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# THE UNBEARABLE BURDEN OF THE OBVIOUS

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## **Part III, B: The Janus-faced Nature of Everyman**



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# **The Unbearable Burden of the Obvious**

## **Part III, B: The Janus-Faced Nature of Everyman**

**Leo Feyaerts**

Dedicated to Prof. dr. Dr. Lode Wils.

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# **Chapter II: Hell**

# § 1. The Tree Is Known by Its Fruit

## 1.1. The Pervasiveness of Opposites and Implicit or Explicit Pejorative Adjectives in Value Judgements

Marxism posits that humanity can be divided into two opposing categories: the haves and the have-nots. Each of these groups claims a monopoly on truth. Marxism posits that the Right espouses views of man and society that are oppressive and therefore untrue, while the Left champions views that are liberating and reconcile all opposites and antagonisms, which would make them true. Since the Right denies the necessity and possibility of this ultimate reconciling liberation, it is evident which ideological group the Left considers me to belong to.

Some scholars posit that the majority of the world's evils can be attributed to the imitation of one another's desires and the resulting obsessive rivalry. However, this perspective does not fully elucidate the underlying causes of the persistent division within humanity. This perspective fails to acknowledge the fundamental human need to differentiate, irrespective of economic interests, language, gender, sexual orientation, culture or subculture. This necessity can be derived from the intrinsic characteristics of each language and each expression.

There are numerous meetings and discussion groups whose participants self-identify as highly articulate and tolerant. It is unfortunate that such individuals fail to recognize the illusory nature of their professed tolerance. It is evident that there is a lack of awareness among these individuals that their statements are, in fact, contradictory. They attribute all instances of intolerance to contradictions, such as the dichotomy between bad rulers and good subjects, or vice versa; between good rationalists and bad romantics, or vice versa; between good atheists and bad believers, or vice versa; between bad capitalists and good proletarians, or vice versa; between good internationalists and perfidious nationalists, or vice versa; between perfectly good leftists and perfectly bad rightists, or vice versa. Further they attribute all instances of intolerance to contradictions and hierarchical dichotomies, such as, the superiority of the white race over the black, brown, yellow, red, and vice versa; of superior *Übermenschen* over inferior

*Untermenschen*; of true believers, enlightened and chosen by God or Allah and His earthly representatives, over damned heretics and infidels stuck in darkness; of backward faith over the light of science; of good matriarchy over bad patriarchy; and so on. In short, they attribute all instances of intolerance to contradictions and hierarchical dichotomies, such as the superiority of light over darkness and of white over black. It is evident that none of these individuals are aware that intolerance is not primarily a consequence of the existence of polarising groups and institutions per se. Rather, it is a consequence of man's natural ability and intrinsic need to manifest himself as a polarising individual or as a member of a polarising group or institution, including through his distinctive language. It is also a consequence of man's natural ability and intrinsic need to distinguish between people and groups, including through his distinctive language, the acquisition of which is also an innate ability.

Marxists posit that all antagonisms between people arise from whether or not they own private property in the means of production. They further posit that all polarising ideologies arise from this concrete, polarised situation. However, they ignore the necessary condition that each person's brain must first translate the social, economic, ethical and/or legal situation of the owner of that brain into a language before that owner is able to understand (fathom) his situation in relation to that of others, and to articulate that situation in relation to that of others. The human mind is capable of processing a multitude of stimuli, including needs, images and feelings such as anger and resentment. These may become obsessive for an individual, but when they are considered, they are immediately translated into a language. Every human being thinks in a language, whether it is a silent monologue, a loud monologue or a dialogue. Such is his nature that he is unable to act otherwise.

The distinction between spoken and written language, and Derrida's tenet that writing takes precedence over speaking, are irrelevant to their role in making distinctions. Indeed, both forms of language are capable of making distinctions. Every individual engaged in cognitive processes, whether verbal or written, differentiates between the conventional characteristics of entities, whether animate or inanimate, and the conventional characteristics of beliefs. This differentiation is achieved by emphasising the distinctive features of one entity or belief in comparison to another. The act of distinguishing between concepts is a fundamental aspect of human cognition. This is achieved through the use of nouns, adjectives, and verbs, which serve to differentiate between concepts, excluding

others in the process. Nevertheless, these excluded possibilities persist in the background as an implicit contrast to what is named. The term "dog" is used to exclude all other creatures and mammals. The term "everything" is used to exclude the contrasting possibilities of "some" and "one". Similarly, the term "here" is used to exclude "there". Furthermore, the term "yesterday" is used to exclude all other days. When an individual utters or inscribed the word "cycling," a specific activity becomes the focal point of their attention, while all other possibilities recede into the background.

Value judgments are made when individuals are opposed to the situation caused by another person or group of people. The nature of the judgement and its perceived impact on others are irrelevant. Even an unspoken "bah" or a clenched fist, invisible to others, represents a value judgement based on the implicit hierarchical dichotomy "I am better than you".

I can discern the sound of the leftists' indignant voices: This individual is yet another gullible Idealist whose Idealism, with its ideality of meanings, is situated far above material reality. This enables him or her to maintain the social status quo in favour of the propertied class. According to Marxist ideology, philosophical idealism is the most egregious and unforgivable anti-revolutionary folly of all. It is irrelevant whether I am labelled an Idealist, a Realist or a Materialist, and whether I belong to the "patricentric-acquisitive" bourgeoisie, as some would have it. The act of ascribing a label to me, whether prior to or subsequent to the reading of this essay, as an Idealist, a right-winger, a fascist, a class enemy, or any other characteristic noun or adjective, corroborates the veracity of my perspective on human nature.

The cognitive processes underlying animal decision-making do not manifest in linguistic expression. Animal decision-making eliminates potential solutions through a process of trial and error. It seems unlikely that an animal is capable of thinking about its solutions in abstract terms and communicating them to its peers in such terms.

It remains to be seen whether people are capable of thinking without language. It is possible that this type of thinking occurs in infants, provided they reside in a manner akin to Mowgli in a pack of wolves. In normal circumstances, parents address each other and themselves by their own and each other's names, or by the name of their familial relationship to the child in question. They also direct the child's attention to various objects and actions by calling them by the names common in their community. Furthermore, the infant rapidly acquires this



knowledge through imitation.

The capacity for language acquisition, or logos, is an inherent human ability that enables the learning of language through pointing, naming, imitation, and the use of speech and writing. Without this capacity, the acquisition of language is not possible. Once language acquisition is initiated, which is the process of recognising and naming things, people and situations on the basis of their universally observable stereotypical characteristics, which exclude the stereotypical characteristics of other things, people and situations, every individual begins to think in a language. Inner monologues are employed solely to express one's personal opinions regarding statements or actions pertaining to oneself or others. These opinions then manifest in a multitude of actions, both individual and collective, and in the manner of communication with others, whether benevolent or otherwise.

For a newborn, the reality that they perceive is solely that which exists outside of language. While all infants are born with the potential to acquire language, they lack the capacity to understand language and to produce and use words and sentences. If, as Derrida asserts, there is no reality beyond language to which the signifieds evoked by the signifiers refer, and to which people can refer in order to educate the infant about the concepts of "a tree," "water," "a lake," or any other object, then any reference to anything is merely a meaningless sound, regardless of how often it is repeated by other individuals or by the child in question. In order for the signifier to have meaning, it must evoke a mental image or feeling in the child's mind. This image or feeling cannot originate from sounds that do not refer to a specific object, form, or experience in reality outside of language. The utterance of signifiers such as "danger", "food", "angry", "safe" and "happy" evoke feelings in the newborn by the tone they are uttered in, even if the infant is not yet aware of the linguistic significance of these words (cf. Mowgli).

It is a moot point as to whether everything that is perceived and experienced can be adequately expressed in language. It is evident that this is not the case. A significant proportion of phenomena remain beyond the scope of language. One might consider the limitations of impressionist painting and, in literature, the shortcomings of naturalistic descriptions that attempt to represent reality. Does this imply that that which lies and occurs beyond the scope of language is mere illusion? This is clearly not the case. It is possible to express at least some aspects of reality in a manner that can be understood by individuals with a normally functioning brain.

It is unlikely that an individual would develop human language if they were to live in isolation from birth. Despite their innate capacity to acquire language, this would not occur. It is evident that the infant would be able to distinguish between different types of branches, such as those on the ground or on trees. However, it is less clear why he would be motivated to categorise these objects as "branches" and to learn the specific term for this category. To inform himself about the distinctions between the various types of tree branches? When he is always aware that branches are present and that they are these specific branches and not others? Furthermore, there is no apparent reason why he would wish to make moral judgements about the nature of his actions prior to, during or subsequent to the slaughter of one or more rabbits. He is unable to make such judgements, as there are no individuals whose actions he can affect or whose motives he can comprehend. The concepts of language and morality are only possible in situations where there is a collective "we" and an individual "I". For example, language and morality are only possible when there is a shared opinion on a particular subject or when there is an individual opinion on a subject that affects others.

In the meantime, however, this individual, who is entirely alone in the world, must kill animals and plants in order to stay alive. It can be argued that the sadism he requires to survive is an inherent aspect of his nature.

