

Martin Heidegger

STUDIES IN
CONTINENTAL
THOUGHT



Ponderings
XII–XV



Black
Notebooks
1939–1941

TRANSLATED BY

RICHARD ROJCEWICZ

Ponderings XII–XV

Studies in Continental Thought

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Translator's Introduction

This is a translation of volume 96 of Martin Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe* ("Complete Works"). The German original appeared posthumously in 2014.

The volume is the third in the series publishing Heidegger's "Black Notebooks." These are small (ca. 5 × 7 in.) notebooks with black covers to which the thinker confided sundry ideas and observations over the course of more than forty years, from the early 1930s to the early 1970s. The notebooks are being published in chronological order, and the four herein correspond to the years 1939–1941. In all, thirty-three of the thirty-four black notebooks are extant and will fill up nine volumes of the *Gesamtausgabe*.

Heidegger gave a title to each of the notebooks and referred to them collectively as the "black notebooks." The first fifteen are all "Ponderings." Their publication began in volume 94 with "Ponderings II" ("Ponderings I" is the lost notebook). Volume 95 included the second five "Ponderings," VII–XI. The present volume with its four notebooks concludes the publication of the extant "Ponderings."

As can be imagined regarding any notes to self, these journal entries often lack polished diction and at times are even cryptic. Nevertheless, the style and vocabulary are mostly formal, not to say stilted, and are seldom colloquial. This translation is meant to convey to an English-speaking audience the same effect the original would have on a German one, the degree of formality varying *pari passu* with Heidegger's own. A prominent peculiarity of the style I was unable to render in full, however, is the extensive use of dashes. Heidegger often employs dashes not merely for parenthetical remarks but for any change in the direction of thought. Sometimes dashes separate subjects and predicates, and some dashes even occur at the end of paragraphs. Due to differences in English and German syntax, I could not include all the dashes without making for needless confusion and could not place them all at the exact points that would correspond to the original sentence. This admission is of course not meant to imply I did capture the varied styles of the notebooks in all other respects.

The pagination of the notebooks themselves is reproduced here in the outer margins. All of Heidegger's cross-references are to these marginal numbers. The running heads indicate the pagination of the *Gesamtausgabe* edition. I have inserted myself into the text only to alert the reader to the original German where I thought it might be helpful

(for example, as indicating a play on words I could not carry over into English) and to translate any Latin or Greek expressions Heidegger leaves untranslated. I have used brackets ([]) for these interpolations and have reserved braces ({}) for insertions by the editor. All the footnotes in the book stem either from me, and these few are marked as such, or from the editor and are then placed within braces.

I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for a critique of an earlier version of this translation.

Richard Rojcewicz

Ponderings XII–XV

PONDERINGS XII

Any thinker who thinks *toward* a decision is moved, and consumed, by care over a plight which cannot at all be sensed in the historiologically reckoned lifetime of that thinker. The level of genuine understanding (genuine in the sense of contributing to the preparation of a decision) of the thoughts of such thinkers is measured according to the capacity for the necessary thinking out in advance to the strange and excessive demands radiating from what is unsaid in the words of those thinkers. The more essential the decision which is to be disclosively thought, all the more grows the distance between the thinker and a historiological explication by way of the tradition, and all the greater becomes the danger that the thinker will, at best, count as an exception. Yet this is the most insidious form in which something decisive is suppressed and becomes ordinary or, in other terms, becomes something already decided. Such suppression of what is decisive does in no way stem from human indolence; instead, it brings the despotism of beings qua beings to its appropriate effectivity.

Destruction is the precursor of a concealed beginning, but devastation is the aftereffect of an already decided end. Does the age already stand before the decision between destruction and devastation? Yet we know the other beginning—know it *in questioning*—(cf. pp. 76–79¹).

a

1. [All cross-references cite the pagination of the notebooks themselves, indicated here in the outer margins.—Trans.]

- b As long as the human being enacts his essence in the sense of the rational animal, as long as he keeps thinking “metaphysically” in the form of the distinction between the sensible and the supersensible, then in such thought he persists in his flight from the question of the truth of beyng.² This flight does not stem from human impulses; instead, the human being flees—unaware of his “flightiness”—because beyng itself disappropriates him from the truth of being—but why is this? Who might know the reason? Perhaps—it is that the human being still scarcely surmises even the least of the historical domain of his essential occurrence, the domain wherein the self-refusal “of” beyng is *the* event in whose core intersect all the decisions of the things to be differentiated (God and human being, earth and world). Perhaps—it is that the human being no longer wants a *beginning* but, instead, merely takes refuge in what follows from one.

2. [Archaic form of “being” to render *Seyn*, archaic form of *Sein*.—Trans.]

2³

1

“Come to meditate”: these words must be uttered at the right moment—and not as a summons or a plan—but rather as an already carried out leap in advance that is now to be recovered. Yet the recovery has a peculiar relation to everything essential in that it projects the recovered even further in advance, i.e., places it back into history as unsurpassable beginning. The ways and the holding sway of being are strange—to want to approach them means primarily to renounce historiology and its habitual mode of representation.

Historiology seems to be overcome most radically when one abandons it, flees into the immediate present, and pursues what is most proximate and most pressing. In truth, however, that is merely a sham overcoming; the uncertainty with regard to historiology and the danger of tottering about in historicism do in fact increase thereby, because the present is always thoroughly historical and the pursuit of the present cannot at all resist historiological representation—except that now historiology is not as such | carried out and must remain external to a critical appraisal. Historicism then becomes indiscriminate, and all the distinctions between ages disappear, if these distinctions offer to the present only something of which the present believes itself to be in need. 2

How *far* back historicism reaches is not essential; it in fact uniformly beats all things from the past down to the *one* level of their current present moment; Greco-Roman columns and porticoes may be erected and operettas from 1900 may be staged like American revues—yet put forth in each case is the same emptiness of a mere facade which becomes a fleeting “lived experience.” To attribute such things merely to the decay of culture would again mean to be arrested in superficiality and to overlook the machinational signs. The indiscriminateness of historicism stems from a self-certain process by which the superficial interpretation of the age is slowly breached. At first, the “natural” right to “life” of the peoples asserts itself, the right to the Specific⁴ unfolding of their motive powers.

Yet all of this is only the prelude to that power process by which the “natural” strength of the peoples’ *powers* is brought into play. Since, however, power is always an overpowering and self-surpassing | will to overpower, the “naturalness” of the strength of the powers ever and again assumes a different form. What was still quite natural for a lower level of power (so natural that this level seemingly had to 3

3. [*Sic*; no entry 1.—Trans.]

4. [Regarding capitalized adjectives, see the editor’s afterword, p. 226.—Trans.]

incorporate the definitive limit into the attained sphere of power itself) is completely unnatural on the inevitable higher level of power and is an offense and a neglect in relation to the “life”-interests of the being with power. In correspondence, the respective determination of *order* and disorder also changes. “Order” is that machinational institution of national borders, ethnic memberships, economic relations, and cultural pursuits which at any time secures the unrestricted exercise of the increase in power to be planned by a “power” according to its essence. Every power must look to bring about at once a situation of *disorder* for the justification of its imposition of order. The more unobtrusively and comprehensively this happens, all the more powerful is the power.

The establishment of new orders within the age of machination is always a question of power—not merely in the sense of the “implementation” of something planned—but rather with respect to the essence and the type of the planning itself. The dimensions of the increase in power | determine the type of the required “order.” And only this order prescribes the corresponding basic notion of what has to count as “natural.” Thus within the machination of beings, precisely the “natural” is subject to the arbitrariness of power and is the veiling of that arbitrariness. The veiling itself and the need for it are consequences of the unshaken metaphysics demanding an explanation for everything—whether the explanation lies in a creator God or in “nature.” The cost of making such explanations credible and current is paid most easily when technology and historiology incorporate the human being himself into machination and thus the possibility of essential decisions, even in its most provisional conceptuality, is stricken from the horizon of “life.” But where in various forms the execution of the power of machination is relegated completely to “politics,” there it seems as if everything is in essence “political” and this essence itself the first of all the being of humanity. In truth, however, this complete “politics” is merely an offshoot of the machinational essence of beings, an offshoot transplanted into a purely technological-historiological institutionalizing and only thereby capable of executing a power. Machination | retains genuine power all the more securely, the more exclusively the execution of political power considers itself the be-all and end-all.

The human being.—The succession of days and nights draws human “life” out into a “length” and lets that “life,” calculated in millennia,

appear again as “short.” How ineradicable and yet how extrinsic is this representation of humanity! Little enough has the human being ventured forth into the question of the structural space of his essence. He always encounters himself only in the aspects of that superficialities on which he lets himself be driven back and forth, all the while believing he himself is the driving force.

4

“German Idealism”—is a very inexact rubric under which we still do not grasp this metaphysics in its Germanness. That does not mean a folkloric restoration of this philosophy to a particular nationality—but, instead, the determination of that basic position from which the nationality, if it is supposed to be important, could be circumscribed in its individuality. German Idealism | attains its genuine metaphysical basic position only in Schelling and Hegel—the “German” aspect is the leaplike relation to the *beginning* of Western “metaphysics”—quite apart from the way Schelling and Hegel themselves historically experienced and historiologically interpreted these relations. Schelling’s philosophy of nature and Hegel’s philosophy of spirit (“aether”) carry out a reacquisition of the inceptual φύσις—νοῦς—λόγος [“nature—apprehension—discourse”]—everything, admittedly, at the same time on the path of Kantian-Fichteian and also Christian-mystical thought and belief.

The individual influences and presuppositions that are here effective can be reckoned up historiologically in various respects. Each of these historiological explanations can prove the others unilateral and insufficient and can act superior to them in one respect. Indeed now, when the consummation of Western metaphysics is being prepared, so many different influences may be reckoned up that nothing remains left over of the historiologically meant “originality,” and for every “thought” a precursor can be exhibited, even if this amounts merely to the self-sameness of the same word and even if the self-sameness is limited to the words being homonyms. | This operational field of historiological science is at times amusing but mostly boring and has the sole result of strengthening the opinion that, since everything can be explained historiologically, there is no longer any necessity to be “occupied” with these thinkers—unless for the sake of memorializing a bygone German “spirit.” Yet what is decisive, what is by essence withheld from *all* historiological intrusions, is the thoughtful leap into the whole of beings as unconditioned, i.e., the attempt, within metaphysics, to think unconditionally. Being itself as the first

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of all beings and as the most eminent being is not simply to be posed “objectively”; instead, thinking and intuition are to be transposed nonobjectively into being itself, allowing it to *be* as the most eminent being.

The Germanness of this “Idealism” (i.e., of this interpretation of being as representedness), a Germanness Fichte never attained, because he simply carried out in an unconditional way the transcendental thinking of Kant, consists in an originary experience of the inceptual essence of being as φύσις. In other words, the essence of Germanness is determined only thereby in its characteristic capacity for such experience—. Metaphysics is not Germanized in a “folkish”⁵
 8 [“*völkisch*”] way, but rather what is German attains | its essence for the first time and for historical moments precisely through this metaphysical exertion. The task here is not to justify, over and against the mechanicism of “Occidental” thinking, the irrationality of “organic” life—. German Idealism grasps both, in their correlation, out of a leap into the unconditionality of beings as a whole. This idealism renounces the “mathematical” and the rational so little that it precisely brings them to their highest development and mastery and, in thinking through the idea of the absolute system, first grants them their metaphysical rights. Yet even what was just said would remain merely one historiological interpretation of German Idealism among others if it did not arise on the basis of a historical confrontation in which metaphysics is already placed in question in the whole of its history.

Such questioning, however, has only one “goal”—to grant metaphysical thinking its still covert sovereignty regarding that which in this thinking must remain unmastered and which thereby alone could secure for it its essence as metaphysics, namely, the question of the truth of being and of the grounding of that truth. Schelling and
 9 Hegel will first *become* | essential German thinkers in the future, if the unconditionality of their basic metaphysical position is taken up as a *question* and carried over into futural thoughtful meditation. Historiological cognition of the manifold conditionality of these thinkers does not help here, as little as do, from the viewpoint of the “historiology of problems,” the derivations of their basic positions. These

5. [Heidegger employs in these notebooks primarily three adjectives derived from the noun *das Volk*, “people”: *volkhaft*, *volklich*, and *völkisch*. I have rendered them respectively as “populist,” “communal,” and “folkish” and have placed the German term in brackets at each occurrence. The term *völkisch* has racial overtones. It is up to the reader to determine Heidegger’s attitude toward the overtones of each term.—Trans.]

derivations on the part of the “historiologists of facts” may be refuted with the same right as the “construction” with which the “historiologist of problems” can brand those “factual” explanations of the “factual” provenance of the “thoughts” as the epitome of thoughtlessness. (—A Schelling-lexicon will soon follow the Hegel-lexicon;⁶ and if a philosophy has once fallen into the pincers and compartments of lexicography, the strangulation of all thoughtful seriousness in being “occupied” with thinkers has reached its goal. This is so, even if masked to make it seem that through such cataloging—which any arbitrary person can arrange still “more exactly” to an arbitrary extent—the presupposition for “scientific” work is first brought about. Perhaps—indeed even certainly—for *scientific* work, but not for thoughtful knowledge.)

Yet how are we supposed to protect the essential thinkers from such a botching | of what is essential to them? No protection is possible here—and to try and provide one is already to be mistaken about the history of thinking. We indeed know only that, and why, ever and again at work is this botching whose average wretchedness must never claim that in relation to it the invaluable power of contempt would be misused in the least. For the Futural—i.e., essentially clarified—Germans, German Idealism “is” a still reserved, unkindled struggle of meditation; what German Idealism *is* in this way it must indeed first *become*. If it does not become this, then Schelling and Hegel belong, with the rest of the thinkers, in the equipment rooms of the historicist Valhalla and remain well-reckoned occasions for contemporary birthday or deathday “ceremonies.” Then some arbitrary person will make mention even of the thoughts of Schelling and Hegel, with the usual homage but also with timely reservations. The struggle of meditation is the free venture of an essential transformation by which all the now easy and usual supports and crutches are shattered. The plight of the ground requires the grounders of that plight and does not surround such a requirement | as a proposition and a proclamation but, instead, unfolds into the space-time of humanity. For the Germans, and thus for the history of the West, German Idealism is *a history that has not yet happened*, in whose domain historiological erudition has nothing to seek, because it could never find anything there.

