: weaknesses, which are mistaken if possible for strengths. In the end the intelligible character would be the crippled rational will. What by contrast would count in it as the higher, the more sublime, what is not ruined by what is inferior, is essentially its own neediness, the inability to transform what is humiliating: failure, stylized as an end in itself. Nevertheless there is nothing better amongst human beings than that character; the possibility of being different from what one is, even though all are locked up in their self and thereby locked away even from their self. The glaring flaw of the Kantian doctrine, that which is elusive or abstract in the intelligible character, also has a touch of the truth of the ban on the graven image, which post-Kantian philosophy, Marx included, extended to all concepts of what is positive. As the possibility of the subject, the intelligible character is, like freedom, something becoming, not anything existent. It would be betrayed, the moment it was incorporated into the existent by description, even by the most cautious one. In the right condition everything would be, as in the Jewish theologoumenon [Greek: theology], only the tiniest bit different than what it is, but not the slightest thing can be imagined, as how it would then be. In spite of this the intelligible character can be spoken of only to the extent it does not hover abstractly and powerlessly over the existent, but really keeps arising in the guilty context of such, and is realized by this latter. The contradiction of freedom and determinism is not, as the self-understanding of the critique of reason would like, one between the theoretical positions of dogmatism and skepticism, but one of the self-experience of the subject, now free, now unfree. Under the aspect of freedom they are non-identical with themselves, because the subject is hardly one yet, and indeed precisely by virtue of its instauration as a subject: the self is what is inhuman. Freedom and the intelligible character are related to identity and non-identity, without *clare et distincte* [Latin: clearly and distinctly] allowing themselves to be entered on one side of the ledger or another. The subjects are free, according to the Kantian model, to the extent that they are conscious of themselves, identical with themselves; and in such identity also again unfree, insofar as they are subject to its compulsion and perpetuate it. They are unfree as non-identical, as diffuse nature, and yet as such free, because in the impulses, which overpower them – the non-identity of the subject with itself is nothing else – they are also rid of the compulsory

character of identity. Personality is the caricature of freedom. The ground of the aporia is that the truth beyond the identity-compulsion would not be purely and simply its Other, but is mediated through it. All individuals are in the socialized society incapable of what is moral, which is socially demanded, but which would be real only in an emancipated society. Social morality would be solely, to finally bring the bad infinity, the dreadful cycle of retribution, to an end. The individual meanwhile is left with nothing more of what is moral, than what Kant's moral theory, which conceded inclination to animals, but not respect,⁶³ has only contempt for: to attempt to live so, that one may believe to have been a good animal.

Footnotes

1 [Footnote pg 225]

The Kantian thought-experiments are not dissimilar to existential ethics. Kant, who well knew that good will had its medium in the continuity of a life and not in the isolated deed, sharpens good will to a decision between two alternatives in the experiment, so that it should prove what it ought to. This continuity hardly exists anymore; this is why Sartre clings steadfastly to the decision, in a kind of regression to the 18th century. Yet while autonomy is supposed to be demonstrated in the alternative situations, it is heteronomous before all content. Kant had to provide a despot for one of his examples of the situation of decision; analogously, the Sartrean ones stem many times over from fascism, true as the denunciation of the latter, not as a condition humaine [French: human condition]. Only those who would not have to accept any alternatives at all would be free, and in the existent it is a trace of freedom, to reject them. Freedom means the critique and transformation of situations, not their confirmation by a decision reached within their compulsory apparatus. When Brecht, following a discussion with students, permitted the collectivistic teaching-play of the Yes-man to be followed by the deviating Nay-sayer, he helped this insight to break through in spite of his official credo.

2 [Footnote pg 227]

The “conception of certain laws” amounts to the concept of pure reason, which indeed Kant defines as “the capacity of cognizing out of principles.”

3 [Footnote pg 236]

“By a concept of practical reason, I understand the conception of an object as a possible effect through freedom. To be an object of practical cognition as such, means therefore only the relation of the will to the action, by which it or its opposite would be really made, and the judgement, as to whether something would be an object of pure practical reason or not, is merely the distinction between the possibility or impossibility of willing the action in question, whereby, if we had the capacity for this (which must be judged by experience), a certain object would come to be.” (Kant, Critique of Practical Reason, WW V, Academy-Edition, pg 57).

4 [Footnote pg 238]

“For that which necessarily drives us to go beyond the borders of experience and all appearances, is what is unconditional, which reason necessarily and with every right demands in the things in themselves to everything which is conditioned and thereby fully achieves the sequence of conditions. If it turns out now, if one assumes, our cognition of experience directing itself according to the objects as things in themselves, that the unconditional could not at all be thought without contradiction; on the other hand, if one assumes, our conception of things, as they are given to us, direct themselves not according to these as things in themselves, but that these objects direct themselves rather as appearances according to our manner of conception, the contradiction falls away; and that consequently the unconditional ought to be met not in things, insofar as we know them (as they are given to us), but rather in them, insofar as we do not know them, as

things in themselves: thus demonstrating, that what we at the beginning only tentatively assumed, would be grounded.” (Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, WWV III, Academy Edition, pg. 13)

5 [Footnote pg 246]