## 1.2. The Bromide That the Opponent's Argument Is Merely a Sentimental Interpretation or Pure Rhetoric

Similarly, the veracity of my perspective on human nature is validated each time it is disregarded or rejected, or portions of it, through the assertion that it is merely a sentimental or emotional interpretation. However popular this argument may be, it is erroneous because it is belittling and therefore an expression of sadism, uttered in an attempt to gain the acquiescence of others. This is an attempt to reconcile opposites. In fact, it is the expression of a particular feeling – namely the need for sadism, the need for contempt and the need to express this contempt in public – that leads a person to make this judgement. Therefore, one should refrain from expressing one's feelings in all judgements and interpretations (if possible), or remain silent if one wishes to avoid expressing one's own need for sadism.

However, an individual cannot be considered credible when they permit their personal, potentially left-wing or right-wing, needs and sentiments to take precedence, while concurrently and arbitrarily condemning the interpretations of others on the grounds that they are exclusively emotional in character.

Furthermore, it is evident that a world devoid of emotional expression would be a rather silent one. One might even be able to discern the reproduction of an amoeba.

I am well aware of the tactics employed to discredit messages deemed to be "undesirable" in the current climate. Another method of discrediting those who present ideas that are at odds with the absence of emotion-driven arguments – the kind of absence that contemporary textual critics claim to exhibit in their interpretive work<sup>1</sup> - is to label their interpretations as mere "pure rhetoric". This is also a value judgement that arises from the need for sadism. The question of whether this judgement is justified is irrelevant to the question of its sadistic nature. Moreover, the manner in which the judgement is conveyed is irrelevant with regard to this particular judgement. The individual or entity that formulates the judgment is necessarily driven by a need for sadism, as evidenced by their

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<sup>1</sup> The absence of emotion in interpretation is a consequence of dwelling in Wittgenstein's nirvana of algebraic logic, or in one of his non-binding language games (such as the philosophical one used by the analytic philosophers) or in the nirvana proposed by Marcuse. This state of being is one in which the contradictions between Eros and Thanatos and between man and nature are reconciled. Alternatively, it is a state of being that is reflected in the Derridean nirvana of the perfect undecidability of the truth content and moral value of every statement.

sadistic expression. As the saying goes, "A tree is known by its fruit."

It is imperative to recognise that if we adhere to the prevailing notion that an accurate interpretation of a text or statement can only be achieved by an interpreter who is wholly devoid of any motivating emotions during the interpretation process, then it is not feasible to arrive at an approving or disapproving interpretation of a text or statement. In such a scenario, it is not possible to provide a verbal or written endorsement of a text or statement, nor to offer a critical analysis. Such positive or negative comments are, therefore, merely sentimental rhetoric, as they are inspired by feelings. Furthermore, any critical and thus sadistic judgement resulting from such a "correct" interpretation would also be sentimental rhetoric. Consequently, the "correct" interpretation, which is purportedly devoid of emotional investment, is merely rhetoric when couched in the verbal contempt of Horkheimer, Adorno, Foucault, Derrida and their epigones for their opponents.<sup>2</sup>

It is interesting to speculate whether individuals who are perceived as lacking empathy would be able to describe their experiences as mere sentimentality if they were suffering from a painful illness or had been involved in a traumatic accident. Furthermore, it would be interesting to ascertain whether they would be able to dismiss as mere rhetoric their presentation of the facts, including their physical and psychological experiences, to the doctor, the examining magistrate or the lawyer. Furthermore, it would be interesting to see whether, after the theft and destruction of a manuscript in which they had radically condemned the presence of emotion in an interpretation as affecting the credibility of that interpretation, the individuals in question would be able to dismiss their own commentary on this amusing misappropriation as mere emotion and their written account of the theft to the police as mere rhetoric.

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<sup>2</sup> The members of the Frankfurt School consistently developed their social critique within the context of the prevailing conformism within their ranks under the leadership of Horkheimer. Their conformity entailed a shared interpretation of the criteria that their theory had to meet in order to be considered the definitive critical theory. While imperfect, their conformism was nevertheless potent, and the hypercritical Adorno, with his proclivity for unanimous agreement, found it conducive to his sensibilities. As a result of his mythical need for security in the womb? This is an assumption that I make using my dialectical imagination, as required by the Frankfurt School. Please refer to Part I, §1, 1.1 for further details.

On the basis of the conformism of the Frankfurt School, Herbert Marcuse launched an attack on the dissident Erich Fromm in *Eros and Civilization*, pp. 214-215 and pp. 247-248, and in *A Reply to Erich Fromm*, in *Dissent III*, 1956. This was in response to Fromm's criticism of Marcuse in an article in *Dissent II* and again in *Dissent III*. For further details, please refer to Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination. A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research 1923-1950*, Heinemann, London, 1976, pp. 23-24, 25, 99, 100-112. (Staf Van der Auwera, 1999).

### **1.3. The Weapon Par Excellence in the Struggle for Life**

Any communication about a subject through the medium of language is a translation. Please refer to Part I, §2 for further details. The act of translating individual and group behaviour, including that of a Marxist or a Derridean, inherently involves the labelling of individuals and groups. Such distinctive labels are a normal and inevitable part of any language. It is evident that the existence and utilisation of these labels would have been inconceivable without the capacity to categorise individuals and groups. Without this kind of language, it would have been impossible for Marx and his followers to distinguish and name different classes in society, or to label a person a philosophical idealist. Without such categorisation, it would have been impossible to ascribe the label of materialist to a Marxist. Without the existence and use of these labels, Derrida would never have been able to identify Western thought as ethnocentric. It is precisely because each individual attaches such distinctive labels to others, potentially even inventing new ones (such as Newspeak), that each individual de-classifies themselves or those others. It is irrelevant whether the individual in question is being truthful or not. Language is a tool that can be used to separate people, create divisions between them, and set them against each other. Similarly, semiotics is employed as a weapon in this manner, with the various forms (translations) in which semioticians render it being used as a means of doing so. The structuralists utilise de Saussure's semiotics as a means of exposing the myths that the powerful utilise to maintain the subjugation of the powerless. I am grateful to them for this, as it relieves me of the obligation to do it myself. The contemporary "intellectual avant-garde" employs Derrida's semiotics to assail objectivism, metaphysics, and manifestations of Western ethnocentrism. They also advocate for the imposition of the equivalence and undecidability of any linguistic expression. The accusation I level at all leftists is that they are blind to their own sadism and that of the powerless, whose nature drives them to plunder, molest and murder. Once in power, they justify their actions with new myths, verbal or otherwise, which they will later use to consolidate their position.

Language is a tool that enables survival. It is humanity's most effective instrument in the ongoing battle for survival. However, it is not a chair leg that happens to be within reach to use as a weapon against an opponent who has suddenly become

aggressive. Language is a fundamental aspect of human nature, as the capacity to acquire language is inherited. And what human needs and functions are not the result of heredity, developed in the struggle for life?

It is a relatively simple exercise to envisage a sexually aroused male of the species *Homo habilis*, whose ancestors split off from the Hominini tribe, which also includes chimpanzees and bonobos, vocalising his desire to engage in sexual intercourse within his group. It is evident that the vocalisation in question will differ from that of a sexually aroused chimpanzee or his own sexually aroused ancestors of the subtribe Homininae. Similarly, it is a relatively simple matter to envisage the male engaging in aggressive behaviour towards a rival who is similarly vocalising for the same reason. The specific nature of the vocalisations, whether they consist solely of consonants, vowels or a combination of both, is irrelevant. This is a topic that Derrida and Jean-Jacques Rousseau discuss at length in the final pages of *De la grammatologie*. The example provides a number of clear insights. It can be observed that whenever a mammal, whether conscious or unconscious of its personal identity, roars in this way, it experiences itself as a sexually aroused unit (ego) of body and mind. This is because both the body and mind are simultaneously governed by only one need and one ideal, namely to mate with another specimen of the species, typically a female, but potentially a male, and to eliminate all obstacles (rivals) that impede the realisation of this ideal through the killing of rivals or the forcing of them to retreat (sadism).

It is unlikely that the male Homininae specimen in question would have classified his roar of sexual desire, with which he expressed his heightened self-consciousness, as a mere interpretation consisting of a signifier evoking an indeterminate signified and that he considered himself to be mere consciousness completely filled in by his "context". Could the linguistic expression of his roar have been made possible by *différance*? Or was this specimen simply so aroused by the action of its endocrine glands (which pumped testosterone into its bloodstream and brain) that it began to roar as an automatic response, indicating a desire to mate? Is the roar of this specimen of animal a fundamentally different phenomenon from the linguistic expression of *Homo sapiens*, who utters the phrase "Fuck, I'm fucking horny, I want to fuck" regardless of whether they are speaking Dutch, Arabic, or Chinese, or writing their linguistic expression using Chinese characters or the Arabic or Western alphabet?

And what of the women? Did they not desire sexual intercourse then? And do they not desire it now? Did they not seduce men then and do so now, presenting themselves as a desirable unity of body and mind (as an ego) and distinguishing

themselves from their potential lovers? "Look, tough guys, what a beautiful, fertile lady I am! Get moving and fight [= sadism provoking sadism]. Whoever wins [= hierarchical dichotomy of priority of the winner over the loser] can have me"? It is reasonable to posit that they engaged in sexual intercourse following this interaction, otherwise we would not have existed.

And is it not the case that every time those Homininae specimens uttered another cry (which was also made up exclusively of consonants or vowels, or a combination of both, possibly supplemented by the click consonants, as in the Khoekhoen language, for example) to warn their family or tribe that they were in danger, they were reconciling the contradictions within their own conformist group by trying to keep their group intact (whether they were leaders or just members of the tribe)?