6. {Hermann Glockner, *Hegel-Lexikon*, 4 vols. (Stuttgart: Frommann, 1935).}

5

The presupposition of *Christianity* is the postulation of the human being as a rational animal, thus is perseverance and refuge in “metaphysics.” *All hostility to Christianity*, even if only opposition against the Christian Churches for the sake of the “genuine,” i.e., social, i.e., socialistic “Christian” activity of providing for the human masses, still remains Christian—and thus also an evasion of the essential decisions. (Cf. p. 6.)

6

12 *Nietzsche*—in what single sense is Nietzsche a transition, i.e., a preparation for another beginning of the history of being? (Transition does *not* mean here the conveyance out of one state of beings into another state of the *same* beings; such a transition—of something that is not destroyed or disturbed in its being—is an object of historiological calculation and determination.) Nietzsche is a transition *only* in the sense that he metaphysically anticipates the consummation of modernity and thereby posits the end appropriate to the history of being, and *with* this end (which he himself was *not* able to recognize and know as such, because he still thinks metaphysically, as the ultimate and definitive proponent of metaphysics) the *possibility* of a preparation of the decision in favor of the other beginning is made ready.

In Nietzsche’s thinking, there is nothing referring to this beginning, its plight, or its essence. Yet his thinking does contain everything the consummation of modernity must carry out. The historiological look this age will have, and the tempo in which this consummation will proceed, can be surmised with respect to their essential configuration: unconditional empowerment of power for unrestricted violence. We may also suspect we are now entering the first phase of the onset of this consummation. What possesses the decisive character, however, is only the knowledge of this basic content of the final Western metaphysics, which in turn depends on knowledge of how the essence of metaphysics as a whole is to be understood in terms of the history of being.

13 To be “occupied” with Nietzsche on any other grounds, or on none at all, is historiological trifling with or pilfering of his thought for purposes of decorating some “ideological” mindset. Such an occupation could not be called a weakening of Nietzsche’s thought, since it is utterly incapable of thinking that thought. Because Nietzsche is the end of metaphysics, and seen in that way is thus metaphysical {?} himself,

his thought can be historically conceived only out of the beginning of the essential overcoming of metaphysics—i.e., *in such a way* that Nietzsche’s thought thereby first comes to stand in its basic historical position.

7

“*Intellectualism*” can be carried on and reviled only where the sheer violence of unleashed power becomes normative as the supposedly sole true form of “volition” (in distinction to “understanding”). This normativity appears with a twofold character: violence is affirmed and is installed in the moral figure of intrepid, “virile” deportment, and on the other hand violence is denied in its counterpart of timid flight into the evasion of resolute action. In each case what proliferates in the corresponding form is “intellectualism,” i.e., | the mistaking of the essence of knowledge and of meditation—and consequently the impotence to recognize in interrogative knowledge the decisive action (decisive in the sense of grounding all decisions) for the appraisal of which the standard of public effectiveness and validity is of no use, even if this standard has already insinuated itself as the only one. Under the protection of its secure popularity among all the human masses, who are stupid right from the start, this standard can guide every suppression of meditation by donning the mask of a “struggle” against “spinelessness.” The impotence of all force is manifest in this dependence on the human masses, whose increasing ignorance has to justify itself through a condemnation of “intellectualism.” It is no wonder that such a struggle *against* knowledge is compatible with the simultaneously highest claim to the sciences—for “sciences” never accomplish any knowledge, i.e., any disclosive questioning of what is essentially to be decided. Therefore it is a misunderstanding to believe that for the protection of the prestige of the “sciences,” the reviling (which cannot be called a struggle) of “intellectualism” must be | “called off.”

14

15

The more harmoniously both go together, the scoffing at knowledge and the exploiting of the sciences, all the more genuinely does the “spirit” of the machinational age come into power. And always on either side are only middling ones, who here seek to weaken and to equalize. But this age does not allow such a thing and has its own greatness in the unconditionality of its ambiguous and masklike essence. There is also no longer any need to disempower the reproach of deceitfulness and pretense, by way of a demonstration of the opposite—the reproach can be satisfied by showing that others at any time

also deceive and work “violently.” Here any moral indignation comes too late, because all “morals” share the same presuppositions as that machinational being—i.e., are grounded in metaphysics which, at its end, must explain all thinking, representing, and “consciousness” simply as the “expression” and “consequence” of “the” “all-encompassing life” and so must make them nonbinding. The appeal to “life,” however, is an avowed renunciation of the disclosive questioning of being, along with a simultaneous invoking of “beings”—and is an entanglement in the forgetting of being as an expression of power and force. The concomitant abandonment of the human being to animality | does not exclude, but rather includes, the fostering of the “spirit” and of “psychic” assets, because “spirit” and “psyche” present interpretations of the human being only in terms of animality and remain possible, indeed unavoidable, on the basis of an ignorance of being, of the truth of being, and of the relation of humans to being.

8

Nietzsche, thinking in advance, entered the desert of that devastation which sets in with the unconditionality of machination and brings forth its first “results” in the exclusively subjective character of the human animal as predatory animal. The desert is the sanding up and dispersal of all possibilities of essential decision. But the decidedness in favor of the complete impossibility of decisions lies in the doctrine of the eternal recurrence. Therefore this doctrine is what is most endful [*endhaftest*] in the ending of Western metaphysics—the final metaphysical notion that could be thought, and had to be thought, in the West—the thought of all Nietzsche’s thoughts; not a “religious” substitute formation—but instead thinkable only in the most decisive metaphysical thinking. This desert, entered in advance and only slowly opening itself, is the hidden ground of that which consumes Nietzsche’s thinking and which, despite all the | adverseness, has its necessity. What is repelling, paralyzing, and devastating of this desert must nevertheless not for a moment divert thoughtful confrontation from its path, so as to make the desolate aspects reasons for rejecting Nietzsche.

How different as regards *Hölderlin*, who can be declared the “Swabian Nietzsche” only through the most extreme and most malicious misinterpretation. To be sure, Hölderlin does not poetically enter serene climes—nor does he take refuge in the oases of the desert—but he does venture newly, differently, and solely into the “primeval

confusion”⁷—and the latter is what we must think in advance as the abyss of the fullness of essential decisions.

Yet before we and the future ones are able to become steadfast in the “primeval confusion,” must the most recent of all devastations be traversed first? May we take this as a sign that the history of the self-refusal of beyng is eventuating in abyssally separated leaps and is a procedure and a progression of which only the surface is consigned to the historiological-technological pursuit of “the” so-called life, such that this life might not surmise how far removed the historiology of beings is from the history of beyng? Accordingly, no path leads from the devastation of the desert | (the complete unneediness for decisions) 18 to the confusion of errancy—even if the traversal of the desert is necessary. The steps of the traversal must be measured by another leap which could not in turn merely renew Hölderlin’s foundational one.

9

Victory over the enemy does not at all prove that the victor is in the right. But this “truth” is a dead letter if right is interpreted as that which is not only confirmed and strengthened by victory but is thereby for the first time posited and instituted: right is then the power of the victor, the power to overpower. Such a right could never be “codified,” for its character as power entails that, on the basis of the victory, it at the same time announces further claims to right, ones which involve the “right” of precisely this victor to his own “life.” But inasmuch as “one’s own life” has long been identified as that of self-reliant humanity (in the form of individuals, in the configuration of peoples and nations), this “highest” right to life becomes at the same time a “holy” right. Not only terminologically, but also in the mode of thinking and | valuing, the basic metaphysical position thereby proliferates (and so 19 does its Christian deformation). All moral indignation of those who were defeated and deprived of rights comes too late, because such indignation no longer has a basis in the defeated ones themselves and is at the same time used by the victor for purposes of “moral” propaganda, although no longer taken seriously. Until then, there will one day come to light that unilateralness according to which everything is posited merely on power and impotence. At the present historical moment, which is ever again prepared in preliminary stages, power

7. {Friedrich Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 4, *Gedichte* (Berlin: Propyläen, 1923), 180.}

itself—over against itself—becomes powerless, in such a way that power is delivered up to essential incorporation into full and constant overpowering and transposes all modes of thought and representation according to the “law” of power. What is right and lawful is now only that which fits into the “order” posited by the overpowering and thus is constantly variable.

20 What dooms power is nevertheless not its ethical insufficiency due to an offense against the previously believed “right in itself,” but is instead its blindness to its own powerlessness or, thought in terms of the history of being, to its deliverance | over to the machinational essence of being, which deliverance power itself cannot see. The overcoming of the age of unconditional violence, an overcoming whose blessings we indeed can first survey only in their sparsest preliminary forms, cannot be carried out through moral indignation or through the deliverances provided by a threatened “culture”—because all this is of the same (metaphysical)—though not yet ventured—essence as is the unconditional violence.

To be decided is the truth of being itself: whether the blindness of power (taken not morally, but as an event of the history of being) can be experienced as the forgottenness of being—or whether the human being is deemed worthy by being to be installed beyond power and impotence, for the sake of the truth of being. We may suppose that meditation on this decision with respect to the history of being must still wander through long, and perhaps always more intermittent, times of Lasting and interrogative expectation. And we must even venture into the knowledge that broken loose masses of humanity, masses first willingly or unwillingly instituted in their movements, 21 require from the rulers such | forms of representing and needing which exclude every capacity for decisive knowledge and surrender the attempts at such knowledge to long ridicule. This ridicule will even appear one day as an excess of the public attention which can be summoned up by the masses over and against meditation.

Nevertheless, to want to go on speaking here of a *mistaking* of those who question and poetize would mean to fall back into the forms of valuation proper to the already overcome pursuit of culture. That which bears in itself the essence of the preparation for decisions (a preparation carried out by leaping in advance) must not be burdened with the miserable and plaintive misfortunes of becoming misunderstood and passed over. Just as little can the brutalization of the masses (which becomes more powerful with the overpowering) still allow a valuation as “ethical” and “cultural” decline. The brutalization is in itself a no longer recognizable wild licentiousness in the form of the

instituted and planned structure of the “lived experience” and “enjoyment” of the masses. Such wildness leads at the same time to a hardening whose hardness is not “strength” (as a consequence of sovereignty) but is instead | the blunting of all drives. This brutalization (understood not in the sense of the book of etiquette or some theory of morals—but metaphysically) which arises from power in its overpowering and is instituted in the human masses leads to a point whereby it becomes the condition of the possibility of Godlessness. Godlessness does not here refer to the renunciation and suppression of God—instead, it means something more essential: the metaphysical incapacity for a leap into a decisional domain in which the divinity of God can first of all appropriate a lighted space-time. The characterization of the age also includes this: one now encounters more frequently a human type which drudges about entirely in the day before yesterday (human being as “I” and “we,” as “consciousness” and “body”; nihilism and loss of belief in God), tracks down all indications of a convulsing but finds quick countermeasures, keeps for itself too little, and “analyzes” everything—without regions of meditation and sufficient power for historical experience. 22

People of this sort, who naturally read “Hölderlin” and “Nietzsche,” take note of Spengler and Jünger, are acquainted with Rilke, feel romantic leanings | toward the Catholic Church, make Pascal timely, and do not forget what is populist [*volkhaff*], could be called *existentiell literati*. Often precocious people endowed with an astounding aptitude for language, but without growth and short-winded, people who are untimely in a timely way and lack all originary necessity. Following behind them and their productions are all the peevish individuals and those Christians who could never let themselves also be given out as “modern.” What comes together in this way seems to be “spiritual” and fully responsible for the “highest values”; in truth, only a disfigurement of the spirit of the age proceeds from here, and this disfigurement tones down the “*brutalitas*” of the age and thereby impedes the great decisions—but also prematurely brings every path of meditation back to a standpoint which is supposed to offer a foothold and a solution to all questions. 23

10

To reflect—and to be a thinker [Nachdenken—und Denker-sein] are always distinct. Indeed the distinction is concealed precisely to reflection, which is acquainted with thinkers only as ones who engage in thinking, who carry out thinking. Thinking has long been

determined as the representing of what can be represented regarding things present-at-hand. Reflection is activity in this merely representationally | constituted domain and, after elapsing very deftly in a historical tradition of concepts, becomes a dealing with thoughts which, as a supplement to “reality,” always need to be “applied” and “actualized” merely in order to justify themselves as “thoughts.”

24 To be a thinker neither consists in reflecting nor arises out of reflection, because the thinker at most grounds the possibilities of a reflection and indeed through that which could always be called anew the grounding of the truth of being. The thinker renounces beings as a whole in favor of being, in order to question disclosively for being a clearing which is in each case expressed in an interpretation.

To be a thinker means to ground disclosively such a clearing for the first time and to become steadfast in that clearing by way of questioning—to let every word arise only from this grounding and have every word pertain to the preservation of the grounding. Nevertheless, the grounding must not be misinterpreted as a doctrine nor as the establishment of a standpoint for a representational edifice. To be a thinker means to possess the courage for a questioning which questions *in order to be overwhelmed with questions* [überfragt]. Such overwhelming does not signify “advancement” to what is next and “better,” but is instead the occurrence of the accomplished grounding | in order to retain it in accord with the abyss so that being might never appear as something made by human representation nor thinking be tolerated only as that reflection.