“Hegel was the first, who correctly portrayed the relationship of freedom and necessity. For him freedom is the insight into necessity. ‘Necessity is blind only insofar as the selfsame is not understood.’ Freedom does not lie in the dreamed-of independence from natural laws, but in the cognition of these laws, and in the possibility given thereby, of causing them to act in a planned fashion for determinate ends. This applies as much in relation to the laws of external nature, as to those which regulate the bodily and intellectual existence of human beings – two classes of laws, which we could separate from each other at most in the imagination, but not in reality. The freedom of the will means therefore nothing other than the capacity, to be able to decide with relevant knowledge [Sachkenntnis]. The freer therefore the judgement of a human being in relation to a certain standpoint, the greater the necessity by which the content of this judgement is determined; while the uncertainty which rests on ignorance, which seems to arbitrarily choose between many various and contradictory possibilities of decision, exactly thereby proves its unfreedom, its mastery by the objects, which it is supposed to master. Freedom consists therefore in the cognition of the domination, founded in natural necessities, over ourselves and over external nature; it is thereby necessarily a product of historical development.” (Karl Marx/Frederick Engels, Works, Berlin 1962, Vol. 20, Pg. 106)

6 [Footnote pg 251]

“This now makes clear, that the schematism of understanding through the transcendental synthesis of the power of imagination, would amount to nothing other than the unity of everything which is diverse of the intuition in the inner sense and thus indirectly to the unity of the apperception as a function, to which the inner sense (of a receptivity) corresponds. Therefore the schemata of pure concepts of understanding are the true and sole conditions for providing these with a relation to objects, hence a meaning, and the categories have thus in the end no other possible empirical use, than in thereby serving, through grounds of an a priori necessary unity (due to the necessary unification of everything conscious in an ordinary apperception), to submit the appearances to the universal rules of the synthesis and thereby to fit them to thorough-going interlinking in an experience.” (Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, *ibid.* Pg 138)

7 [Footnote page 257]

In keeping with the tenor of the Critique of Pure Reason, the opposite intention can still be found there: “The more that legislation and government were arranged in accordance with this idea, the more seldom in any case would punishment become, and thus it is then entirely rational (as Plato maintained) that in a perfected arrangement of the former nothing of the latter would be necessary.” (Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, *ibid.* pg 248)

8 [Footnote pg 268]

“In the judgement of free acts in view of its causality, we can therefore come only to the intelligible cause, but not beyond the same; we can recognize, that it is free, i.e. is determined independent of the senses, and in such a manner could be the sensorily unconditional condition of appearances. Why however the intelligible character would yield exactly these appearances and this empirical character under existing circumstances, this goes far beyond all capacity of our reason to answer, indeed beyond all capacity of the same even to ask, as if one were asking: why does the transcendental object of our external sensory intuition yield precisely only the intuition in space and not some other kind.” (Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, ibid. pg 376)

9 [Footnote pg 274]

“This alienation, in order to remain comprehensible to the philosophers, can naturally be sublated only under two practical prerequisites.” (Karl Marx/Frederick Engels, The German Ideology, Berlin 1960, pg 31)

10 [Footnote pg 276]

“Shortly after the publication of Heidegger’s masterwork, its objective-ontological implication could already be demonstrated in Kierkegaard’s concept of existence [Existenzbegriff] and the recoil of the objectless interior into negative objectivity.” (See Theodor W. Adorno, Kierkegaard: Construction of the Aesthetic, Frankfurt am Main, 1962, pg 87)

11 [Footnote pg 279]

“Every such act is right, which can exist together – or, whose maxim permits the freedom of the caprice of everyone – with everyone’s freedom in accordance with a universal law.” (Kant, Metaphysics of Morals, Introduction to the Doctrine of Law, Section C, WW VI, Academy Edition, Pg. 230)

12 [Footnote pg 286]

It is easy to reckon against the concept of the intelligible, that it would be forbidden to positively mention unknown causes of appearances, even in the uttermost abstraction. A concept over which simply nothing is to be said, cannot be operated with, it would be equal to nothingness, nothingness also its own content. Therein German idealism had one of its most effective arguments against Kant, without the former stopping very long at the Kantian-Leibnizian idea of the border-concept. Meanwhile one would need to remonstrate against Fichte’s and Hegel’s plausible critique of Kant. It follows for its part traditional logic, which rejects discussing something which would not be reduced to the content of the thing, which comprises the substance of that concept, as idle. In their rebellion against Kant, the idealists have overzealously forgotten the principle which they followed against him: that the consistency of thought compels the construction of concepts, which have no representative in the positively determinable given fact. For the sake of the speculation, they denounced Kant as a speculator, guilty of the same positivism which they accused him of. In the alleged failure of the Kantian apologetics of the thing in itself, which the logic of consistency since Maimon could so triumphantly demonstrate, the memory lives on in Kant of the ghostly moment counter to the logic of consistency, non-identity. That is why he, who certainly did not mistake the consistency

of his critics, protested against them and would rather be convicted of dogmatism than absolutize identity, from whose own meaning, as Hegel recognized quickly enough, the relation to something non-identical is inalienable. The construction of the thing in itself and the intelligible character is that of something non-identical as the condition of the possibility of identification, but also that which eludes the grasp of the categorical identification.

13 [Footnote pg 289]

Concerning the relationship of the Kantian doctrine of the will to that of Leibniz and Spinoza, see Johan Eduard Erdmann, History of Modern Philosophy, Neudruck Stuttgart 1932, especially Volume 4, pg 128.

14 [Footnote pg 292]

“Heartfelt thanks, my most esteemed and dearest friend, for the revelation of your kind sentiments towards me, which duly arrived along with your beautiful present the day after my birthday! The portrait which Mr. Loewe, a Jewish painter, produced without my permission, is indeed supposed, as my friends say, to have a degree of similarity with me, but a connoisseur of paintings said at the first glance: a Jew always paints another Jew; whereupon he puts the emphasis on the nose: but enough of this.” (From: Kant’s Letters, Volume 2, 1789-1794, Berlin 1900, pg 33)