What then is the fundamental importance of the fact that, after the genus *Homo* evolved into the species *Homo sapiens*, this *Homo sapiens* developed the capacity to create a vast array of signs and phrases in its respective languages, including pictograms, cuneiform, Linear B<sup>3</sup> and the alphabet? These were always employed to warn of different kinds of dangers and to express the behavioural norms, patterns and collective beliefs necessary for the survival of the group.

What is of paramount importance is that *Homo sapiens* has consistently employed these pictograms, characters, letters and phrases to convey his aggressive language, which is characterised by a sadistic distinction between himself and "the others" (potentially the others within his own group). However, this may also serve to maintain or restore internal reconciliation within his own community by directing his aggression against outsiders. Furthermore, he employs these symbols to convey warnings to his group, differentiating between his group and "the others" and thereby resolving internal conflicts within his group. Additionally, he utilises these symbols to formulate a code of conduct for his group, striving for internal reconciliation. Finally, he employs these symbols to avoid aggression from or against "the others" during a consultation with them, ensuring his survival alongside his own group. The objective of all spoken and written words and sentences was to express distinction and sadism, as well as to reconcile the internal contradictions of one's own group. This was achieved by using a writing system that differed from other writing systems and thus distinguished its users from "barbarians" without a writing system. For instance, by formulating myths (in the

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<sup>3</sup> Syllabic script used to write Mycenaean Greek, which is currently the earliest known form of Ancient Greek.

traditional sense of the word) and religions, ideologies and philosophies that served as models for the behaviour of one's own group and its views on the necessity of aggression, whether against members of one's own group (through law enforcement) or against other conformist groups.

Thus, there are two distinct approaches to the prohibition of killing: the first is found in Buddhism, Judaism, and Christianity, which espouse the principle of "Thou shalt not kill"; the second is exemplified by the objectivist categorical imperative of Aztec, Incan, Spartan, Roman, medieval chivalric, Robin Hood, Machiavelli, Hobbes, extreme nationalists, Social Darwinists, Nazis, Marxist-Leninists, Muslims, state Shintoists, and others, which justifies killing in certain circumstances.

In a more recent stage of human development, the common history of one's own conformist group was proudly told to the members of that group and to future generations through various languages and writings. This occurred at least as long as the members of a particular group still believed in the value of their own group. However, once a state or civilisation ceased to believe in its own worth, its members began to describe themselves and their community as "abandoned by the gods" and doomed to destruction. At the same time, they sought a scapegoat to explain their own failure. Both non-Christian and Christian late Roman writers did this after the sack of Rome by the Visigoths under Alaric I (410 AD). Non-Christians attributed the disaster to Christianity, while Christians ascribed it to paganism, citing the latter's perceived moral weakness. Paul Orosius, a Christian priest and theologian, believed that the sacking was an expression of divine wrath against a proud and blasphemous city. Zosimus, a Roman pagan historian, postulated that Christianity's abandonment of traditional rites had undermined the political virtues of the empire. He further asserted that the imperial government's misguided decisions, which precipitated the sacking, were a consequence of its indifference to the gods.

The abandonment of the belief in the value of Western culture by the Western elite has led to the demonisation of this culture by the same elite. From their perspective, this demonisation is predicated on the ethnocentric and imperialist character of Western culture. The suggestion is that other cultures are not or will not be ethnocentric and imperialistic. In response to this, the elite has developed its own models, which are based on a utopian vision. These models seek to replace the existing Western conformism and the resulting prescribed behaviour. In contrast to its reviled predecessor, to which this elite itself belongs (self-hatred of this elite), it



perpetually assumes that these novel models – in contrast to the preceding one – will definitively reconcile all contradictions. This is exemplified by the prescription that humanity must live from a position *jenseits von Gut und Böse* (beyond good and evil) by utilising a language that makes no distinctions (Derrida).

Moral indifference while leading others. Let this combination of indifference and leadership sink in. Furthermore, let the inherent contradiction of this "otherness by not being other" (sic), as the left-wing elite refer to their indifference to distinguishing themselves from the "others", the right-wingers, who are "different" from them because they make distinctions, be considered.

In essence, language is a tool that best fulfils the fundamental human need to survive in a group, while each member of the group differentiates and distinguishes themselves in some way. However, when socialising with family members, kindred spirits or allies, each person employs language to differentiate between the members of their own conformist group (i.e. "we") and their own personal identity (i.e. "I"). They also distinguish between their social identity and "the others" (i.e. "they", the other conformist group and the individuals who belong to it). Language is employed to differentiate between competitors (both individual competitors and those affiliated with one's own clan or social identity) and oneself in the pursuit of food, sex and status. This is done with the intention of neutralising or eliminating these competitors, either through individual action or through the actions of one's own conformist group.

Conversely, language is employed by all members of a community to differentiate themselves from others within that community, whether as the most conformist member or as the most revolutionary, seeking to overthrow the established order and its associated beliefs and values in the most radical manner. Is this not correct, Adorno, Marcuse, Rudy Dutschke, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Derrida, Paul Goossens and all the other members of the Leuven SVB?<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Editor's note: Alfred Willi Rudolf "Rudi" Dutschke (7 March 1940 - 24 December 1979) was a German sociologist and political activist who, prior to being seriously injured by an assassin in 1968, was a prominent figure within the Socialist Students' Union (SDS) in West Germany and the country's broader "extra-parliamentary opposition" (APO). Dutschke asserted that his socialist ideology drew upon both Christian and Marxist influences, rejecting the Leninist model of party dictatorship he had encountered during his youth in East Germany and the compromises inherent to West German social democracy. He proposed the establishment of alternative or parallel social, economic and political institutions based on the principles of direct democracy. Concurrently, he aligned himself with Moscow- and Beijing-oriented communists in endorsing the national liberation movements of the Third World as fronts in a global socialist revolution.

Daniel Marc Cohn-Bendit (born 4 April 1945 in Montauban) is a Franco-German journalist and politician

Language has served this purpose since the invention of pronouns by Adam and Eve in Central Africa. These pronouns, "I/me," "we/us," "he/him," "she/her," and "they/them," or equivalents, were created by changing the form of conjugated verbs in the singular and plural. These differentiators were then used to make value judgments.

The inclination of humans to differentiate and categorise is evident in the creation myths that have been passed down through history. According to the Greeks, the universe began in a state of absolute chaos, with no discernible form or substance. From this uninhabitable state of indifference, a distinction that could be inhabited emerged with the appearance of the goddess Gaia (Mother Earth) and the god Uranus (Father Sky). They proceeded to procreate other deities who proceeded to create new entities and thus new differentiations.

Similarly, Norse mythology describes a similar scenario: in the beginning, there was nothing but a gaping void, the primordial space.

The Maori (New Zealand) creation myth begins as follows: "In the beginning, there was nothing."

Taoism (China) posits the concept of "primordial chaos."

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of Jewish origin. He was born to Jewish parents who had fled Nazi Germany in 1933. He was educated in France but attended school in Germany. His parents had not submitted the requisite documentation to officially declare his birth, as they intended to emigrate to the United States in the near future. This plan was never realised, and as a result Daniel remained stateless. Upon reaching the age of 18, he was presented with the option of acquiring citizenship in either Germany or France. However, he chose to decline French citizenship, citing the desire to avoid conscription. In 1965, he relocated to France to pursue a degree in sociology at the University of Nanterre. He subsequently became a prominent figure within the student movement. In the wake of the shooting of Benno Ohnesorg in Berlin on 2 June 1967, he posited that such violence could occur in other countries. At the 1968 Anti-Vietnam War Congress in Berlin, he encountered the West German APO activist Rudi Dutschke. In the wake of Dutschke's assassination just weeks later, Cohn-Bendit was compelled to mobilise French students. Following his involvement in the Paris student revolt of 1968 (May '68), of which he was a principal instigator, he was denied entry to France. (Source: *Wikipedia*, 2024)

Paul Goossens held the position of president of the KVHV (Catholic Flemish High School Students' Union) during the 1968-69 academic year and was a member of the Student Union Movement (SVB, 1967-70). The SVB was originally a progressive current within the KVHV. The SVB perceived itself as an emanation of a burgeoning progressive current that presaged a new spirit in society at large. In the December 1966 edition of the KVHV magazine *Ons Leven* (Our Life), the organisation's leaders presented a critique of the traditional and, in their view, narrow-minded student life. They were vehemently opposed to the prevailing conservative current within the Catholic and Flemish nationalist KVHV. At the international congress of the left-wing German student union SDS in Berlin in the summer of 1967, SVB leaders engaged in discourse with disciples of Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin and Mao Zedong. Subsequently, there was a growing interest within the SVB in scientific socialism and in broadening the perspective of the student population to encompass the experiences of the working class. This left-wing radicalisation resulted in some students disassociating themselves from the SVB, which ceased to exist in 1970. (Staf Van der Auwera, 1999).

Ancient Egypt is known to have had four distinct creation myths. The first account commences with nothingness and darkness, the second with a formless universe and primordial sea, the third with the god Ptah creating through thought, and the last with the god Khnum creating animals and humans from clay on a potter's wheel.