25 To be a thinker means to keep for a moment in interrogative words the truth (of being) as the origin of history (origin of the enduring of the encounter of gods and humans with the strife of earth and world). It means to belong in an interrogative and grounding way to the abyss which, undisturbed and undisturbable by beings, opens up for them the spaces and times of their history and holds them gathered into the uniqueness of a decision. It is first and only the clearing of being that bestows the illumination (light) in whose “shine” beings can appear—arise; for even darkness and confusion require errancy, and the latter requires the clearing, which as abyss relegates all beings to the insufficiency first to be attained. The light illuminates but does not clear. Clearing is appropriation into the endurance of both the encounter and the strife. The appropriation is of the event—the other beginning of the history of being requires being to be thought disclosively as this event. Even for the few who are once again and still capable of thinking in a decisive way, it remains an excessive demand to join the questioning of | the truth of being in the historical uniqueness and yet imageless determinateness of that truth, without succumbing to

26

the gloomy appearance of emptiness and detachment. Such appearances inevitably adhere to this question in its previous metaphysical configuration, due to the long transmission of the basic words and the abrading of the basic concepts. No sufficient protection against this is offered even by the most deft cleverness in reflection—such cleverness merely leads astray in ever new “consequences,” to the effect that thoughtful questioning is rooted in being a thinker; but according to the previously given determination, this might still easily be falsified and externalized. One could believe that “being a thinker,” versus mere arbitrary, playful reflection proceeding on paths of pleasurable thought, emphasizes that the thinker “draws his thoughts from life” and relates to life and makes this his rule, so that this thinking—issuing from “life” and transforming itself into it—then might be of help to life. Such thinkers who do not disappear in the detachment of their thoughts, but take their thoughts back into “life” and thus make themselves “existent,” are commonly called “*existentiell*” thinkers, and their “philosophy” is named the “philosophy of life” | or even the “philosophy of existence.” The fact that the thinker is here degraded to a serf of much-extolled life and its praxis, i.e., a serf of beings, already shows to what extent the “*existentiell* thinker,” who not without reason is today required and esteemed in various configurations, never comes to be a thinker—i.e., is never able to enter the domain of the decisions regarding the truth of being over against the supremacy of the beings abandoned by being (the supremacy of machination).

27

To be a thinker involves the decisive knowledge that meditation, as the disclosive questioning of this decision, projects into “life” the *most dangerous disturbance* of “life” and renounces justifying itself to this “life.” For such doom links the age to the distorted history of its “life” (a history which arises with the increasing power of historiology): the absence of the meditative, thoughtful convulsions which could set that life with its egotistical self-certainty into discord and into conflict with itself. Instead, the “spirit” of the age hastens to suppress the “spirit” as the adversary of the “soul”⁸—i.e., the adversary of the “body” and thus of the animal—at which | striving, the doctrines of individual authors and metaphysicians remain inessential over and against the power to renounce meditation and also over and against the aversion which, out of the machinational essence of beings as a whole, spreads at once over them and over the subjectum [*Subjektum*] as the predatory animal.

28

8. {Ludwig Klages, *Der Geist als Widersacher der Seele*, 4 vols. (Leipzig: Barth, 1929ff.).}

To be a thinker means to know that the thinking which disclosively questions the decision is not only in its consequences “inimical to life” but has in its essence decided against “life.” Here “life” does not mean the presence at hand of some arbitrary elapsing of arbitrary and massive everyday occurrences of clashing human beings—but rather counts as a title for beings as a whole which, regardless of their beingness, assert themselves through the execution (displayed before themselves) of the continual surpassing of their current state to a greater power—i.e., a more instituted and more calculative power.

To be a thinker means to know that the decision does not concern the correctness or incorrectness of a “world-picture” nor the bindingness or nonbindingness of a “worldview.” It is to know that meditation must not turn toward the question of whether and to what extent a thought secures a use for life or has fallen into uselessness. It is
 29 to know instead that only *one decision* must be prepared and at some point carried out: whether the unrestricted machination of beings will devastate everything into nothingness, and the human being, under cover of the animality of the predatory animal, will develop into an apathetic, all-calculating, and always swift institutional animal of the best-ordered herding, from which herd occasionally packs of executors of the devastation will still flock together—or whether being will bestow the grounding of its truth as plight and will cast to the human being the necessity, out of another beginning, to preserve the simplicity of the essence of all things, by which he might mature toward steadfastness in the midst of the history of being, a steadfastness which could permit him a downgoing that is a beginning of the last god.

The decision: whether the humans of our history will take being, as it emerged for them at the first beginning, and will turn it simply and definitively into a cause of beings or a condition of the representation of beings, and on account of the attenuation of beings into mere mental things, will relinquish being—or whether humans will disclosively question being as the abyss, and in downgoing and arising, will allow being to bear and determine all beings.

30 From the moment of the overcoming of metaphysics, to be a thinker will be to possess an essence in accord with the history of being, namely, to keep being itself free from all derangement by beings and to do so through the interrogative disposing of the truth of being. Being, as the abyssal “in between” of the enduring of the encounter and strife, powerlessly (outside of power and impotence) *disposes* human history. This type of thinking is sovereignty and decision; victory and violence, success and fame, as well as their counterparts (e.g.,

the Christian ideal of withdrawal from the world), relapse into impotence as regards the history of being, the impotence of that which is extricated out of the capacity for decision. *Therefore*, on the other hand, that irresistible sharpness and force of impact, which we at times recognize in the sovereignty of the stillest stillness and of its mildness that has no need of effectivity, is precisely characteristic of the thinking which is heedful of the history of being.

11

Talk of the *overcoming of metaphysics* is even today exposed to the usual misunderstandings. Thinking of Kant or, rather, of the misinterpretation of Kant in “positivism,” one understands the overcoming of metaphysics as the elimination of faith in the | knowability and reality of the supersensible, in favor of—the sensible. To advocate for the latter is of course not to overcome metaphysics; instead, it amounts to a crude exaggeration of metaphysics—inasmuch as now the essence of beings is all the more decided *without questioning* the truth of being. And to leave this question essentially *unasked* is, in terms of the history of being, the essential ground of every metaphysics. 31

The “overcoming of metaphysics” will also be readily identified with “*atheism*,” especially if metaphysics is understood in terms of cultural Christianity, whereby atheism means the denial of the presence at hand of a God. The overcoming of metaphysics is indeed a-theism—but in a sense unavailable to any theological metaphysics: steadfastness in the dispossession of humans from every preparedness to bring to a first decision the divinity of God in the encounter with their problematic humanity. The foundational enduring of this “without the decidability of the divinity of God” is incorporated into a moment of the history of being and renounces the claim and the public reputation of comparison with any sort of ecclesial or otherwise instituted pursuits of piety and lived experience. Especially through | such comparisons, and particularly when they are still well disposed toward this atheism and concerned with its ultimate (i.e., Christian) salvation, there readily enters into its abyssal essence a dissonance allowing that essence to appear as a preliminary stage of the genuine “belief in God.” A-theism understood in terms of the history of being would measure itself according to a standard that is essentially too low and would pervert its own essence, if it strove to pass itself off merely as a higher piety over and against the ecclesial devoutness of cultural Christianity. For this a-theism is altogether not a piety; in every case, piety must have its ground in the metaphysical interpretation of beings. 32

“Atheism” (in the context of the history of *beyng*) sees in this designation a burden, because even with the averting of all misinterpretations, the orientation toward the previous, metaphysical thinking and valuing still perseveres. This holds especially if one forgets that the thinking which is heedful of the history of *beyng*, according to its own proper mastery of the mildness that has no power, can be assigned in each case only to a few individuals, who throughout long spans of time conceal in their struggle the unique decision of the transition from metaphysics to the grounding of the truth of *beyng*,
 33 | whereas the masses of modern humanity are in the act of first instituting themselves globally. This a-theism cannot be communicated or even announced as a “direction” or “standpoint” and transmitted in the manner of a view, such that those who are like-minded would flock together into a community. In all such intentions, we mistake the incomparable uniqueness of the thoughtful course and historical form of the history of *beyng*. A-theism, therefore, despite all emendations, remains a designation which still *can* be cast back (and ascribed) to the thinking which is heedful of the history of *beyng* out of a residual metaphysical intention, in order to provide a name and an interpretation to something whose decision is denied at the same moment, because the meditation preceding that decision is considered presumptuous or impossible and unnecessary.

11a

In the meantime, meta-physics has become physics, i.e., physiology. (Should think here not of disciplines and doctrinal constituents, but of basic positions toward beings qua beings as a whole.) Nietzsche took the first resolute and thus also deliberate step into this consummation
 34 | of metaphysics—with | his affirmation of the “sensuous” world, which is in this way posited outside of the distinction between truth and semblance and is no longer related to another world. But if meta-physics has become physics (of which “physics” as science must occupy merely a small, aloof, and insignificant corner), it is not eliminated, but only forgotten. Thereby the (forgotten) metaphysics attains the highest power; for physics—taken unconditionally as the postulation of beings in the sense of the involuted and onrolling *life* as the domain, measure, and fulfillment of nonhuman and human things—contains the most extreme exaggeration of beings as a whole, namely the one that, seizing on what is closest as unconditioned, falls back on itself in this proceeding-into-the-whole and so raises up the appearance that nothing supersensuous is posited any longer.

Yet what is Nietzsche's laying claim to "life," other than the unwitting and ungrounding postulation of the domain, the measures, and the fulfillment relations—i.e., the postulation of what one can and must explain on the basis of life as its expression, because indeed "life" is the encompassing that bears | everything—(περιέχον ["embracing"]), but which nevertheless must be something "above" "life" and drawn out of it, as long as it still strives to interpret itself and know itself. In this manner, "metaphysics" is unavoidable and "natural," provided the nature of a human being includes a relation to beings as such and thus a relation to himself. Yet if on the path of its own history metaphysics explicitly attains the form of "physics," then beings stand purely and simply privileged over being—so decisively that being becomes correctness. This exclusive affirmation of beings and the empowerment of their power constitute a meditationless denial of being (and thus of its question-worthiness). "Nihilism"—carries out the consummation of metaphysics and therefore can also be grasped only metaphysically and overcome solely through the overcoming of metaphysics. But where, in whatever accidental and half forms, "nihilism" is apprehended and pursued—or suspected and refuted—as a "world-view" or the like, where the flight into the past could be justified through the manifest appearance of "nihilism," there nihilism already grasps its *supposed* opponents and despises and conceals itself in | a form whose greatest danger is undangerousness and unrecognizability.

Nietzsche's deepest meditation therefore resides where he still recognizes himself as a nihilist—and the limit of his meditation consists in his inability to recognize any longer his attempted overcoming as the most extreme form of "nihilism." That is denied him because he cannot at all think nihilism in terms of metaphysics and the history of being, but only in terms of morals and within the horizon of the thinking and positing of values.

11b

The thinking which is heedful of the history of being neither portrays present-at-hand facts, nor describes "structures," nor sees in the universal (as condition of representation) the ground of the particular, nor posits values and goals. The thinking which is heedful of the history of being is without "content" and gives the impression of something "abstract" and empty. Yet what looks like emptiness is only the omission of beings in the destiny of being, a destiny consisting in the circumstance that the spatiotemporal field of being is to be

disclosively thought, and the abyss is to be grounded, in a way appropriate to Da-sein.⁹ All “consciousness” and all being conscious of something are the filling up of the abyss of the clearing of being, |
 37 along with a contemporaneous claim upon this abyss—without at all experiencing its open domain as such and certainly not as abyssal. The final expedient remaining to a metaphysical “grounding” of “consciousness” lies in the direction of a reduction of what is in consciousness to what is in the un-conscious, whereby the previous interpretation of consciousness becomes limited to the representation of objects, and representation itself is grasped as the “I am representing . . .”

Metaphysics, in its time-immemorial and necessarily practiced withdrawal from the question of the essence of truth, is incapable of seeing how decisively the “consciousness of something” harbors precisely the clearing of being—as an unfathomed ground. Nor can it see that *this* ground is more originary and more abyssal than all very superficial “depths” of the “unconscious” which is sought, following psychology, in strivings and instincts rather than in the act of representation—without their rootedness in disposition (which is to be grasped in relation to the clearing) surmised even here in the least. The explanation of the “unconscious” on the basis of consciousness is as impossible as the characterization of “consciousness” as a mere epiphenomenon of the unconscious, which is now determined as urge, now as will to power. (Leibniz—Schelling—Nietzsche.) It cannot be
 38 contested that a | departure from “consciousness” (*ego cogito* [“I am thinking”]) and a remaining in “consciousness” (Hegel) leave something essential undecided. The question is only whether the reversion to the “body” and to “life” does bring or can bring what has not been decided to a decision. The obvious one-sidedness of every standpoint of consciousness seems to justify immediately and definitively the transition to the unconscious as the properly real.

The first question, however, must stress the problematic character of “consciousness” as such: how it—as a domain of metaphysical thinking—is insufficient and why. The task is to see how the standpoint of consciousness is entirely an essential consequence of the interpretation of being which takes its guideline from “thinking” and to grasp that therefore *also* and a fortiori the reversion to preconscious “life” receives its impetus from that which grounds metaphysics, namely, the priority of thinking and its role as guideline. All

9. [*Dasein*, in the most literal sense “thereness,” is Heidegger’s term for the beings we ourselves are, thematized specifically as places (*da*) where occurs an understanding of what it means to be (*sein*) in general. The hyphenated term stresses this thematizing of humans in relation to being.—Trans.]

seemingly “deeper” (and closer to reality) appeals to “life” therefore—strictly conceived—fall beneath the level of the standpoint of consciousness. In that standpoint, there is still operative a presentiment that *cogitatio-ratio* [“thought-reason”] is essential for what is to be disclosively questioned in general (beings as such), whereas the invocation of the “body” and “soul” versus the spirit—despite the apparent justification—amounts to a bogging down | of thinking, yet on the other hand may be all the more secure for the agreement on the part of the increasing thoughtlessness and impotence for meditation. Collapse of the point of view of consciousness—yes! But thereby also of the point of view of the vindication of the “body” and “soul” “against” “consciousness.” “Consciousness” is thoughtfully overcome and grasped not through an evasion into the un-conscious (the instinctual) but rather through a more originary meditation on the essence of consciousness and of its incorporation into the clearing of being: “consciousness” not as afterglow and radiation of the unconscious—but as grounded in Da-sein. Yet the latter holds sway as this when the unconscious, the drives, and the instincts are recognized as mere superficial interpretations related to the postulation of the human being as animal—: the disposedness of the steadfast grounding of the clearing of being: affiliation of humans to the “in between” of earth and world.