The Babylonian creation myth, *Enuma Elis*, commences as follows: "When the sky above was not named, And the earth beneath did not yet bear a name, And the primeval Apsû, who begot them, And chaos, Tiamat, the mother of them both, their waters were mingled together, And no field was formed, no marsh was to be seen; When none of the gods had been called into being".

Thus in the beginning, there existed solely the saltwater entity Tiamat and the fresh water entity Apsû. The two substances then combined, resulting in the creation of deities. These deities, in turn, gave rise to other deities, thereby initiating a process of differentiation. Subsequently, a series of homicides commenced when Apsû sought to assassinate his progeny and Tiamat persuaded Ea to murder his father (i.e. the sadistic tendencies of the primordial deities).

Finally, both the Han Chinese and Hindus believe that the processes of creation and destruction are repeated endlessly. This is exemplified by the eternal repetition of differentiation and the destruction of difference, as in the antinomic god Shiva, who is both the creator and the destroyer.

In a manner analogous to that of Apollo, Mr. Nietzsche.

The Norsemen had their own interpretation of the conflict between chaos and order. In the first song of the *Edda*, *Völuspá* (translation by Jan de Vries, Klassieke Galerij, number 67, De Nederlandsche Boekhandel, Antwerp, 1952), the following description is provided: "In prehistoric times there was Ymir: no sand, no sea, no salt waves. There was no earth and no wide sky, only the gaping abyss and grass nowhere".

Ymir was the primordial giant who was slain by the Æsir, the deities of the sky and war, representing the sadistic tendencies of the primordial deities. From his flesh, bones, and blood, the Æsir created the world and a man and a woman (see Song 3: *Song of Wafthrudnir*). The three goddesses of fate (the Norns), daughters of the giants, originate from the realm of Jötunheimr. The advent of these beings marks the end of the golden age of harmony, peace, and prosperity, as even the gods are now subject to fate. A conflict ensues between the Vanir (the gods of vegetation and fertility) and the Æsir. They reach a reconciliation. A giant rebuilds the destroyed Valhalla, but the Æsir deny him his promised reward, Freya, the goddess of beauty, spring and eternal youth. Consequently, a cataclysmic conflict erupts

between the giants and the gods, with the latter being aided by the heroes who had been killed in battle and subsequently brought to Valhalla. The world and Valhalla are annihilated in the World Fire (*Ragnarök*), and chaos reigns supreme. However, the earth and Valhalla are subsequently resurrected by the return of the completely innocent god Baldr (the messiah), who returns from Hel (the Underworld). He encounters a few surviving Æsir and a new golden age commences, including for the two individuals who survived Ragnarök.

In essence, language is a human construct, a means of communication that enables us to think, speak, and write. Just as apple trees bear apples, language enables us to express our thoughts and ideas. Each is a reflection of the nature and needs of its creator. In contrast, the aggressive pigeons with olive branches in their beaks symbolise peace. An antinomic symbol (or antinomic deity) can only be conceived by an antinomic being. The invention of a deity in whom all contradictions and opposites are reconciled is also only possible through the imagination of a being driven by the inherent need to reconcile all contradictions and opposites, both within itself and in the world around it.

In the beginning was the Word, as it is written in the Gospel of John (1:1). And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, as it is written in the Gospel of John (1:14). Indeed, the Word did become flesh. In more precise terms, the evolution of the human species enabled the acquisition of the hereditary ability to acquire language, which in turn led to the development of a logocentric mode of thinking. This was necessary for the survival of the species, as it enabled the distinction between truth and falsehood. Language is the most fundamental expression of human nature, representing the antinomic and homicidal tendencies inherent to the species. It serves as a means of distinguishing oneself and one's community, reconciling contradictions and opposites within the context of a conformist community and its herd mentality.

#### **1.4. *Idem Velle Atque Idem Nolle...***

The following is in accordance with what is set forth in section 1.1.

A number of distinctions are constantly made, but it must be acknowledged that they are all superficial. The essential point to be made is as follows: It can be observed that every individual, regardless of geographical location, age, or ethnic or cultural background, makes distinctions through the use of language. The necessity for such differentiation is intrinsic to the human species. This is, along with his need to reconcile all opposites, his most fundamental need. Every time a human being engages in any form of thought, speech or writing, they make a distinction. He differentiates between one entity and another, one action and another, one opinion and another, one motive and another, one understanding and another, one meaning and another, and one emotion and another, one value and another, one individual and another, and one group and another. This is the fundamental nature of language.

If language did not differentiate, it would be devoid of meaning. It would be absurd. The word "absurd" is derived from the Latin "*absurdus*", which means "out of tune", hence "irrational", and is related to the word "*surdus*", meaning "deaf, dull". In such a scenario, language would effectively name everything and everyone simultaneously, rendering it devoid of any specific meaning and therefore meaningless. The latter is the result of Derrida's semiotics. The fundamental objective and intrinsic quality of any language that aspires to convey meaning is the establishment of distinctions.

Language is inherently polarising, both in terms of the value judgements it makes about the speaker/writer and about others, and in terms of the contradictions it confirms or creates. This polarisation is not exclusive to any particular group or belief system. Those who hold views contrary to those of other individuals or groups engage in polarisation by characterising their own group as positive and implicitly or explicitly portraying the other as negative and therefore inferior. This can be understood as creating a hierarchical dichotomy. Examples of such groups include Marxists, Nazis, Christians, Muslims, atheists, machos, feminists, homosexuals, transsexuals and heterosexuals. The act of meaningful communication, whether through spoken or written sentences, inherently involves some degree of polarisation. This is evident from the etymological roots of the

English word "sentence", which is ultimately derived from the Latin "*sententia*", meaning "opinion". The Latin "*sentire*" translates into English as "to feel" or "to hold the opinion".

One might argue that every non-disabled individual uses language, and therefore every normal person is a discriminating being, a polarising being, and a being that discriminates against others while living from a position that is either *diesseits* or *jenseits von Gut und Böse*. One could even argue that its position is inherently *diesseits*, given the hierarchical distinctions it makes between different value systems, including those of persons, things, actions and attitudes. This applies to both the Right and the Left. The latter makes use of universal generalisations (which, according to Adorno, are no more than myths or fetishes) such as "the alienated possessing class" or "the establishment" or "the power", "the have-nots", "the powerless" and "the wage slaves", and of "the elite" that stands up for them, namely "the party" and/or "the left-wing intellectuals".

The term "agreement" in the context of interpersonal relationships denotes a state of concordance between two individuals based on an immediate interpretation of each other's sentiments, necessities, and actions. This interpretation is often expressed through the act of naming and/or appreciating the other's feelings, necessities, and actions, which are then perceived as either right or wrong.<sup>5</sup>

In this sense, an individual who exhibits such a state of agreement with another can be considered a friend.

Any individual who disagrees with you based on their own interpretations and translations is your adversary. This is regardless of whether you acknowledge it or not. They pose a threat to your socio-economic status and your moral and other certainties, even if you call these certainties "undecidable" or "provisional truths" or "interpretations," as the prevailing leftist ideology demands. Therefore, Sallust's assertion is accurate: *The strongest friendship is ultimately based on an identity of likes and dislikes*. However, any group that claims that its members want the same

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<sup>5</sup> A second phase of interpretation may be defined as the process by which an individual determines the veracity of their own judgments. This entails an intuitive or explicit assessment of whether their evaluation of observed phenomena, statements, or actions is accurate. It also encompasses an evaluation of the accuracy of judgments made by oneself and others regarding observed phenomena, statements, or actions. It is possible that he may or may not acknowledge this error to himself or to others. He may ascribe responsibility to himself or, as is typically the case, to others, which may be perceived as a manifestation of sadism. He may attempt to conceal his error by fabricating a series of interpretive justifications and excuses that serve to justify or minimise the error.

thing ipso facto distinguishes itself from, and ipso facto opposes, any other group whose members want something different.

## **1.5. All Value Judgements Are Manichaeian (Morally Dualistic)**

A group whose members pursue similar goals typically assesses its own group as superior and the other group as inferior. This inferiority is manifested in a number of negative characterisations, including "bad", "ignorant", "stupid", "backward", "stubborn", "selfish", "prejudiced", "heretical", "misleading", "discriminatory", "distinctive", and so on. This phenomenon is observable in all contexts. The negative labelling of individuals belonging to a particular political movement, whether left or right, inevitably leads to discrimination, stigmatisation and exclusion of those who are labelled. This is true even when the label is applied to others only in thought.

In other words, every value judgement is Manichean because all human beings, including Marxists of all persuasions, are Manicheans by virtue of their morally distinctive perception of themselves and others. Without this kind of perception, they would never have been able to make morally distinctive value judgements using Manichean language. Derrida also makes such a value judgement when he accuses Western thought of ethnocentrism, logocentrism and imperialism. The apple tree bears apples.

Furthermore, the argument presented here should not be dismissed with the trivial and inconsequential objection that the branch of a pear tree can be grafted onto an apple tree. In other words, the objection is that man, as a kind of God the Father, can create a new, semi-Manichaeian human being without waiting for the results of slow evolution. It is indeed possible to 'perfect' an apple tree by grafting it, but even then the resulting fruit will partly resemble an apple and partly taste like an apple. What is the advantage of this? The possibility that the new fruit contains less Manichaeism, or not just Manichaeism, remains to be seen. This is because the tree remains what it is, an apple tree which, given its genetics, normally only produces apples. As long as the tree produces pure and unadulterated apples, which look and taste like pure and unadulterated apples, it can be considered a pure and unadulterated apple tree. Consequently, as long as individuals espouse pure and unadulterated sadistic statements, whether verbally or in writing, one can reasonably conclude that they are pure and unadulterated sadistic people.