39

Nietzsche’s position on the essence and role of “consciousness” must nevertheless not be taken as a “biological” interpretation in the usual sense. “Consciousness” as a fiction of “life” is not simply fused into it and, mixed with all the other “fictions,” consigned to life’s stream and broth—instead, consciousness, in the sense of the representing, identifying, and | determining of that which is constant, plays an essential role in “life”—consciousness is a sort of will to power in the sense of the consolidation which is in each case necessary for an overpowering, namely, the consolidation of a level of life and of a perspective on life, which only then become surpassable. Because “consciousness” always places beings (in the sense of things that are constant) into life, it is essentially related to beingness, which of course stands opposed to genuine being as “life,” i.e., becoming—an opposition that does not exclude affiliation. Through this relation of consciousness and “being,” Nietzsche’s position toward the standpoint of consciousness constantly receives and maintains an essential metaphysical character, on which founders every crude biological fusing of consciousness into the “stream of life.” Even here, Nietzsche’s mode of presentation must not mislead us into complying with crude interpretations working with facile oppositions as exclusions.

40

12

The concealed Germanity—the sacrifice of the fallen is to be inviolable; everyone, even those who speak about it subsequently, should know that the warrior was more essential than the writer ever could be. Nevertheless, in a domain extending entirely beyond the *historiologi-*
 41 *cal* consideration and evaluation of the world war, I we must venture a meditation that makes visible a pernicious constriction of the otherwise serious thinking about the effect of the spirit of the front-line fighter. What is most essential could never be accomplished if that spirit (preparedness for battle—camaraderie—endurance—faith and so on) is simply carried over from the martial to the political, so that both, coinciding in essence, would at once completely and utterly determine all human comportment and thus constitute the cornerstone of the “total mobilization.”¹⁰ For *in that way* only an intimately experienceable past process—although a very hard and painful one—is broadened and stamped immediately, as it were, into the prototype, and the power of this “prototype” is affirmed altogether without misgivings. What gets lost, what is not at all elevated into historical meditation, is this humanity which in the form of the warrior manifests only a first announcement of history; the warrior himself first becomes especially a mystery and does precisely not constitute the form into which the definitive prototype is to be stamped.

Yet this humanity does indeed have its first historical vocation in the fact that every support in beings was taken from it and that nevertheless no despair over being I could entrench itself. The unsupported
 42 adherence to something concealed and refused traces a structure through the previous humanity, wherein an Essential possibility of the relation to being is announced. This, however, everywhere simultaneously in the midst of the released forms of power of the completely planned instituting of all progression and all standing firm. In this simultaneity of the announcement of the other and of the start of the continuation and consummation of the past in its totality, a third something still reveals itself: the planning and orderliness of extreme calculating and instituting in the progression of events seem to exclude everything accidental and all surprise. And in fact—both are entirely ruled out in the domain of the progression itself and of its horizon. But this power of calculative instituting brings into beings the released machination and thus also a disturbance in the whole, and

10. {Ernst Jünger, “Die totale Mobilmachung,” in *Krieg und Krieger* (Berlin: Junker und Dünnhaupt, 1930), 9–30.}

this disturbance becomes an ever more powerful ground for things that cannot be foreseen. The danger, because it is essentially already something forgotten, increases unimagably, to the effect that the abandonment of beings from all grounded being will once break through and completely take away every possibility of a foothold | in beings and will do so precisely in some form of calculation. 43

The danger of the accident of the complete groundlessness of beings lurks in the unconditional power of machination. The point is not that individual accidents and mischances threaten individual persons—insofar as that happens, it is unimportant in terms of essential history and the history of being, even though perhaps very hard for the affected ones in the sphere of their historiological sojourn in the age. The *decisive accident* is the unique one of the bursting forth of the abandonment by being, within the apparently irresistible pursuit of the highest empowerment of all beings in each of their . . . {illegible word}. The equipping for this accident can be carried out only historically, in an essential transformation of humanity, such that the human being comes to be *at home*—not merely accustomed and indifferent—in that space-time wherein beings have no support and being is concealed. To become in the future the ones who are at home in this unique “in between” of beings and being is the destiny kept open to the concealed Germans. They stand outside of all previous historiological-political and religious space—and their history possesses a power of silence grounding another mode of communication.

They also no longer have an occasion (possible only in the domain of metaphysics) to shape their Da-sein (i.e., their former Da-sein) into what is “typical”; for the “prototype” is only the inversion of the “idea” and of the “ideal” into the region of human accomplishment—thoroughly bound to a metaphysical origination and also to the logic of metaphysics and essentially assigned to calculation and planning. The prototype is the form the “ideal” takes in the age of the consummation of modernity—of the releasement of the machinational essence of beings. The distinction between “individual and community,” the disappearance of the individual in favor of the community, is only the morally-socially interpreted and more innocent—*calculated* according to the temperament of the masses—and therefore instituted—foreground of the power of the “type”—the “breed,” the “race”—i.e., of the equipmentally {?} planned and bred—disciplined—machinationally reckoned humanity—which takes on—occasionally very different—apparently opposed—political forms and never proliferates as itself, but always in masks and dissemblances. Da-sein inherently bears the necessity of an assignment to the human self, and this assignment 44

45 is just as remote from every subjectivizing (since altogether | no “subject” any longer) as it is from individualization in the moral-metaphysical sense of the “person.” “Individuation” is determined by the adoption of steadfastness in the “there” into the *self*.

The latter is determined, however, neither out of egoity nor on the basis of a previous individuality (understood as present-at-hand) of a specifically occurring human exemplar—selfhood indeed from the self-presence [*Bei-sich*] which is disposed as a self-appropriation through the eventuation that constitutes the mode of the essential occurrence of *beyng* (appropriating event). The selfhood of *Da-sein* can only be grasped steadfastly as the *self-referential* grounding of the truth of *beyng*—; in this way, the “self” is the leap into the abyss of *beyng*—.

(The characterization of *Da-sein* in *Being and Time* as “always mine to someone” [*jemeinig*]¹¹ is already thinking out toward the ontologically derived essence of the self and toward its authenticity, because it occurs solely on the path of the question of the truth of *beyng*—although this characterization is also just as much caught up everywhere in that which the self needs in order to attempt the leap.)

46 *Da-sein*, the steadfastness of those who are self-constant, is the clearing encounter of the unsupported and un-supporting | beings with self-refusing *beyng*. To make the “in between” (as the essence of truth) of this clearing available in an enduring of the interrogative steadfastness—that is the destiny of concealed Germanity, the destiny with regard to the history of *beyng*, i.e., the destiny disposed out of *beyng* itself and toward it.

13

The “scientific philosopher” is distinct from the thinker. The former calculates out a “system,” one which is supposed to encompass and explain even the thinking that is alien to “system thinking.” The scientific philosopher strives for a constant expansion of his doctrines so that everything otherwise thought and thinkable would still always have a place in this framework, i.e., a place always subordinated to the system. This sort of formal encompassing (e.g., in the sense of absolute consciousness for Hegel or of the universal subjectivity of the Cartesian *ego*, an encompassing which allows even the “constitution” of “objectivity” to be “constituted” in “subjectivity” so as not to tolerate any *pregivenness*) believes itself through such overpowering to be in possession of universal truth and superiority, whereas it merely falls incessantly into an ever more invisible dependence on that which

11. {Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, GA2 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1977), 57.}

it | recognizes as other and as still not encompassed—and which accordingly calls for the arrangement of a broadening of the system—and such a broadening is always and endlessly possible for the standpoint of “consciousness” without any radical reorganization. Such a standpoint (which actually lives only on the fact that things which are other and alien are brought to it so that it might incorporate them into the appropriately constructed encompassing) retains for itself the right to claim a “continuity” in its development and to pass this unbrokenness off as a sign of the farthest foresight and of self-certainty and perhaps to take both of these as signs of “genius.” 47

In truth, this is merely a transference of the modern “mathematical” procedure of science to the “objects” of philosophy, which are grasped, and posited as absolute, in a determinate form allied to modern science. Correspondingly, also expressed here is the claim to validity of “scientific philosophy,” a “philosophy” which is alien to every thoughtful creature.—The latter, the thinker, knows that unforeseeable changes are essential, that there are constant collapses which do not follow from one another and each of which falls abysally into the path of the decisions sought. Therefore, the | thinker—posited in the uniqueness of his goals—must still for himself reject these goals, not in the service of other goals, but in order to make irreconcilable the nonrecurrence of thoughtful questioning and to preserve the latter’s decisive character. Thereby the assignment to the clearing of being for the sake of the grounding of that clearing might become in each case the inceptual basic experience of what it means to be a thinker. The complete exclusion of the “scientific philosopher” from the realm of the thinker is betrayed most clearly in that endeavor to tolerate no pre-giveness and to resolve everything into the accomplishment of “subjectivity.” Here in fact *nothing* is pre-given, except for—subjectivity itself, i.e., the determinate (and thus not at all unconditioned and universal) interpretation of the human being as “*subiectum*” [“*Subjectum*”]. Blindness to this stipulation also prevents grasping that there could be possible at any time, from the standpoint of “consciousness,” a decision that would decide *against* this standpoint itself and yet would precisely *in that way* still open up the possibility of another standpoint. With Hegel, however, “scientific philosophy” does enter into the realm of the thinker, inasmuch as this philosophy, thinking historically, grasps itself as the consummation of Western metaphysics and thus starts to surmise a decision—indeed one that has long since been made. 48

The more the metaphysical essence of the human being—the rational—full of feelings (i.e., “lived experiences”)—animal—comes to power within the inevitable course of the unconditional 49

empowerment of machination, all the more clearly does there also press forth, within the massiveness of humanity, the universalization of this essence: the animality as well as the capacity for lived experience create for themselves their form of commonness: the human being is at once animallike and capable of feeling—the one corresponds to the other—each confirms the other reciprocally, and each claims to possess “power” and “depth” (“lived experience”). The involution of the human being on this, his allegedly complete and unproblematic essence, is the *anthropomorphizing* of the human being.

14

Philosophers are supposed to be sovereigns and stewards—but where are the palaces—where is the land in whose landscape the palaces tower up? We must first make this land arable, indeed first visible and surmisable—we must be long-preparing questioners, on the far side of power and impotence, strictly on the basis of the mildness of knowing the abyssal character of being. The sovereignty of those sovereigns is nevertheless not a public | despotism of the powerful. Sovereigns
 50 qua philosophers do not “effectuate”; instead, they bind invisibly into that which they themselves are not, as whose unrecognized stewards they reject everything that could disturb the harmony with the simplicity of the essential encounters.

15

Decisions do not arise out of insights; instead, they themselves become insights, provided the latter are understood as clearing and disclosing views of what is concealed and inexplicable. On the other hand, decisions are prepared by meditation—the disclosive questioning of what is to be decided—; decisions never occur violently and never blindly, otherwise they are flying under false colors and are measures taken in consequence of desperation.

Decisions look like human achievements but are in truth always appropriations of the human being into essential relations (to the truth of being, to the forgottenness of being, to the abandonment of beings, to the undecidedness between being and beings). As such appropriations into these relations, the decisions *are* in themselves “insights” and thereby can become a knowledge which, holding sway
 51 *prior* to all cognitions, | permits no Propositional communication and yet essentially surpasses in determinateness any demonstration through “facts” and circumstances, because the determination [*Bestimmung*] arises out of the basic disposition [*Grundstimmung*] intoned

[*angestimmt*] and attuning [*stimmend*] in the decision. The decisional knowledge also never has the character of a conviction, because decisions bring the human being into the open realm of the liberation of possibilities, whereas on the contrary convictions blind and harden us and as their very first step pursue their enmity with what is question-worthy. Decisions are leaps into what is question-worthy.

16

With the increasing cleverness of humans (“cleverness” intended metaphysically as the highest capacity of planned and instituted problem solving), the essence of beings falls prey to indifference. This seems to justify the presumption that *meditation* will one day be excluded from the present, like a fabulous monster, long since dead. What meditation might have claimed has been assigned with greater certainty to a proper form of the pursuit of “spiritual-cultural” life: i.e., to the timely and even simultaneous reportage and illumination of the then-current situation.

52

The “bond to the people” of today’s publishers leads to businesses that can be compared only to the heinous practices of “war profiteers.” It is no wonder that authors who a short while ago still held out the promise of a serious endeavor of meditation have everywhere entered the service of the planning of publishers. “Magazines” which used to unite seeking-questioning youths, and used to foster distance and distinctions of rank, now emulate the “illustrated” urban newspapers—pictures of “nudes” and of Pope Pius XII stand in immediate succession. Accordingly, people have also renounced venturing, or even only preparing, a “deed” by way of meditation, questioning, and decision. In union with the turn to the “photomontage” of “political-spiritual” life, people have also become “historiological”—they report on and illuminate what they already take to be “decided” and “clarified,” and this becomes the very dubious “objectivity” of the “twentieth century.” People talk themselves into believing they are participating in the decisions regarding Europe, and in attitude—in case this word still applies here—they surrender to the vilest Americanism.

53

Such signs are of little or no consequence over and against the machination which has got its hooks on all this in deeper domains. But such signs must occasionally be recorded so that we might *possibly* come to know the extent of the lack of “spiritual” resistance against the basic forces of the age, which occur *prior* to everything “political” and “cultural.” But because the “bond to the people” of today’s publishers induces competition in individual undertakings, the mania to surpass then leads to “book”-forms which still do not show themselves

to the current power of representation. Such phenomena are nevertheless aimed at the pursuit of a process in which the masses (of previously and newly “refined” individuals) have secured the suppression of every attempt at meditation on the whole of beings.