Biological evolution is only possible if hereditary traits are inherent in the species. Improvement through crossbreeding and selection is therefore only possible if the creatures you are trying to improve possess hereditary traits. Given the success of



plant and animal breeding and selection, it is reasonable to conclude that these traits are present in them. It is also reasonable to conclude that these traits can be modified. All living things, including human beings, are carriers of hereditary traits. This is a fundamental aspect of their nature. Therefore, in order to change their nature, it is necessary to change their hereditary traits. For humanity, this means creating a Brave New World. Certain interventions in human nature were already carried out by the Nazis: Eugenics, which involved the crossing of the physically and mentally strongest men with the physically and mentally strongest women, and the sterilisation or destruction of those deemed inferior, represents a particularly sadistic path to the desired outcome. Those who do not wish to follow this path, which was devised by the lust for power, will simply have to wait for the effects of slow evolution. It is futile to hope for an unforeseen mutation that will eradicate all forms of sadism in one or a few individuals, as these mutants will no longer be able to utilise a distinctive language. Furthermore, they will be unable to employ a language that makes judgements about themselves and their non-mutant, sadistic counterparts. As a result of their mutation, they will be left with no language at all.

This objection can be levelled against any individual or entity that claims to be a "messiah" and to bring about a perfectly good humanity. It can also be applied to the teachings of such an individual or entity and to any personality cult. Without the existence of perfectly good, silent and apathetic mutants, there is no perfectly good, silent and apathetic messiah.

## § 2. Contradictions and Antinomies

### 2.1. "Universal Doubt" and "Moral Relativism" Are Contradictions in Adjecto

All that has been said so far about making distinctions and about sadism applies unreservedly to any group that pretends to support universal doubt and, on that basis, to be the elite that abstains from any objectivist moral judgement (any moral judgement formulated as a universally valid judgement). This group inevitably turns against anyone who doubts the sense of universal doubt (= this group turns against all obstacles to its ideal), thus turning its universal doubt into a universal absolutisation of the correctness of its claims. While its members claim to take a position beyond good and evil in all their statements, they condemn anyone who makes a moral judgement from a certain objectivism as backward, intolerant and right-wing. They make an absolute value judgement instead of the relative and subjective judgement that they believe is the only good and right one. And why not? After all, stupid people come in all shapes and sizes, regardless of the talent with which they display their stupidity, including the kind who shout "Hallelujah" when you tell them they are contradicting themselves: "See! I told you everything can be contradicted". You have indeed said one thing, my dear, and that is that you have contradicted yourself. Congratulations.

It is true that anyone can contradict any statement. But this possibility does not automatically make every contradiction a meaningful statement, let alone a tolerant message or a message from a person who empathises positively with another person. Moreover, to say that a certain action is possible is to say that you can choose between two opposite actions: affirming and denying (denying = contradicting). People have free will and can therefore choose, regardless of the extent to which they are inclined to choose one of the alternatives out of a particular need. No need, no choice. What need, dear relativists, leads you to systematically contradict every assertion? The need for modesty? A truly humble person does not emphasise his opinion, nor does he do so when he thinks that the other person is equal to him as a person in all respects.

A few examples to illustrate that the ability to contradict every assertion does not make every contradiction a tolerant message, or the message of a person who empathises positively with another person.

Your best friend is dying of dysentery and says to you: "I'm dying." You reply, "Sorry, my friend. Any statement can be contradicted. You are not dying. You are only suffering from a corn. But you, in turn, can deny that".

Does such a denial, uttered in such circumstances, make sense? Is it tolerant? Is it a statement of positive empathy?

Another example. Your best friend is gay and you see him ejaculating during sex with another man. The context and the sexual orientation of the witness are left to your imagination. Your friend says with a glorified face, "Wow that was great!" You reply, "Don't kid yourself, mate, you felt terrible. Besides, you are not as gay as you say you are. After all, any statement can be contradicted, and in terms of its truth, the contradiction is absolutely equivalent to your statement. And besides, you couldn't possibly have enjoyed it because 'you' as such doesn't exist. After all, you are 'the Id'. Just ask Adorno".

Does your denial make sense in the context described? Is it tolerant? Is it an expression of positive empathy?

One last example. A woman is raped by a man with excessive Thanatos as a result of... (Type something).

"Help!"

"But darling, you don't need help, you're already being helped. But you can deny it, mind you. But I don't have to take your denial into account, because in truth it is the same as my denial. And who needs to be helped? After all, you are just 'the Id'".

Does your denial make sense in the context described? Is it tolerant or positively empathetic?

Your denial does not discriminate against the person asking for help: You are not distinguishing between the truthfulness of their claims and your own. You are simply demonstrating your total indifference to the truth of what the person in need of help is telling you, to the factuality of what is happening, and to the feelings and needs of the person being raped. Demonstrating indifference in word and deed is a choice made out of a particular need. Which is? You know this all too well by now, but please read carefully the content of paragraphs 2, 3, 6 and 13.

Contradictions are only fruitful if they are eliminated. To tolerate fundamental contradictions is to tolerate an intellectual inertia that makes any progress in

science and thought impossible, and any consistent action based on reason impossible. *The most beautiful paradox, then, is this: Without the sadism inherent in all criticism and critique, all rationality is impossible.*

Therefore, genetic modification that would remove all sadism from the human genome would be a disaster. Such a modified humanity could not possibly survive, except under a dictatorship of sadistic, unmodified manipulators (*Brave New World*).

My paradox formulated above does not mean that it is impossible to acquire scientific knowledge out of pure interest (= to satisfy one's own Eros). In this case, one works with what is available without criticising it: One adopts existing knowledge in order to adapt one's own knowledge to it or to replace it with it (= one subscribes to a certain conformism). But the point is that one cannot develop a new theory without considering other theories to be false or incomplete and publicly condemning them as such, and one cannot use one's scientific knowledge as an argument in a debate without opposing the views of others, either out of narrow-mindedness or by saying "I am more right than you" or "My views on this matter are truer (= more valuable) than yours". Both statements deliberately lower the status of the person whose theories are being criticised (= sadism). The history of science is littered with examples of scientists continuing to dispute the correctness of each other's views. In the context of this essay, I refer to the conflict between Fromm and Marcuse within the Frankfurt School over whether or not the Freudian Thanatos is part of human nature.

Those whom I have caught formulating contradictions and antinomies will no doubt claim that I am constantly wielding an even more fundamental antinomy than they do, namely that of the universal need both to distinguish and to reconcile opposites.

This is a correct observation.

Without the fundamental antinomy to which I refer, it is impossible to explain the existence of the antinomies inherent in each of the conciliatory solutions for which humanity seems to have an insatiable thirst, a thirst which it seeks to quench with the wisdom of shamans, seers, thinkers, messiahs and prophets, and through myths, rites, symbols, mysticism, religions and philosophies, including those of moral relativism and/or scepticism.

So it is an either/or choice: Either man clings to and remains stuck in the antinomies inherent in the provisional solutions of the past and present, or he accepts the fundamental antinomy of human nature. The latter choice is the most

reasonable, for a being that invariably invents and elaborates antinomic solutions at all times and in all places can only do so because it is driven to such solutions by inherent antinomic needs and feelings. Apple tree - apple.

Instead of constantly striving for the universal reconciliation of contradictions and opposites, while always being forced to express this goal in a language that emphasises differences (= antinomy), it would be better to first answer the following question: Assuming that the author of this book is wrong, where does humanity's stubborn adherence to a particular conformism (based on myths or religions, or on principled conservatism, or on evolutionary or revolutionary ideology) come from, together with its equally stubborn need to formulate differences and antagonisms between its own conformist group and other conformist groups, and between the orthodox members of its own conformist group and the dissidents who oppose this official line, for example the antagonisms between Stalin and Trotsky, and between Marcuse and Fromm? This need for conformity and the creation of contradictions is not only the result of capitalism and Christianity. Trotsky and Stalin were involved in a power struggle within the socialist system of production in the USSR, which, according to Marxist-Leninist doctrine, should have been pacifist and united precisely because it was atheist and communist. Stalin eventually had Trotsky liquidated by a Comintern assassin, and Trotsky's supporters disappeared into extermination camps. Speaking of sadism! Khrushchev was the initiator of the destalinisation of the USSR (= Khrushchev's Thaw). In the same Stalinist socialist production system, he oedipally denounced his spiritual father, who had included him in the party leadership. In "The Secret Speech" at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party in 1956, he portrayed his ex-boss as a perfect demon.

Communist China openly broke with the USSR seven years ago (1960), while both Mao and Khrushchev were in power in those socialist, atheist and materialist systems of production. Is this not yet another parricide in defiance of their common socialism, atheism and materialism? Or is it this time a repetition of the myth of Cain and Abel? My dialectical imagination now sees a Chinese shepherd, Abel/Mao, being attacked by his brother, the Soviet farmer Cain/Khrushchev, as they both vie for the blessing of the Supreme Patriarch, God the Father Karl Marx, offering him their own version of the only true model of proletarian revolution and classless society.