17

“Intellectuals” are exponents of the traditional pursuit of cognition and possession of knowledge (seen and evaluated from the horizon of the masses who are *still* excluded from the power over this pursuit and possession) and will be criticized and reviled as long as the masses |
 54 have not yet become “intellectual.” They will succeed in becoming this only slowly and by way of an inconspicuous degrading of the domain of the intellect to the level of the claims and lived experiences of the masses. This process of seizing the possession of knowledge starts with the adoption of the “intellectual” way of speaking—e.g., no longer will something simply be “shown” [*“gezeigt”*] in a speech—instead, it will be “exhibited” [*“aufgezeigt”*]. To be sure, what the “intellectuals” themselves accomplish toward the justification and rectification of their essence is only the assimilation to the wishes of the masses—it will one day be found quite in order that “science” and the “ink-slinging” now passing for “poetry,” as well as the production of paintings and musical works, are “bound to the people.” The justification is an admission of the right of what the masses demand, namely, that every pursuit of cognition should happen for their use and in their favor. Yet this demand is not at all unusual; it merely expresses what is implicit in the pursuit of cognition and of knowledge: the planning of beings for the purpose of their complete usefulness to everyone. This striving, however, is grounded in the fact that beings as a whole
 55 are taken to be already clarified and certain | and in the fact that there is no need for meditation because no possibilities are especially visible any longer.

“Intellectuals” occupy an ambiguous position in relation to “metaphysics” and in relation to the human masses and count as aloof, indeed impertinent, exceptions in the possession of knowledge. As these possessors, they are precisely the worst enemies of all meditation. If therefore the assimilation and fusing into the massive do set in and again come to play a role within the massive, and are effectively assailed and disempowered there (“science” reacquires “prestige”), then the “intellectuals” and not the slow and stupid masses are the worst enemies of all meditation—*they*, not ones who learn from them and merely imitate them, are the genuine bearers of destruction.

18

“Pragmatism”—is the doctrine that the true must be sought in, and posited as, the useful. This usefulness is conceived as the furthering and securing of that state of human life which one takes over as present-at-hand and given or, through a demonstration of its genetically suitable character, demands as given and immutable. Yet what is essential is not simply the notion of *use*, but above all the determination of that *for which* the useful is supposed to be of use: that the use might remain “aligned” with the expansion and enhancement of what is unproblematically present-at-hand—i.e., so-called life (prosperity¹²)—that the use be suited to the claim of “life” and serve this claim—“life” itself is here the instituting of an exploitation and enjoyment of every satisfaction of the precisely present-at-hand and prevailing drives toward “power,” “beauty,” and well-being. The vital states of life itself—which has instituted itself in its own strivings—make up the goal. “Pragmatism” is thus always the ineluctable consequence and essential supplement of an extreme “rationalism”—one which necessarily requires assured guarantees of its own claim to certainty—guarantees which the “rationalism” itself can only seem to keep entirely available in its *own* sense and with its own means. Thus, e.g., it is in the sense and with the means of his novel principle of the *clara et distincta perceptio* [“clear and distinct apprehension”] that Descartes attempts to prove the “existence of God.” Yet in this proof the decisive point is that in general the belief in God is held fast as needful and useful. Pascal is in no way opposed to Descartes, but is only his explicit supplement, one already tacitly called for in the basic Cartesian position. With the increasing development of the essence of modernity (i.e., of the power of calculation, planning, and securing), the self-evidence of “pragmatism” also grows: that something counts as actually and essentially justified through its use.

Why is “pragmatism” a “doctrine” and a “worldview” that found their adherents and flourished especially in “America”? Not because Americans are particularly intent on what is “useful,” but because they base humanity on *rational* securing, calculating, comprehensive instituting, and planning. Every genuine “rationalism” in the metaphysical sense (positing the machination of beings as beingness, without grasping the machination *as such*) leads to “pragmatism,” and conversely: where pragmatism rules—where that, and only that, is

12. [English word in the text.—Trans.]

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true which has “utility” for “life”—there metaphysical rationalism is in power or is on the way toward the greatest expansion of its power.

The rational itself—what is at any time attained and secured through planning and instituting—for its part again secures the enhancement of “life” and in that way receives the character of the “useful” and the needful—what therefore requires the greatest elaboration—and so *Nietzsche’s* so-called philosophy of “life” does not exclude
 58 the power of the “spiritual” and of “knowledge”—| the spirit is the “adversary” of the “soul” only in the specific sense of securing the ever higher and broader possibilities of the soul—i.e., of the body—and constantly rousing them lest they become moribund in some already attained state. How this extremely high evaluation bestowed on reason and logic does nevertheless affirm an abyssal lack of meditation and an impotence for questioning, and how at the same time the extreme affirmation of “corporeality” and “life” conceals a flight, the blindest flight, from beings and into the absence of being—these things can no longer be known or disclosively questioned in the domain of the consummation of metaphysics (i.e., of rationalism and its affiliated pragmatism). The metaphysical danger of this state of consummated modernity lies in the complete obliviousness with regard to the history of being, whereby such a state brings into power to the same (excessive) degree the “body” and “reason” and constantly plays them off against each other in ever more acute—i.e., coarse—and violent forms, in order to salvage both and affirm them again and again. Presumably, the obliviousness with regard to being is the basic condition (one requiring constant nourishment) of the habituation in that which is called “life.”

59 Robbing and banditry can assume various configurations in the age of the complete mastery of all means of concealment and deception. Versailles was a protoform—; world wars play out on diverse levels;
 60 the lowest level will be reached when the highest intelligence and the installation of violence meet in a sheer overwhelming that has no goal, unless the goal is the gigantic concealment of a gigantic emptiness and perplexity.

19

All historiologically determinable and producible history transpires as thoughtlessness over and against a decisive thought which grounds being itself in a truth or else withholds this truth from being. Thoughtlessness in the form of the unneediness for meditation extends thereby first of all to itself—it knows nothing of itself—i.e., its own essence

is withheld from it, so severely that this sequestration from its own essence assumes the form of a conviction that the supposedly “real” history (of incidents and consequences) would also be a path of the human being to his destiny. Corresponding to this historiological essence of common history, the latter itself remains insensible to every impetus toward meditation.

Nevertheless, the essential occurrence of being requires in each case individuals who are able to retract their gaze from the levels of common and public history and thereby come to know of events which are not historiologically graspable.

20

What most severely obstructs and properly dooms a German self-meditation is the bustling about, vanity, and muddleheadedness of the “expatriate Germans.”¹³ Their paragon is still Herder, and his relation to Kant furnishes at the same time the paradigm for the way all these renews and their domestic German followers deal with German works and affairs. The currently prevailing Herder-fashion provides an easy indication of the extent of the flight into thoughtless oratory over lived experience, oratory by which every power and every seriousness of the struggle of an interrogative confrontation with Western thinking are destroyed, perhaps for a long time to come, whereby machination will be assisted to its unrestricted empowerment, (romantically) intending to rescue, or even to renew, something else—such as ethnicity and the like. That would at most be still possible metaphysically—but never in the manner of “folklore.”

Yet metaphysics is indeed the ground that has already long since prepared machination—and so no longer has any essential power to rescue anything. If, however, the place of metaphysics has already been taken by folklore in the correct sense of the theory of race, of prehistory, of morals, and of customs, then out of this way of “thinking,” which no longer “thinks”—, how could there ever arise a knowledge in which the decisive domains for the history of Western humanity are gained through battle?

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13. {An “expatriate German” was (and is) a German living abroad, with or without German citizenship. Concern over the “expatriate Germanity” was in the 1930s a fixed component of the policy of the “Foreign Office” directed at first (until 1938) by Konstantin von Neurath and later by Joachim von Ribbentrop.}

21

Battlers—divide on the one hand into those who always need an opponent and if none can be found invent one and feign themselves and others as opponents. Without an opponent, these battlers languish in perplexity and goallessness, and in order to escape this, they basically battle without cessation over the currently actual or merely semblant presence at hand of opponents and make themselves dependent on these opponents. On the other hand, there are those battlers who attend only to that *for which* they battle and do not need opponents, and if such exist, these battlers make the opponents dependent on themselves, the battlers, and thus make themselves goalless. The highest battle of such battlers—who of course do not designate themselves this way—is the one that enables an enduring of the essential decisions. The battle is not over possessions and results, and
 62 not over power and enjoyment, but | over a beginning of the history of being.

22

Someone is acting “politically” in the modern sense who, e.g., obtains the payment promised, though at first withheld, for betraying another country and obtains it specifically by utilizing the friendly mediation of the very country he betrayed. Politics [*Politik*] no longer has anything to with the πόλις [*polis*, “city-state”] nor with morals and least of all with “becoming a people.” In the age of complete de-divinization, politics is the only appropriate basic form of the forceful gathering of all means of power and ways of violence, i.e., the only form that acknowledges the authority of no court of law and derives everything legitimate from “rights,” i.e., from the power claim to “life,” i.e., from the empowerment of power, indeed such that the talk of “rights” is tolerated only as a vestige of overcome notions of order, so as to reaccustom into the new order those who are ponderous and laden with old prejudices. “Politics” is the genuine executor of the machination of beings and can only be grasped metaphysically—every other valuation does not reach far enough. And therefore the talk of “power politics” betrays a | misunderstanding in the form of a pleonastic expression, since politics requires power in order to be directed by it to the empowerment of the machination of beings. This politics is “total”—not because it encompasses everything, but because it by essence is grounded in the execution of the beingness of beings. Notions such as “nationalism” and “socialism” belong to an age in which modernity still tarried in the preliminary stage of its consummation; now they
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are simply historiologically employed titles for a quite different process which can no longer be called “political” in the least.

23

In the age of unrestricted machination, the sciences take on the character of an *industry* dealing in the lore of nature and of peoples. This industry is an institution of “technology” in the essential sense—i.e., at the same time an institution of historiology—for the empowerment of nature and of the people. The products of this industry become means of the power of machination. Every attempt to bring the sciences into connection with “knowledge” in the sense of a grounding of truth and a decision toward truth must fall prey to universal ridicule. “Nature” and “people” are themselves merely machinational institutions in which the empowerment of machination plays out and is constantly secured. Only “visionaries” and “philistines” will still see here realities in which the emptiness of humanity could find a | sustaining and surpassing fulfillment.

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The history of Western humans—no matter whether they dwell in Europe or elsewhere—has slowly advanced to a situation wherein all otherwise familiar domains such as “homeland,” “culture,” “people,” but also “state” and “Church,” and also “society” and “community,” refuse to take shelter. And that is because these domains have been degraded to mere pretexts and have surrendered to an arbitrary conivance whose motive forces remain unfamiliar and divulge their operation simply in compelling humans to habituation in an ever more importunate massiveness whose “fortune” is exhausted in making do without decisions and in becoming stupefied while intending to possess and enjoy this massiveness more and more, because what is worth possessing is becoming constantly smaller and emptier. The sole and also necessarily ungenueine anxiety such a situation still allows is the fear that this human activity could suddenly be brought to an end by new wars and everything could go astray; for where the adherence to the present-at-hand counts as the possession and mastery of | beings, there misfortune shrivels up to a state in which and through which everything present-at-hand must be subject to elimination.

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How could there still awaken in these circumstances a trace of the anxiety which recognizes that precisely the supremacy of the present-at-hand and the unneediness for decisions (the imperceptibly growing strength of the destining toward this situation) are already

and only devastation and not merely destruction and that the sovereignty of this devastation through catastrophes of war and wars of catastrophe can no longer be impugned, but only attested? No essential change will be introduced into the metaphysical character of beings as a whole, whether or not the herd-quality of humans, abandoned to itself, through its universalization drives the human being to the consummation of his animality, or the pack of despots drives the supremely articulated and “engaged” masses to complete decisionlessness, or therefore an “order of rank” within the definitively identified animal (in the sense of the “superman”) can still be instituted. With the coolest audacity and while averting all the pressure of “moral” evaluations and “pessimistic” dispositions, | the thoughtful gaze must keep before and around itself the consummation of the metaphysical history of beings, so that the atmosphere of inept decisions might blow pure and clear throughout meditative questioning.

What matters here is to know that the devastation within the domains of “refinement” and “cultural pursuit” has already progressed essentially further than it has in the field of the coarser concern for the needs of life. In correspondence, here—with the futile custodians of the spiritual heritage—a higher cleverness has developed in the renunciation of essential meditation. In this correspondence, there entice and increase, on the one hand, the disempowerment of all rooted domains in favor of the empowerment of a thorough machination and, on the other hand, the renunciation by the human masses of all claims to decisions and standards. Through this self-expanding correspondence, there emerges an imperceptible void whose concealed essence cannot be grasped from the still-dominant basic metaphysical position, especially if this position, in the guise of its opposite, attains prestige as the unconditional incorporation of the human being into the machination of beings as a whole—and this often still in reference to | the historical forms of sovereignty which have already been deprived of every foundation. For instance, today’s military believes it can still rely on “Prussianism,” but the military has essentially changed and is even already something other than the soldiery of the last years of the world war—besides the fact that from this domain of human activity, even if the domain places one before death in an idiosyncratic hardness, creative historical decisions can never arise, but only forms of an always average breed, and to want to expand this breed and make it “total” would demonstrate utter ignorance of the essence of being and of its lying beyond all power and impotence.