It just goes to show what man is capable of when he "gives all power to the imagination", what a wealth of mythical archetypes he can then discover in the

beliefs and practices of modern man, whether he lives in a "patricentric-acquisitive" capitalist society or in a communist system, in which it is assumed that all contradictions and opposites have been reconciled and that the cause of every form of oppression, private ownership of the means of production, has been eliminated. In reality, the practice of every communist party turns out to be at least as "patricentric-acquisitive" as that of the capitalist bourgeoisie, and Oedipal parricides turn out to be commonplace in communist parties.

I hope that after all this, the reader will finally realise that ideas about the goodness of man in his natural state (Rousseau, Nietzsche, Derrida) and Freudian myths about the murder of the primeval fathers and about the Id, the ego and the super-ego (Frankfurt School and structuralists) are not enough to explain human behaviour. These representations are a smokescreen. They don't solve the problem, but they obscure everyone's understanding of the antinomic nature of man, unless one is willing to notice this antinomic human nature in the feeling, thinking and acting of all mythical figures.

"Why, then, do the expounders of the myths by which the propertied classes seek to maintain their power cling so fanatically to the myth of the natural goodness of man?"

If they did not believe in this myth and did not at the same time assume that this natural goodness is already largely realised in themselves ("*the mote in your eye is the best magnifying glass*"), on what grounds could they still claim that they, and only they, have the right and the duty to sadistically criticise and eliminate other people? Surely one can only attribute this right and duty to oneself if one has the polarising illusion that one is perfectly good oneself, possibly as a result of a biological mutation, and that one is therefore the only person pursuing a perfectly good cause, "the greater good", the universal reconciliation of all contradictions and opposites, the earthly paradise of species-beings who are perfectly equal and good by mere nurture. It must feel particularly good to see yourself as perfectly good and intelligent, and to be convinced that you have every right and duty to constantly portray your opponents as incurably stupid or corrupt. But you would be depriving yourself of this fantastic feeling, of this boundless sadistic pleasure, if you were to demythologise the myth on which all your pretensions are based: the myth of your self-image.

The need to be different and to assert your own truth over that of others has nothing to do, and never has had anything to do, with culture, ethnicity, private

property, class, nationality, colour, atheism, Christianity, Confucianism, Islam, gender and sexual orientation.

"With what, then?"

With man's inherent need to distinguish and differentiate himself, and to translate and communicate all these differences to others, especially in the form of implicit or explicit value judgements about his own personal and social identity and that of others. Why else have all kinds of myths and rituals around the world led to the creation and maintenance of societies that were radically different in their practices and beliefs, long before capitalism emerged as a system and long before Judaism and Christianity?

Long before Christianity and capitalism arrived in Mexico, the Maya sacrificed children to their gods. The Aztecs did the same to their Indian rivals. Slaughter is actually a more appropriate term for the ritual activity of the Aztecs. What needs drove these social identities? Why did the Indian polytheists of Tlaxcala decide to join forces with the white, monotheistic Spaniard Cortés to attack Tenochtitlan rather than continue to serve as fodder for Aztec sadism? Daily human sacrifice at the religious centre of Tenochtitlan (the *Teocalli*) was a religious duty imposed on the Aztecs by their creation myth. This duty was practised in a very conformist way in their metropolis. The Tlaxcaltecs fought for their existence against their rivals, who ideologically motivated their own struggle for life with their creation myth. The ritual human sacrifice was a repetition of the self-sacrifice of the god Huitzilopochtli, who voluntarily jumped into the fire to rise as the life-giving sun (= *the free will of the original gods*). The repetition of this divine example through human sacrifice was necessary to ensure the daily resurrection of the Sun God and thus the survival of his worshippers, the Aztecs. What could be more beneficial to these people than the existence of an enemy? They killed two birds with one stone: They sadistically sacrificed their opponents to the gods, while at the same time expanding their power and maintaining their totalitarian conformism, their internal reconciliation of contradictions.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> In light of the Frankfurt School's focus on the libido, the death instinct (or instinct of destruction), and the reconciliation of contradictions and opposites, it seems reasonable to conclude that they believe all forms of egoism and altruism, as well as the Freudian Eros and Thanatos, can only be reconciled when all involved derive pleasure from their sexual activities. It can be reasonably assumed that they also believe that the military and administrative leader of the Aztecs, the emperor, the *Huey Tlatoani* Ahuizotl, and his assistants, the dignitaries, brought about the same reconciliation among all the Aztec celebrants in 1487 [VII Acatl according to the Aztec calendar] when, during the four-day inauguration of the Temple of Huitzilopochtli and Tlaloc [God of Rain and Vegetation], they cut the beating hearts from the breasts of thousands of captives on the upper platform of the brand new, snow-white and fully decorated temple

Battles and wars between the Greek *poleis* were common in ancient times, as well as between the Greeks and the Persians after the Athenian military support of the Ionian cities after their revolt against Darius I (500 BC) and after the Persian attack on Athens (Marathon, 490 BC). Later, in 480 BC, the Spartans fell at Thermopylae.

Remember where the term *barbaroi* comes from and what the ancient Greeks (Hellenes) meant by it, whether they were advocates of private property or not? After all, the Spartan *homoioi* (= "the equals") participated enthusiastically in this cultural distinction. All Hellenes empirically perceived differences, translated them into distinctive terms, and thus formulated a thoroughgoing distinction between Hellenes and non-Hellenes.

The Romans, Japanese and Chinese also made this distinction between their own level of civilisation and that of their neighbours. The latter were considered inferior and were therefore referred to verbally as "inferior". The word "Berber" is derived from the Latin word *barbarus*. Hence the Western European term Barbary for Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya from the 16th to the 19th century. But the Berbers also regarded other peoples as barbarians. The name Ghana is probably derived from the Berber word *agnaw* (meaning mad, misunderstood, foreigner).<sup>7</sup> This is the universal scenario. It is observable and verifiable by anyone who looks around carefully and listens attentively to conversations or speeches, and by anyone who has studied history without letting their perception be clouded by an a priori need for the absolute equality of all cultures and the perfect reconciliation of contradictions and opposites.

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pyramid. It is evident that this belief was not shared by the subjugated city-states, which were forced to engage in conflict with the Aztecs, which has been characterised as 'flower wars'. It is evident that these conflicts were invariably concluded in the Aztecs' favour, thereby conferring upon them the prerogative to sacrifice their vanquished adversaries to the gods. With the exception of one leader, the rulers of the other city-states only arrived in Tenochtitlan after a clear and unequivocal threat was made to attend the aforementioned great feast. (Dr R. van Zantwijk, *Handel en wandel van de Azteken* (Life and Times of the Aztecs), Van Gorcum Assen, Amsterdam, 1977, pp. 185-189). This leading expert on Aztec society states: "The four [large] temples were dripping with blood, and Tezozomoc [an Aztec historian] writes that the 11 *calpulli* temples [*calpulli* = district] of the aforementioned 15 [...] were also covered with the blood of the sacrifices". Van Zantwijk notes that Tezozomoc dedicates a significant portion of his account, spanning over 40 pages, to this festival, which is indicative of the Aztecs' profound significance ascribed to this particular "feast." (Staf Van der Auwera, 1999.)

<sup>7</sup> The term "Ghana" is derived from the Soninke language, where it signifies "warlord". From this term, it is evident to what extent the kingdoms and empires within Ghana's territory were regarded as peaceful and inherently benevolent prior to the advent of Islam and the arrival of the Portuguese, who were Christian.



So I repeat my questions to Adorno and Horkheimer and to all the structuralists, Derrideans and other subjectivists and relativists. Where does this pervasive need for contradiction, for the perception and naming of contradictions, and for aggression against those who manifest themselves as dissenters with a different sense of value come from? Where does this need come from, in all times and in all civilisations and states and regions and economic systems, and among all skin colours, and among all adherents of religions and philosophies, and members of parties and sects, regardless of their gender and sexual orientation? Where does this need come from, if the existence of contradictions and opposites is not the result of the existence of private ownership of the means of production, of capitalism and of Christianity? Are these pervasive needs not a characteristic of human nature?

And if this need to distinguish and formulate differences, and to make sadistic value judgements and to use violence against opponents judged to be different and therefore evil or inferior or life-threatening, is arguably peculiar to human beings, to what extent is the claim true that these same human beings can be "perfected" into autonomous species-beings in which all opposites are reconciled? Does the pursuit of this ideal still make sense?

Surely you Frankfurt School philosophers also use your own jargon? Surely you make all sorts of derogatory and sadistic judgements about your opponents? <sup>8</sup>

Surely you Derrideans also constantly accuse dissenters (= sadism)? Indeed, you accuse the whole of Western civilisation of logocentrism, ethnocentrism and imperialism. In your eyes, of course, this accusation is entirely justified. But the Aztecs were also completely convinced that they were right when they fought the Tlaxcaltecs. And the Tlaxcaltecs thought they were right to fight the Aztecs. And the Spaniards also thought they were right when they monstrously massacred the Aztecs, whom they considered monstrous by their Christian standards. Every

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<sup>8</sup> Despite their official unanimous aversion to any dogmatism, Erich Fromm was excluded from their circle by the Frankfurt School as a revisionist (of Freud's view of man) because he did not employ the critical theory in the manner they deemed appropriate. Fromm attempted to construct a positive anthropology, a concept that was met with considerable opposition from his colleagues, with the exception of Marcuse. Additionally, Fromm rejected Freud's assertion that libido represents one of the most fundamental human instincts. Fromm was ultimately regarded as heretical by both Marcuse and the other members of the Frankfurt School due to his assertion that the fundamental human instinct is limited to Eros, thereby excluding the Freudian concept of Thanatos, which they deemed essential for violent revolution. (Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination. A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research 1923-1950*, Heinemann, London, 1976, pp. 99-100). Adorno was the first to openly challenge Fromm's ideas (Martin Jay, *O.C.*, pp. 103-104). Additionally, Adorno censored passages from Walter Benjamin's work (Martin Jay, *O.C.*, pp. 205-206). And, of course, he did all this for the sole purpose of achieving the greater good. (Staf Van der Auwera, 1999).

person thinks he is always right when he is arguing with his opponent(s), regardless of the tone of voice and regardless of the subject of the discussion. It does not matter whether the discussion takes place in a meeting of a primitive tribe in the Amazon rainforest, in the back rooms of Brussels, or in the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party. After all, the opponent always deserves to be put in his place, right? Maybe only out of spite or revenge on your part, but they deserve it anyway, right?

## **2.2. Protagoras' Sophism**

### **2.2.1. "Man Is the Measure of All Things"/"Everything Is Relative"/"Everything Is Interpretation"**

The Sophist Protagoras, whose epistemology was grounded in relativism, was opposed by Socrates because the latter perceived the detrimental consequences of Protagoras' relativism and recognized that it would have a destabilizing impact on society. Protagoras espoused the adage that "man is the measure of all things," which suggests that human perception and understanding are the primary determinants of reality. All knowledge is relative because the reality perceived by the observer is completely subjective and influenced by the observer's own perspective. He then fills it with his own interpretation of what is true and false, and what is morally right and wrong. In this way, everything is relative. Consequently, the nature of reality is contingent upon the individual interpreting it, with the interpretation itself being shaped by the temporal and spatial context within which that individual resides. Consequently, truth and goodness are only valid within the cultural context of the individual interpreting them and within the social structure in which they find themselves. The consciousness of every subject (i.e. of every thinking and feeling entity) is shaped by the culture or structure in which they find themselves. The concept of individual autonomy is absent, rendering individuals incapable of being held responsible for their actions, and absolving them of any form of culpability. Consequently, individuals are free to act as they please, without any form of restraint. The ultimate consequence of this line of reasoning is the moral deserter Alcibiades and the collective murder of the party pooper Socrates.

### **2.2.2. The Agnostic Version**

"I am uncertain as to whether truth exists, and thus I provisionally accept the interpretation that is most likely to be true, while I await a more compelling one." This attitude is acceptable in mathematics and science, but it is not in the context of a village in Vietnam that has recently been bombed by the Americans and in

which the remains of a woman who was just a few minutes ago your wife are being collected. In such a case, it is reasonable to assume that the account of events provided by a right-wing disaster tourist who calls himself a journalist and who has it recorded in his newspaper that your wife's existence is nothing more than your biased interpretation of events, and that your nationalist anger at her untimely death is nothing more than sentimental rhetoric, will not be satisfactory.

Furthermore, the interpretation provided by his left-wing Western European colleague, who informs his audience that she is number 23502 in the statistics he uses to denounce US capitalist and imperialist inhumanity, will also be unsatisfactory. His assertion that she is an inevitable and necessary consequence of the class struggle, which will inevitably culminate in the victory of the proletariat and the liberation of all humanity through the reconciliation of all contradictions and opposites in the classless society, is devoid of both comfort and truth.

Life is life and a corpse is a corpse. The living make distinctions; the dead are equal.

Consider the case of a person who witnesses the death of a loved one from a heart attack in their presence. What is provisional about the truth of this individual's perception that his loved one died? It is illogical to claim that what a person has seen and experienced is merely a chance interpretation of an event that either never happened or happened in a completely different way. Such a response is both obscene and nonsensical, as it inflicts a painful and unwarranted insult upon the grieving individual. It is implausible to suggest that the deceased can somehow be resurrected, or that the mourner's observations of a lack of pulse, respiration, body cooling, and rigor mortis were somehow misinterpreted.

The traditional understanding of truth is that it is the correspondence between empirical facts and data and communication about them. In order to express this correspondence in an intelligible way, human beings use signifiers that immediately evoke in the mind the stereotypical or specific features of certain mental images that arise from the perception of persons, objects and situations in reality outside of language. These signifiers can be word-images/signifiers (e.g. "Idealism") that likewise evoke certain stereotypical features (of a way of thinking or a certain style of art, etc.) observed in reality outside of and/or within language. The Frankfurt School and Derrida reject this conception of how truth comes about as fact-fetishism or logocentrism, respectively. This rejection stems from their real need to manipulate the facts through their dialectics and deconstruction, respectively, with the aim of proving themselves objectively right. This aim is to

demonstrate that their assertions align with the objective reality, whether external or internal to the linguistic domain. In light of the aforementioned, it can be posited that their objective can be described as logocentric.

At the existential level, truth is always a representation of reality, however imperfect that representation may be, and however imperfect one's own truth may be. To claim that one is speaking a provisional truth while making a statement about the life and death of people who exist or have existed is to deny their existence and death. This is an act of cruelty and inhumanity. "The assertion that this woman, my beloved, whose remains I am now collecting, is dead, is a hypothesis that is only provisionally true."

Furthermore, if one considers one's assertion about the past existence of one's beloved to be a hypothesis that is only provisionally true and communicates this assertion to others in such a manner, there is as much belief in the truth of the assertion in oneself as if one had asserted that it was an indisputable fact that the beloved really lived. Indeed, one holds one's assertion to be absolutely true. "My assertion that (...) *is* a hypothesis (...)" . The grammatical form of this statement indicates that it is not a hypothesis, but rather a communication that the statement is objectively true. Moreover, the existence of this statement is an objectively observable fact.

In point of fact, you state that your assertion *is* a hypothesis. The main clause is affirmative and uses the independent verb "to be" in the indicative and simple present tense. However, the affirmation of what "my assertion" *is* (namely a hypothesis) is not qualified by accompanying adverbs expressing a conditionality. If an individual is permitted to assert that a given phenomenon (whether external or internal to language) *is* of a specific kind, or *is* this-or-that, or *is* the case (i.e., that they are conveying the truth), then such an individual is not entitled to deny the same privilege to all other individuals who express themselves in a similar way about things (in reality, whether external or internal to language) that are of a certain kind, or are this-or-that, or are the case. The same can be said of anyone who espouses the view that "everything *is* relative" or "everything *is* relative to something else".

Moreover, these latter statements are self-contradictory. They assert that a given statement is always and everywhere the case (as evidenced by their statement "*every* statement about something *is* relative"). Additionally, they maintain that their own statements, such as "Everything *is*..." and "*Everything is*...", possess universal validity. This implies that such statements are objectively true,

irrespective of the individual making them or the context in which they are uttered. Consequently, they assert that their statements are not relative, but objective determinations of an absolute truth. However, the veracity of all statements cannot depend solely on the context in which they are made (i.e. truth cannot depend solely on context) and at the same time be objectively true because they are true regardless of context. However, this is precisely what all the aforementioned statements claim. Consequently, they are all contradictory.

### **2.2.3. Everything Is Relative**

The view that man is the measure of all things was reintroduced during the Renaissance and has since degenerated, as it did in Athens in the last days of its heyday, into a radical relativism/subjectivism of all knowledge and morality.

Why is this argument invalid, and why can it be anything but invalid?

If man is the standard by which all things are measured, and if measuring by this standard can only entail relativising all statements about all things, then it follows that it is impossible to conceive of absolute and unconditional truth, certainty or goodness, since all such qualities are inherently relative and thus constantly relativised. It can thus be concluded that the entirety of humanity is constrained to continually relativise its own relativising statements, given that humanity and its statements are intrinsic to the concept of "all things". In this instance, however, the principle of relativity itself is relative, contingent upon a particular context and perspective. This is therefore a self-contradictory position. The proposition is presented as an absolute and universally valid one, namely "everything is relative" or "man is the measure of all things". However, according to the proposition's own position, it is only valid for the individual formulating the proposition and for other individuals living in the same context and perspective as the individual in question. Moreover, the claim that the principle of relativity is itself relative, thereby excluding all exceptions and omitting any reference to a context and perspective that makes the assertion relative, presents the assertion as an absolute and unconditional truth. This latter observation is both self-evident and well-articulated in the existing literature.

N.B. As a relativist, it is not possible to say that one *must* relativise oneself or one's own truth. This is because it implies two things: firstly, that everyone has the

choice whether or not to do so, which implies the existence of free will; and secondly, that one is imposing a categorical imperative, which by its very nature makes any relativisation of what is imposed (namely, relativising one's own person or one's truth) impossible.

#### **2.2.4. Everything Is Relative to Something Else**

The relativist's objection to the above argument is equally well-documented and clear. He formulates this objection as follows: "If the phrase 'everything is relative' is taken in isolation, your argument is correct. However, when the phrase 'everything is relative' is used, one means that what is called 'relative' is relative to some other entity with which one compares and judges that entity. In this sense, a judgement is never relative without taking something else into account, but always relative to something else, a particular time or place or community or individual (a particular context)." This is subjectivism.

The relativist repeatedly uses the words "always" and the indicative and simple present tense of the independent verbs in his main sentences, while no adverbs expressing conditionality are used in them. These sentences are not relativistic or subjectivistic. They are, in fact, the opposite.