For the same reason, however, also every “pacifism” and every “liberalism” are unable to press on into the domain of essential decisions; instead, these attitudes amount to a mere counterpart of a genuine or

ungenuine militarism. But the occasional increase in the power of Judaism is grounded in the fact that Western metaphysics, especially in its modern evolution, offered the point of attachment for the expansion of an otherwise empty rationality and calculative capacity, and these thereby created for themselves an abode in the “spirit” without ever being able, on their own, to grasp the concealed decisive domains. The more originary and inceptual the future decisions and questions become, all the more inaccessible will they remain to this “race.” (Thus Husserl’s step to the phenomenological attitude, taken in explicit opposition to psychological explanation and to the historiological calculation of opinions, will be of lasting importance—and yet this attitude never reaches into the domains of the essential decisions; instead, it entirely presupposes the historiological tradition of philosophy. The necessary result shows itself at once in the turning toward a neo-Kantian transcendental philosophy, and this turn ultimately made inevitable a progression to Hegelianism in the formal sense. My “attack” on Husserl is not directed to him alone and is not at all directed inessentially—the attack is directed against the neglect of the question of being, i.e., against the essence of metaphysics as such, the metaphysics on whose ground the machination of beings is able to determine history. The attack establishes a historical moment of the supreme decision between the primacy of beings and the grounding of the truth of being.)

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“Bolshevism” has nothing to do with Asia and even less to do with the Slavicality of the Russians—or therefore with the basic essence of what is Aryan—but arises instead from Western—further westward [*abendländisch-westlich*], modern, rational metaphysics—. What if Bolshevism destroyed Russianism? What if the identification of Russianism and Bolshevism completely guaranteed this destruction?

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A devastation in the extreme is prepared when the possibility of a passageway is denied even to nihilism in the essential sense—as the obscure presentiment of the mystery of being on the basis of the furthest remoteness from being—and when nihilism does not get decided in its metaphysical essence.

The same essential form separates Bolshevism from the Russo-Slavic nationality. The same root lies in the modern historical essence of released machination. The latter’s unconditional claims compel to

themselves in each case the corresponding opposition and increase the misunderstanding of the originary affiliation of the nationalities.

All racial thinking is modern and moves on the path of the conception of the human being as subjectum. Racial thinking consummates the subjectivism of modernity | through an assimilation of corporeality into the subjectum and through the full conception of the subjectum as the humanity of the human masses. Contemporaneously with this consummation, and compelling it into its service, the empowerment of machination is carried out unconditionally. “Nationalities” are only reservations and means of power and purposes of power—but no longer and indeed still not an origin and a beginning—i.e., not essentially occurring out of the assignment to a grounding of the truth of beyng. The undisclosed mystery of Russianism (not of Bolshevism) can be bestowed and grounded as such only through a correspondingly originary and thoughtful pronouncement of the abyss of beyng, a pronouncement that is over and done with all metaphysics and all Christian pursuit of culture (Hölderlin the advance founder of the decisions).

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The German essence is again thrown far back—and how often will it still be thus thrown—into an uncanny concealment and still lacks the clearness and the courage for sovereignty out of the silence of the bestowal of the supreme struggle in beyng itself, taking beyng as the preserved origin of the last god. It is not “through” the last god as “creator,” but rather by a decision in favor of this god in the | encounter of the essence of divinity and humanity that, out of the human essence, there will come to be a people that endures the task of grounding the essence of truth and never finds a task beyond or beneath this one.

28

“Nihilism.”—The coining of the word and the conferral of its meaning are connected to Turgenev,¹⁴ who referred in this way to the Russian form of Western positivism. And thereby the essential metaphysical core of nihilism is grasped, even if not comprehended in its ground (i.e., in the abandonment of beings by being, an abandonment concealed in the forgottenness of being) and not thought in advance originarily (i.e., in another beginning). What is grasped is the claim

14. {Ivan Turgenev: e.g., *Fathers and Sons* (1861, first German translation 1869).}

proper to all positivism in a broad sense, the claim to pass beings off as being itself (beings taken as what can be experienced through the senses), that is, the claim to let being be degraded to a mere “concept,” and the latter to a mere name, and the latter to a mere sound. Being qua *nothingness* in the sense of the correct is to be forgotten—nihilism in the metaphysical sense: the historical-political forms of nihilism (as a result of the denial of all “goals,” the neglect of “values,” “atheism,” and the like) are grounded on the authentic nihilism. If this latter nihilism is not recognized, and such a recognition | was withheld even from Nietzsche, despite his decisive insights or perhaps indeed on account of them, then every overcoming of nihilism is a mere half-measure and in this way becomes more fatal than nihilism itself, because in such an overcoming nihilism fully attains its unrestricted and—because now hidden—most dangerous power.

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A word is pure if it arises out of steadfastness in being; mere elimination of foreign words by manufacturing “translations” of them leads to a deterioration of words and to an ossification of language.

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It can scarcely be an accident that the two thinkers who consummate Western metaphysics—Hegel and Nietzsche—lapse into the most superficial conception of language and the emptiest interpretation of its essence. The reason is that for both Hegel and Nietzsche—although quite differently for each and in opposition—“thinking” and “logic” come to power as the origin of beingness in a complete sense, and logic is apprehended on the basis of *λόγος* and thus on the basis of language, and no other question is permitted regarding logic, especially since, assuming the ground of beingness could have been questioned, even this questioning | would be referred back to logic. And at the same time both thinkers—again quite differently and yet in a German way—were masters of language such as was hardly any thinker before them within modern metaphysics.

73

Linguistic science is superfluous, especially if shackled to a tacit conception of the word and language as an object and a tool. Beyond all linguistic science, what is still uniquely required is knowledge of the word, the knowledge which, as steadfast, inceptually determines the basic relation of the historical human being to words. And that requires a great silence.

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The unconditioned order of unrestricted power, in the form of a comprehensive instituting of all possibilities of the empowerment of power, is in itself already a definitive derangement into the irredeemable.

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Is Germany the land of the Germans, is its history borne by the grounding of the Germans in their essence, or are the Germans not rather expending themselves in mere diffusion and dispersion for the development of the highest form of the unleashing of all instituted powers of machination?

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There are some who never come to die their own death; others die their own death often.

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“Radicalism” is of a genuine essence as the preservation of the origin. To preserve, however, is neither to retain some already available possession nor to bring forward historiologically something from the past. To preserve the origin, the primal leap, means to venture the leap which in the first beginning of the history of being leapt ahead of everything futural and thereby had to disappear at once in all succeeding things and in their claims. “Revolutions” are sham forms of “radicalism” and quickly drive on to the now first unleashed power of what was revolted against. In times opposed to essential decisions, meditation must be awake to the simple essence of history, history which is “authentically” only a beginning. Yet the entanglement in historiology and in its distorted forms of propaganda and anesthetization scarcely still allows the correct appraisal from which we could experience the importance of the knowledge of the essence of “radicalism.” All historiological instruction and all “transverse,” selected, illustrated reportage concerning “world history” are groundless and misleading if the | basic relation to history is lacking. That relation is rooted in the event whereby the essence of the human being, as the steward of beyng, becomes question-worthy in some respect or other and the advent of the decisions comes about. “Theological” interpretations of history are as superficial as “political” ones, “cultural-

teleological” interpretations no less superficial than “economic” ones, and interpretations in terms of the “historiology of the spirit” superficial the same way “racial” ones are. The grounds are entirely provided by “metaphysics”—yet the latter obstructs the basic relation to history by veiling the human essence inasmuch as it constantly identifies the human being merely as an animal, whether through a superstructure above animality (spirit and immortal soul) or through the retraction of reason and consciousness into pure “life.” In every case, the misrecognition of the stewardship of beyng is essential and is so most of all when the relation of humans to beings (in any form of the subject-object relation) is still conceded. Metaphysics turns itself into the domain of the emergence of sham forms of “radicalism” that succeed one another at an ever more rapid pace. To be sure, most wretched are ultimately the attempts to make metaphysical radicalism (in theology, politics, etc.) harmless through compromises and through evasions into traditions.

Previously, thinkers could set down their thoughts in a “work” and develop them therein according to the model of scientific treatises or poetic narratives. In the future, thought must become a *course of thought* leading not from beings to beyng, but from beyng into its truth. And the course is in any case only the approach run for the leap which uniquely allows beyng as abyss to be reached in the leap. As long as knowledge of this kind of thinking and the capacity for it are not roused up, all “new” thoughts are lost and remain a poor imitation of metaphysics or, at most, an inversion of metaphysics and a flight from it.

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The power of machination—the eradication even of Godlessness, the anthropomorphizing of the human being into the animal, the exploitation of the earth, the calculation of the world—has passed over into a state of definitiveness; distinctions of peoples, nations, and cultures are now mere facades. No measures could be taken to impede or check machination. Never before in human history has being, so unconditionally, uniformly, | in frantic onslaught, and yet completely hidden behind currently pursued beings, compelled the whole of beings into decisionlessness. Never before, accordingly, for those who know, have such acuity and simplicity of a moment of the history of beyng ever been attained. Never before, through a globally instituted and continuously increasing *fear* of “wars,” of losses, of diminutions of power, and of economic failures (through the fear of beings), has the *anxiety*

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over beyng been suppressed and falsified. But why does beyng, at this extreme limit of the derangement of its ungrounded truth, refuse to grant the plight of grounding? Why does beyng allow beings to rage from one pretext into another? Is this the *self-refusal of the downgoing* over and against humans and thus the deepest abasement of humans in the satisfaction of their crudest needs? Who experiences in all this the silent sovereignty of beyng? Who knows of the reservation of the decision regarding the abode of the last god? Everything is still entangled in the machinationally overfilled emptiness of the abandonment by being. Few surmise. And these few are unique. And these unique ones do not need to be enumerated.

- 78 Cast out into impotence even in relation to Godlessness, the human being totters—continuously equipping himself for this through historiology and technology—into animality and affirms “life,” in order not to deny being—which would indeed be a beginning—but in order simply to forget being, in the most bleak desolation of his pursuit of life. Pessimism? No. Then on the contrary optimism? Again no! Instead, steadfastness in the hardest and most frightful, simple and most abyssal, clearing of beyng? Yet a thinking whose discourse brings the silence of beyng into the endangered word which is most threatened by what has already been spoken. But a knowledge that seeks no refuges, neither in the protection of a god nor in the success of humans, neither in the shelter of the earth, nor in the value of the world. Every refuge is evasion of the abyss of truth and is withdrawal from the concealed suddenness of the bestowal of the moment. The appeal to beings of the highest and ordinary sort makes being something stable and permanent, requires—even against its own will—machination in the definitiveness of its power, ventures the attempt to debar history from its affiliation to the sovereignty of beyng, hunts the
- 79 gods | in the loss of divinity, sends humans into the illusion of anthropomorphizing, snatches the earth from closedness, and thrusts the world into the emptiness of what is merely public.

To make public with the gigantic noise which machination maintains round about itself seems to indicate that the only historical age that could begin, after the time of the end of modernity, has to be the *time of essential silence*. Who could know whether, and in which form of humanity, the human being is appropriated to be the co-ground of this time of beyng?

The “reportage” of machination in “picture” and “sound” is the global “myth” of the consummating phase of modernity. The world of the most remote German farmstead is no longer determined by the mystery of the rhythm of the year, i.e., by the “nature” in which the

earth still holds sway, but rather by the illustrated newspapers with their presentation of ballerinas and underclothed film actresses, of prize-fighters and race-car drivers, and of other “heroes” of the day. Here it is no longer merely a matter of the destruction of “morality” and of “propriety,” but a matter of a metaphysical | process, the devastation of every possibility of beyng into the products of makeable— 80
 producible and representable—beings. To the electric plow and to the motorcycle which can convey someone to the next big city in an hour, there pertain the American sort of “magazine” and illustrated newspaper and also the assimilation of the morals of the highlander to those of the urban sportsman and bar lounge. When machination has secured its power so extensively, then the likewise machinationally grounded “principles” of “blood and soil” are proclaimed, and what ultimately comes into its own is “science”—which makes its discoveries according to these new points of view. The releasement of beings into the abandonment by being cannot be stopped by any sort of preventive measure—it must, as that which is happening, codetermine the future decision.

36

Enlightenment, despotism, unlimited stultification; grasped metaphysically, these are a single process: the uprootedness from beyng, the replacement of the origin by the unfolding of power, the instituting of self-contentment along with | what is brought forth at any 81
 time—entirely the supremacy of beings.

37

The essence of the Germans, their historical destiny, is withdrawn from historiological calculation through folklore or historical lore and arises only at the moment that decides what underlies even “world-historical” incidents and either jolts the Western human being into Da-sein or delivers him up to global machination. On what does it depend that the courage for this meditation is lacking and everything merely totters back and forth between the affirmation and negation of the present day? Perhaps on the fact that all possibilities have been withdrawn for a genuine responsibility, which arises only where an Essential plight demands autonomy in essential decisions. How do all domains of the power of machination prevent every responsibility? Because they most importunately prepare the *semblance* of responsibility in the forms of the massive distribution of always small

authorizations, but ones constantly supervised and instituted in what is “great”—; the capacity for decisions is undermined not through enforced measures but rather through the ever more rich apportioning of 1 “tasks” which are in fact none, since they exclude meditation, exclude venture, and simply require the corresponding releasement and regulation of the already prepared violence.

38

That the age of machination elevates race to the explicit and expressly instituted “principle” of history (or only of historiology) is not the arbitrary invention of “doctrinaire” individuals, but is instead a *consequence* of the machinational power which must subjugate beings, in all their domains, to planning and calculation. Racial thinking makes “life” a form of breeding, which is a kind of calculation. *With their emphatically calculative giftedness*, the Jews have for the longest time been “living” in accord with the principle of race, which is why they are also offering the most vehement resistance to its unrestricted application. The instituting of racial breeding stems not from “life” itself, but from the overpowering of life by machination. What machination pursues with such planning is a *complete deracializing* of peoples through their being clamped into an equally built and equally tailored instituting of all beings. One with the deracializing is | a self-alienation of the peoples—the loss of history, i.e., the loss of the domains of decision regarding being. And thereby are blocked the unique possibilities for peoples of preeminent historical power to unite, precisely in their oppositionality: e.g., the cognitive concept and the passion for meditation to unite with the intimacy and breadth of what is uncanny—Germanity and Russianism—which has nothing to do with “Bolshevism,” and the latter is nothing “Asiatic” but is only the configuration of *Western-modern* thinking on the level of the closing nineteenth century—the first decisive anticipation of the unrestricted power of machination.