The relativist states, "There is nothing absolutely good or beautiful." He continues, "My own statements about beauty and goodness come from a particular context, namely my own, and therefore they will not convince everyone."

In fact, they do not convince everyone because they remain problematic even after this explanation. An Inca who is perpetually engaged in conflict with his opponents, who assumes that the Inca people engage in human sacrifice to appease the Sun God, and who metes out the death penalty for adultery, demonstrates that he is driven by a series of enduring needs that cannot be relativised in view of their grave and imminent consequences: His need to distinguish himself from members of other tribes, his sadistic desire to dominate these others, his religiously inspired sadism, and at the same time his need for conformism within his own community. These are his need to reconcile internal contradictions and opposites. In the event that this internal conformism was destroyed by deviant behaviour, e.g. adultery, this non-conformist behaviour, which was a form of resistance to the conformist group, was sadistically defused by applying the death penalty to the adulterers. Now, it is necessary to compare these real needs of the Incas with the same real needs (and resulting behaviour) of any other culture. The simultaneous need for

distinction/sadism and conformism/reconciliation of internal contradictions within one's own group is universal and therefore cannot be relativised. This antinomic need is existential.

What can be compared is the extent to which sadistic behaviour has been and is prescribed and practised by different cultures. This degree varies from culture to culture, as does the degree of coercion with which different cultures enforce conformist attitudes and behaviour in order to reconcile internal contradictions. Those who espouse cultural relativism and claim to care about the suffering of all humanity must acknowledge the existence of these differences. Failure to do so renders them hypocritical and untrustworthy.

The relativist's assertion that everything is relative to something else demonstrates that this form of relativity is of greater importance and significance to him than any sensually perceptible fact, including the undeniable suffering of certain victims. If this were not the case, he would not have formulated his final conclusion as an absolute and universally valid statement, namely, "Everything *is* relative to something else". The absolute and universal final conclusion of the relativist is always more important to him than the facts, actions, texts, situations and ideas he has compared and judged. This is because the relativist believes that man is the measure of all things. Alternatively, the inhuman who turns away from all real misery by trivialising it into suffering that is only relative to the suffering of others, dialectically or in a Derridean way, imagines that he/she is the measure of all things.

Furthermore, there is the following regarding the proposition that "everything is relative to something else". How can the speaker/writer know that "everything" is relative without assuming a priori that "everything" actually exists? It is unclear how the speaker can know that "everything" exists unless he is God, which is unlikely given that he is limited in time and space and apparently also in the knowledge traditionally attributed to God, namely a knowledge that creates everything as it is by thinking it.

It is difficult to comprehend how he can speak meaningfully of "something else" and of the relation between "something" and "something else" if he does not presuppose both the unquestionable existence of this "something" and of this "something else", and the unquestionable existence of the relation between this "something" and this "something else". Unquestionable existence, by definition, is never relative, but always absolute.



A correct statement is "All is": the definition of pantheistic deity. This is comparable to the biblical statement "I am that I am" (Exodus 3:14), which represents the self-revelation of the monotheistic God. Like the proclamation of the so-called truth of universal relativism, these statements about God or "by" God are made because the one who makes them feels the need to reconcile contradictions and opposites.

One might now posit that it is necessary to deconstruct the hierarchical dichotomy of the primacy of "all" (or "everything") over "nothing". In the first stage of deconstruction, the order of precedence of the opposites in the hierarchy must then be reversed, so that "nothing" takes precedence over "everything". Is this inversion necessary and meaningful?

In order to conclude that the signifiers resulting from this deconstruction evoke only indeterminate (undecidable in terms of truth and moral content) signifieds (Derrida's final goal), it is unnecessary to reverse the hierarchy of these signifiers and then, by asking questions without precedent, to make the new hierarchy disappear by replacing both signifiers with a new one that evokes an undecidable signified (which is the introduction of undecidable newspeak). The signifieds evoked by both "everything" and "nothing" are perfectly undecidable, and thus, both signifieds are perfectly equivalent in meaning and possibly even synonymous. Indeed, all qualifiers can be arbitrarily and meaningfully assigned to "everything," while no qualifier can be meaningfully assigned to "nothing." However, it is the non-random assignment of a qualifier to something or someone that allows us to determine their characteristics in a particular respect. For example, something can be classified as either true or false, or partially true. Similarly, a person can be described as either truthful, deceitful, or partially truthful. Additionally, something or someone can be perceived as either beautiful or ugly, or partially so. The same applies to moral attributes, where something or someone can be regarded as either good or bad, or partially so.

The signifieds evoked by "everything" and "nothing" are undecidable, and thus already equivalent prior to the deconstruction of their hierarchical relation.

However, should one adhere to Derrida's philosophy, one may deconstruct the traditional hierarchy of "everything" over "nothing," assigning a higher value to "nothing" than to "everything." This is why Derrida's epigones undoubtedly speak of 'nothing' when they speak of 'everything'.

Conclusions of the foregoing:

It can be argued that either Derridean relativists are unaware of the implications of

their statements or they are deliberately misleading their interlocutors. In either case, they are engaging in a form of rhetorical abuse.

It is also recommended that arguments with Derridean relativists be avoided, as they tend to focus on the contextual interpretation of words and sentences. This approach is in line with the teachings of their prophet, who advocates for a contextualised understanding of language. The context in question is determined by the personal and collective presuppositions and needs of the leftist Derridean relativists regarding the equality or equivalence of all people. These presuppositions and needs are based on the personal preferences of the relativists, combined with the preferences inherent in their social identity. This social identity is a social identity whose existence they collectively deny, while this very denial is an essential aspect of their social identity.

In this context, it should also be recalled that, according to Derrida, all signifiers evoke only indeterminate signifieds. This includes the signifier "context." Given the indeterminacy of the signified evoked by "context," this signified can be interpreted arbitrarily, at will, by Derrida and his followers. Consequently, mass murder can be interpreted as charity or solidarity in a context which is considered by them to be humorous, satirical, figurative or metaphorical, if the text is written by a left-wing politician or someone who meets with the approval of the Left. However, it should be noted that when a preference for someone or something is expressed, it is always assumed that this person or thing has a higher value than other people or other things, which implies a hierarchical dichotomy. The verb "prefer" and the noun "preference" mean "to elect" and "election" respectively. It can be argued that everyone always chooses someone or something out of some need.

Due to the arbitrary nature of any relativist interpretation, it is possible for any relativist to describe robbery-murder as "undesirable proletarian shopping" and non-violent theft as "proletarian shopping", without providing further context. It can be objected that if robbery is the only way to survive, one has the right and the duty to steal. However, this is only the case in a situation of general hunger and general unemployment. Furthermore, it is unclear who would be able to determine whether this is the case and, if so, on what grounds (in what context), particularly given that grounds have already been declared undecidable according to Derridean deconstruction. However, if we accept that these reasons genuinely exist and that there is no alternative means of survival, we must consider the extent and frequency of theft. Are acts of murder, violence and assault permissible in such

circumstances?

What is the appropriate interpretation of the verb "kill" (imperative, singular or plural) when it is encountered in a text? In the context of the Left, the verb is employed as a humorous or satirical metaphor for "fondle" when the text is written by them or by a member of one of their favoured conformist groups. An alternative position is that the violence of the perpetrator is "understandable" and "justified" on the basis of the (subjective) interpretation of the context in which the violence occurred. This context may include the victimisation of the perpetrator by a capitalist totalitarian society (Marx, Frankfurter Schule), discrimination by power structures (Structuralism), or the ethnocentrism of Western culture (Derrida). However, when the text is written by an alleged right-wing opponent, the verb in the imperative should be interpreted literally as a call to murder or an order to kill. This is the context employed by those on the Left: a context that serves to justify their intolerance of those on the Right (see Marcuse).

Do you doubt my assertion? Are you truly convinced that only Marcuse is driven by this need for unlimited intolerance towards the Right? Then consider once more the words of Adorno, as set forth in *Minima Moralia*, part two, § 82: "The non-barbaric of philosophy is based on the tacit awareness of that element of irresponsibility, or blessedness, which arises from the volatility of thought, which constantly escapes what it judges."<sup>9</sup>

In other words, anyone who has a fleeting thought at the moment can immediately escape that same thought by playfully and innocently ascending to the sun of presence, interpreting that thought (which may be a true judgement) as a lie, and ten seconds later – again ascending to the sun of presence – as the truth, and this to infinity.

It seems implausible that philosophers who espouse revolutionary ideals and claim to stand up for the oppressed would devise systems (thoughts) that would allow any oppressor to discredit reports of his oppression as false or mere interpretation, despite the millions of victims he causes. This is particularly so given that such a system would effectively enable the oppressor to discredit the very victims of his oppression. Nevertheless, Adorno and Derrida present evidence that such systems can indeed be devised. Adorno considers himself "blessed" due to the inherent volatility of philosophical thought, which, in his view, is constantly escaping the

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<sup>9</sup> T. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, Frankfurt am Main, 1951, Part Two, § 82, pp. 234-235: Das Unbarbarische an Philosophie beruht in dem stillschweigenden Bewußtsein jenes Elements von Unverantwortlichkeit, der Seligkeit, die von der Flüchtigkeit des Gedankens stammt, der stets dem entrinnt, was er urteilt. (Misspelling of "Unverantwortlichkeit" by Adorno and/or the publisher.)