It would be just as absurd—i.e., a perversion of the innermost essential relations—to want to battle against Bolshevism by means of the principle of race (as if both of these did not have, in fundamentally different forms, the same metaphysical root) as it would be to endeavor to save Russianism by means of Fascism (as if both of these, separated by an abyss, did not exclude every essential unity). Yet the fact that this is indeed pursued historiologically-technologically shows already the definitive victory of machination over history, the subordination of all politics in relation to metaphysics, wherein is

announced at the same time how much we are still driven about in mere historiological superficiality and less and less I recognize the ways on which might be known the historical ground of what is happening.

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39

“Powerful” now signifies “gigantic,” but never means “sovereign”—a “powerful” chimney in a factory . . .

40

What is “simple” and what is simple.—The former: what immediately “occurs to” the crudest, most superficial, and ever transient everyday opinion; the latter: what emerges to the deepest and most protracted meditation out of an essential struggle and remains an unfathomable ground.—No matter what the political configuration, all despotism over “the people” must in advance simplify (in the former sense of the “simple”) everything, including the essential. Every grounding and decision in the history of being must venture forth into the simple in the latter sense. On account of its transience, the “simple” in its ordinary form must be constantly hammered in and repeated—thereby every other possibility disappears from the horizon of public opinion. Whether this common opinion is expressly formulated through a determinately instituted, exceptionless, and thoughtless production of what is simple, or whether Common opinion arises out of the sleepy indolence of the I “people” does not alter the fact that in each case the “they” has assumed power. On the other hand, every expressly calculated and proposed “they” is still more uncanny—especially if there forms, hard by the “they,” that which meekly submits to all those productions without taking them “seriously” but also without being able to transcend this “they”: the fact that “they” no longer believe at all. The simple in the essential sense is rare and has a predilection for self-restraint—since such simplicity must in each case be expressly ventured and individually attained. The simple in the ordinary sense “lives” on the presupposition that the people are “stupid”—without the capacity (ability and desire) to form their own judgment. Every despot must be aware of this stupidity of the “people” but may not speak of it; instead, the ruler must conceal it by a promulgation which claims that everything comes from the “people” and is an “expression” of *their* soul. The simple in the essential sense arises out of the truth of being itself, namely, that being is the decision refused to

85

everything public, the decision which occasionally grounds the spatiotemporal field of the struggle of the encounter and of the strife: god—human being—earth—world eventuating in their respective uniqueness.

86

41

The senselessness of “world-historical” incidents should not be surprising now or in the future, since the abandonment of beings by being, in favor of the unrestricted supremacy of beings in their machination, has been decided. Here senselessness means that being is denied a truth whereby are also denied a ground and a domain in which the gods and the humans could be essentially appropriated for earth and world. All the same, senselessness has taken possession of beings; being still essentially occurs, but its truth remains deeply concealed, the gift of the purest moments. Against these moments, no frenzy and no entanglement can accomplish even the least. The noting of the sheer senselessness of beings is swallowed up in the attitude of pursuit in the same way as the violent and forced establishment of a “sense” qua the postulation of a “value,” of an “ideal,” of a “goal,” and of a mysterious “steering” of all things toward an optimum. All this places itself outside the authentic decision—i.e., always on the side | of what has already been decided: the supremacy of beings in their machination. The essentially historical and concealed humans must first become mature for enduring the *unique decision between the supremacy of machination and the sovereignty of the event*.

87

If the god necessitates being, and if the human being as Da-sein disclosively grounds the truth of being, and if a world arises out of the abyss and the earth opens itself to bearing—the hour of a beginning has then arrived. The striking of this hour is audible only to those who are able to perceive a silence and draw from it the powers of all passion, i.e., only to those who are not lured away by the vacuous eagerness of the imposed and prospectless machination. Necessitating and grounding, arising and self-closing—each in a moment—eventuate in the appropriating event whose preparation in human history can be carried out only from a transformation into Da-sein. And that requires the great conversion of the human being out of animality into the basic disposition of the stewardship of being; for this stewardship, every passion is simple and more intimate, every knowledge bright and more interrogative.

42

88

Hölderlin is the poet of that unique decision—and thus he is someone unique—incomparable; as a poet he founds in advance the essence of this decision, without thinking of it as a decision pertaining to the history of being—yet his poetizing is already an overcoming of all metaphysics. That can be known only thoughtfully and is also worthy of knowledge only for thinking. The word of this poet and the essence of the word.

43

“*Metaphysics*” in its essence is constantly prey to various, though interrelated, misinterpretations. Metaphysics is sought historiologically-docrinally in the form of a conceptual edifice and of the principles detachable therefrom, thus as an assemblage of discrete and arid thoughts. Or in it indeterminate, mythic, ideational residues are demonstrated, and these are supposed to give metaphysics its unique content and support, but which metaphysics at the same time allows to deteriorate into empty conceptual husks. Metaphysics is cast back and forth between “logic” and “mythology” and is explained, in an apparently deeply thought out and superior way, in each case on the basis of something it is *not*. In truth, however, metaphysics contains the ground of something quite decisive—the one (although still not explicitly grasped) truth and sovereign form of | being—a form available only to the highest and simplest *thinking*. That the clearing of being is of all beings that which is most a being, that to being a pure and most proper meditation as well as the appropriate discourse belongs, and that the word of being prevails powerlessly above every power—all this pertains to what is first, what must be raised into knowledge, if “metaphysics” is not to remain a phenomenon of the “historiology of philosophy” or an object of “worldview” interpretation. The awakening of such knowledge, however, is already the transformation of modern humanity, already a historical, i.e., essentially preservational, overcoming of “metaphysics.”

89

44

According to common opinion, “thinkers” are concerned “only” with “thoughts” and reside amid what is “unreal.” On the other hand, practical persons dwell in the “real.” What? Is not the practical person the unconditional *slave* of his mere un-free “thought”? Is not the thinker the only *free* person, standing free in relation to that which, of all

beings, is most a being? But why must this law of freedom and slavery be concealed and perverted in “public”? It is because publicness allows only the supremacy of beings as “realities,” in the sense of things immediately effective for everyone, and “feels” every self-refusal and every self-constraint as a lack.

- 90 Publicness is never the open domain of the clearing, but is instead always the apparently self-expanding derangement and obstruction of the clearing. Publicness is the most insidious semblance of the open domain and therefore is the refuge of all the operation of the abandonment of beings by being, the space of the most constrained decisionlessness. “Publicness” belongs to human “subjectivity”—when-
 ever the human being as subjectum places himself in the “limelight,” he also posits publicness as this limelight. The most extreme “subjectivism” is attained when publicness secures for itself global unlimitedness, i.e., arbitrariness. This metaphysical “subjectivism” announces, as its greatest result, the eradication of the “individualist” and does so in order to cover over the fact that now for the first time the human being is *completely cut off*—i.e., unrelated to anything other, especially unrelated to being—and can be related *to himself* only as the despotic executor of machination who believes he is sovereign, whereas, already pressed down under slavery to beings, he merely pursues the abandonment of beings by being to its consummation. That the essence of the human being no longer participates in the truth of being and is completely cut off from this truth and does not
 91 know its grounding, even as a possibility, and that | the human being in this nonparticipation instead apparently on his own apportions to machination all things as his presumed fabrications—this constitutes the peak of “individualism.” Christianity least of all can resist this “individualism,” because Christianity has indeed already come to terms with “individualism” in the metaphysical sense, i.e., has withdrawn the human being and his essence from the decision (between being and beings).

45

Historiology is primarily concerned with establishing a sequence of incidents, a sequence of what passes by (“happens”)—(establishes it for the sake of pursuing what is present). *Historiology* explains the later by means of the earlier and even finds that “history” is determined by “ideas,” by notions of purposes and of goals which the human being proposes, which occur to him. *Historiology* explains all incidents and accomplishments in a more comprehensive way on the basis of circumstances and their influences. *Historiology* ultimately explains

everything on the basis of biological states and predispositions and their effluences. The more and the longer present-at-hand, and the more indeterminate, yet indeed more understandable, the respective explanatory ground—proximate incidents, ideas, circumstances, states, predispositions—then all the more superior does the respective historiological explanation seem to be in relation to any other one. In the age of unconditional “individualism” (where the detached stance of humans toward being is entirely uprooted), there arises the most conspicuous semblance that the human being makes history and that all formative adherence to the “historiological” has become superfluous. Yet at that moment historicism celebrates its supreme—and last—triumph, for now the nonparticipation of the human being as subject is explained on the basis of the states and predispositions of his present-at-hand—underlying—(ὕποκειμενον [“that which is placed under”])—*subiectum* [“that which is thrown under”])—and therefore “eternal”—life. This historiological explanation of history, not based on influences, but as effluence, is the reassurance, required for publicness, of the boundless unfolding of servitude to machination. If the appeal to “life” and the “organic” has become a metaphysical principle and is thereby transposed into publicness, then “technology” and “organization” enter into their unconditioned predominance: historiology and technology reveal themselves as the same. Whenever historiology takes an essential step away from the possibility of meditation on history (as decisive grounding of the truth of being), a new “impetus” “accrues” to historiology as “science”—; previously, for example, only the experienced, “older” scholars were able to accomplish a lucid survey in historiology. But as historiology attains greater synchrony and sameness with technology, all the more superfluous do experiences become and all the more pressing is cleverness in timely reinterpretation and in arranging for what is publicly needed.

Something like that can be accomplished only by the versatility of the “younger” generation—“compendia,” “surveys,” new abridged editions of the German “spiritual heritage,” “summaries,” and everything of the sort are bursting into publicness with an “automatism” which obscures, with an uncommon certitude, the hollowness, disengagement, meditationlessness, and thorough barrenness. Historiologists of whatever stripe (to which “philology” and other “human sciences” are to be accounted) are engulfed by historicism (essential sameness of historiology and technology). To make the consummation definitive, however, scholarly ambition is left with the opinion and conviction that we have advanced essentially “further” than our “liberal” and other hopeless predecessors. We have indeed advanced further—further into that which already reigns in concealment: i.e., into the

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93

94 machination of beings—into the a-historicity of modern humanity—into a place lying outside the spaces of the essential decisions. | Historiological erudition always occupies a mere corner of scientific research, and the latter itself is taking on more and more the form of a publicly required and no longer remarkable branch of activity. Nevertheless, historiological science remains the secret paradigm of “journalism,” even if the latter devises other means and even if it shuns the appearance of science. In turn, “journalism” determines every kind of authorship and thus determines a basic form of the configuration of publicness. The scientifically technical form is therefore not what is essential to historiology; the essential is rather *the undermining of the possibility of historical meditation—the technological elaboration of a-historicity as the last field of effectivity of unconditional machination.*—Will it be kept open to humans to ground their history out of the decision regarding what places itself into the clearing in the essential word of the undecided Godlessness and anthropomorphizing as what is self-refused? Who will speak this word? Has it already been spoken? Yet who will open to the word the clearing of beyng cleared by that word? Who is still capable of halting the exploitation of all discourse and the inundation of all thinking by means of this exploitation? What could accomplish such a damming up? Whence will come to the human being the stillness | of the simplest and longest apprehension of the event? Will the essence of the human being ever be grounded back into the essential occurrence of beyng? Will the historical human being ever be capable of mastering metaphysics?

95

46

The confrontation with Nietzsche’s basic thought of the “will to power” must grasp this thought, in advance and historically, only as the consummation of the first beginning of Western thinking but must experience this thinking as the most concealed history of the West. *This* confrontation is the sole essential form of a foundational overcoming of metaphysics—i.e., at the same time, a historicalizing of metaphysics into unassailability. This confrontation is the venture of the decision between the supremacy of beings and the sovereignty of beyng. This confrontation leaves behind all refutation and must pay no heed to the ever coarser massification of Nietzsche’s thinking in public ink slinging—yet must know of this phenomenon, not because in it the proper “effect” of Nietzsche is carried out, but only because it represents a veiling of his thought. The confrontation with the last metaphysician can become history only as German thinking, because only to this thinking are reserved the breadth and abyssal depth from

which the inceptually | Greek questioning as well as the consummating modern questioning can be overcome in an ordinary way. 96

47

Is there a better justification of the world of faith of cultural Christianity than the more and more favored proof that all “metaphysics” does indeed rest on a myth? Why does the age of the consummation of Western metaphysics proceed to an instituting of a complete misunderstanding of the essence of metaphysics? Whence this immoderate anxiety in the face of “thinking” and thoughtful meditation? Driving this anxiety is the supremacy of beings as machination. This supremacy prevents any grounding of a decision but can do so only as a form of the sovereignty of being—thereby consigning being to the most obscure and most perplexed intimation, and indeed striving to make being forgotten. World-anxiety has long since been overcome in a fundamental way, but only so as to leave the field to the deepest anxiety: *the anxiety in the face of being*. The deeper the anxiety, all the more *essentially* remote is it from any timidity or fearfulness and all the more essentially does it dwell outside of all domains of feeling or immediate “lived experience”—and all the more decisively does the anxiety pertain to the opening up of a transformation of the essence of humanity, a transformation still unrecognized by humans, but already a historical one.

48

97

At the moment of the decision between the supremacy of beings and the sovereignty of being, the possibility of a god becomes unique and the divine becomes most difficult, but the human being in his previous constitution and position is thrown off course and deprived of any grounding power. Every fabricated thing is carried off all the way to the groundless claiming of a goalless power. Yet there remains the still concealed capacity for disclosive thinking—whether it will gather the decisive domain into essential knowledge and be equal to the unique possibility of the last god through what is most difficult—the grounding of a Godlessness. But the last god is the most protracted one—the moments of encountering him derive from the abyssal history of being and of its truth. All previous gods were explanations, confirmations, and pretexts of beings. The present age can experience the determination of its own historical place most “securely” by undergoing appraisal according to its relation to Godlessness (cf. p. 76ff.). Yet never did an age stand so anonymously outside of every

Godlessness; for its de-divinizing of the “world” claims to have instituted itself on the divine (providence; “the” life).

Creators are still not grounders; creators can emerge in the production of what is customary and needed and can justify themselves historically. Creators then one day become essential obstacles to any grounding (a grounding indeed only raises the truth of being into words and begins meditation as a transformation of the essence of humanity). Creators—even in the ambiguity of those who are constantly busy and “productive”—are esteemed within the domain of metaphysics. Grounders ground decisions; those who are essential become in the first place compelled to think disclosively the domain of decision through the plight “of” being. *Grounders are no longer creators*. What becomes a “work” to those who ground takes its form from the truth of being, and this truth in each case demands to be put into words in a different way and essentially occurs entirely and only out of, and for, the history of being. Everything merely created is degraded to a restraint on what is decisive and to the vain consolation of production and enjoyment.

The human being—all metaphysical thinking, and thus previous Western thinking in the entirety of its history, determines the human being as a living thing (animal) related | to God as the cause of the world—places the human being between animal and God—as occurring between those present-at-hand things—and endows him with extant properties and essential components (body—soul—spirit) and does this in different ways—according to the interpretation of animality, of rationality, and of what bears them. The human being remains torn away everywhere from his essential ground—which, as abyss, is his plight and as plight is his most profound convulsing and as convulsing is his most extreme preparation for the appropriation “of” being—and remains abandoned to mere explaining, instituting, and planning.

What is in each case for a thinker the first, indelible gaze upon being? Through what does he gaze? Is the gazing a matter of a changing leap into the truth of being? Or is the gazer only one who calculates

regarding things present-at-hand and who reckons up views about those things?

52

Historiological “knowledge” reckons back and reckons toward what is forthcoming; historical meditation decides into the future and liberates the past to its decisionality.

The first, elapsed phase of modernity gave | metaphysical status to “rationalism” (and, as its constant counterpart, to irrationalism). The second—now commencing—phase is developing this rationalism into an unconditionally “constructive”—and thus anticipatory—one (correspondingly, “irrationalism” is all the more “close to life,” i.e., all the more “animallike”). To be sure, “rationalism” is here an insufficient and worn-out catchword which expresses nothing of that which is primarily to be grasped of the machinational essence of beingness, the beingness which, fully unfolded, first offers unconditioned points of attachment for the calculability of historiological-technological proceedings and thus involutes the human being himself into machination. 100

53

What is public harbors a compulsion to results and to the accumulation of results. This compulsion binds one to the pursuit of precisely powerful claims and in that way acquires for them an inconspicuous and yet most effective confirmation. But how does such compulsion correlate with the essence of publicness? Are both grounded in their unity on the basis of the priority of beings over beyng? How is publicness the mirror image of the clearing (of the essence of truth)? How does publicness arise out of the | concealed machination through the things that prepare the way and the space for machination: historiology and technology? How does decisionlessness get welded to the compulsion for results?— 101

54

Only the imitative aptitudes believe they would need to have from early on their own type and their own special tone and would be relieved of an unconditional passage through what is other and old. But why does the true grounding capacity require an often long protection through what is properly alien to it and even is inimical? Why is this protection still more essential than the ever necessary mastery

of the craft that can be learned only in the struggle of the appropriation of what is great within what is smallest?

55

—inclined to the simple things, as is the young birch, which, well disposed to all circumstances and winds, takes into its favor the stars and the sun and greets the earth, whose enclosing power maintains it—

56

102 Among the biases of the “intellectuals” is also the opinion that philosophy is “academic” | talk regarding universal concepts and is a barren stumbling about amid conceptual values. But philosophy is something else: meditation on what essentially happens, i.e., essentially *is*—or, rather: both the knowledge of the sovereignty of *beyng* and the decision on the form of the future sovereignty of *beyng*.

57

Nietzsche—plays out the essence of being to a combat of power positions and power relations—this “combative” “aspect” of beings as a whole indicates a “heroic” mode of thinking. And yet: precisely as thoughtful, this thinking is the most complete capitulation, is metaphysical cowardice pure and simple—an evasion of the unique and decisive question of the truth of *beyng*—. Does therefore all of the anxiety in the face of the concept seek its refuge in this thinker, who in such capitulation must execute only the abandonment of beings by being, the abandonment that gained sovereignty in the history of metaphysics, and yet as this executor does become a thinker?

58

103 Those who have been hushed up and allegedly refuted are most strongly effective—they dislodge into constant | unrest even those others who remain “equal” to them only by evading them.

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PONDERINGS XIII

- a We do not know goals
and are only a passageway.

Need to grant admission ever more exclusively to the one and be always more steadfastly present where for a long time no echo offers the semblance of a concord and yet never break away from the concealed tradition, but instead in the future grow back into the history which must become preservation and loss, grounding and collapse, recollection and neglect of the truth of beyng, provided this truth comes to its essential occurrence.

The transition itself—is what is *most transitionless*—of itself the uniqueness of the inceptual decidedness which incorporates both beginnings.

Need to be present where beyng must ground itself in a ground which of itself wins for itself its own height—because this ground can be appropriated only out of the essential occurrence of beyng itself, through beyng as event of appropriation.

ἀλλὰ παλαιὰ γὰρ
εὕδει χάρις

b

But indeed the old
bestowing illumination of strict grace is sleeping.

Pindar, *Isthm.*, VII, 17¹

1. {*Pindari carmina cum fragmentis* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1935).}

- c Only if we relearn to think on long passageways and in tiered ascents will we create for ourselves broad paths and with them the guarantee of coming from afar; yet this is the precondition for any drawing near to what is great. The length of a thoughtful path, however, is to be measured not by the size of a “book” but only by the concealed order of the question-worthiness of a question.

Those who proceed on the transition can only *intimate* what it is that appropriates them.

No self-interpretation attains what is first said, because in the latter alone does the unsaid vibrate.

We are now standing where the dictum holds: before there can be a poetizing (as poesy), a *thinking*—in the sense of the disclosive thinking of beyng—must first recur.

1

1

The truth of beyng is the ground of history: in such a way that beyng is cleared and allows this clearing to attain a grounding, whereby beings are preserved in Da-sein as the ground of the human capacity for grounding.

2

How much the heart is in tune with the attunement of beyng—

3

What is happening—(but even this word, like all others, is already worn out—“happen” can mean anything). Yet the question is to be maintained in this word! For the task is not to ascertain facts and to report incidents—instead, the happening must be recollected in the decision; but “happening” can here mean only that which essentially grounds history: the truth of beyng and the way beyng bestows itself in its truth, that truth which essentially occurs in beyng itself.

4

Behind the consummation of machination (the unrestricted makeability of all beings as the unique although now unrecognizable truth of being) is concealed | the abyss of the essential decisions: whether the human being will at one and the same time place himself back into the closedness of the earth and also cast himself forth into the openness of a world (the openness that brings something questionable to a worlding) or whether, in the strife of both, there will intersect the encounter of the essential groundings of the divine and the human—and thus the voice of beyng will find its tongue and history will attain its first, long silence.

2

5

The metaphysical revolution is this that breaks out as the consummation of metaphysics, namely, the rolling back and rolling in of life on itself, life that has become the subjectum—life for the sake of life—the unproblematic sheer power of the “interests” of the “life” that does not itself pronounce these claims but entirely falls between them,

pursues the ever more blind involution of life, permits anything only as an expression of itself, from day to day involves itself in something always different, transforms everything with the highest technology into a gigantic historicism, and thus even steps out of the sphere of nearness and remoteness to beyng—. The involution of life on itself is the releasement of “lived experience” into incessant quaffing without measure or rank.—

3

6

The *basic disposition* of the future decision is the *passion* of the word of *refusal*—here is grounded the first and farthest remoteness of the god—his purest radiance. The passion for the clearance of the refusal accords with the essential questioning which must first be a knowledge in advance, earlier and more precursory than all planning: knowledge of the “between” qua the clearing of the “in the midst” and the “meanwhile”—i.e., knowledge of that as yet ungrounded space-time in which the advent and flight of the gods eventuate and the human being fulfills his most human essence.

7

4 “*Anthropomorphism.*”—How are all the anthropologizing of beings and every anthropomorphizing of the human being to be overcome in a radical way? Only through the grounding of the human being in his most abyssal essence—i.e., in the stewardship of beyng. Here the human being first attains the highest freedom toward himself—; here no redemption is needed, just as little as is its counterpart: flight into the “life” that merely has a lived experience of itself. Beyng as machination tolerates this alone: the blind and formless to and fro between redemption and lived experience—interlaced and equally alienated from beyng. Supersensible and abstruse powers | and being-less empowerment of “life”—both originate in the one circumstance: that the human being is experienced and questioned too deficiently, too inhumanly. As soon as the essence of the human being is grounded in *Da-sein*, we are no longer seduced into treating him like something present-at-hand or sacrificing him like something present-at-hand for something unformed—since in each of these cases, even if they are directed to the contrary, the essentially still ungrounded human being provides the measure for the beingness of beings. “Anthropomorphism” is therefore a component of metaphysics. As soon as the human being achieves human dignity, anthropomorphism of any sort is impossible.

8

What is happening?—The abandonment of beings by being as release-ment of being into machination—the involution of the human being into life and of life into lived experience and mere classification.

9

How long is the path on which the thinking “of” being might be released from the usual mistakes—the scientific representation of beings and of their beingness—and hearers might be produced for the other claim of another truth? How otherwise than through the easily misinterpreted word which is immediately mixed into things that are said and are constantly ignored | and which “lives” only on letting the moment pass by? Which moment pertains to the disclosive thinking of being? The preeminent of all moments—the moment—of the moment—the originary leaping-back-into-itself of what is decisive: that does not mean to put forward an image of humanity or institute public worship or negotiate a supernatural bliss or boast of accomplishments and results—what is most preliminary to beings must be carried out first: the truth of being. For this truth is most in advance of everything and yet is only the very first preparation—only the “between”—so that being might essentially occur. This is difficult to see for those who are all-too-blinded by beings and is still more difficult—even for the few—to endure in disclosive questioning; therefore the great, intrinsically obscure errancies approach on this path.

5

10

In the future, may the thinker love only this: being as the abyss in beings—between the projective enchainning and entanglement of being as the “between” of the abyss—from which a plight of grounding arises.—

The thoughtful word—above all, “being”—speaks out of the highest univocity, because it names what is most unique, | which is threatened by no evasions into what is still nameable “otherwise.” And yet: what this word says is never properly understood, since it is always improperly taken as referring to *a* being; we expect in the word something that can be represented instead of carrying out a leap into the steadfastness of *Da-sein*. This word is the deepest conjuncture of the abyss—nothing perceivable (and nothing to be extracted by *ratio*²),

6

2. [Latin word.—Trans.]

but rather the conjunction of the essence of the “between” into the decidability of the extreme decision between the truth of beyng and the supremacy of beings.—

11

Beyng.—The gods have need of a ground from which they summon humanity to an encounter wherein their transfiguration of all things and of all history can be bestowed. The human being requires a ground on which to stand so that he can venture an open region wherein a dialogue first resounds in confrontation. The world vaults into the arch of a ground in whose features the one refers to the other and the one casts toward the earth while opening out various worlds. The earth reposes on a ground into which it retracts its own mystery and, | as something closed, protrudes out into a world.

7

In each case and at the same time the ground is in another ground-
ing, so the reciprocally intersecting affiliation of the grounds is the
one character of the abyss: the “between” of the silence that is kept
silent in the word of beyng.

Between the gods and humans, there essentially occurs the same
“between” to which the world and the earth owe their essential turn-
ing to each other in strife. And this “between” is beyng itself. Human
speech is merely the unrecognized reverberation of the word wherein
the silence of beyng is kept silent as the abode of the “there.” The
thoughtful word expresses nothing about objects and their investiga-
tion, and even less does it give information about lived experiences.
Because we seldom venture the uncanny “between,” however, and
are even less frequently able to bear the alienation of the most inti-
mate silence of this “between,” and because we cannot illuminate in
the simplicity of our essence the sad-joyful grace of the rigor of the
abyss—therefore we can scarcely surmise any longer the sovereign
dignity and nobility of the awaiting which infinitely surpasses every
possession and everything impeding | and, as inexhaustible, is all that
remains akin to the abyss.

8

12

Who knows truth? Those who rest in the confidence of possessing
something true—without knowing about truth or wanting to know
about it? No—truth as the essence of what is true can never be a “mat-
ter” of a possession. Truth pertains to the seeking which desires what

is to be attained—the desiring reaches out into what is reserved—is the broadest and genuine “possession” of what is forthcoming—in order to “possess” inexhaustibly in its own way and so is sovereignty over the abyss—, over what can never be exhausted. The inexhaustibility of the abyss is “grounded” not in immeasurableness and not in a nearness that could be paced off—but rather in the fact that the abyss immediately, constantly, and definitively repudiates every ground and support and compels into the oscillation of the “between”—provided only that we do not take the abyss as a semblant ground and misuse it as a pretext and hiding place.

13

Basic disposition. Every essential attitude and action of the historical human being vibrates in a basic disposition. The most decisive action of the historical | human being is his poetizing, and if this should be used up into something distorted in essence and small, then thinking must propel all poetizing into an extremity—how? All deeds are merely consequences of the one and are bridges to the other, or they remain offsprings of an unmastered and merely calculative mania. 9

14

The historical recollection of what has been is possible only where the recollected is transposed into the intimacy of the same action—; where, e.g., thoughtful recollection of the inceptual thinking speaks out into thoughtful questioning and so can only be radically decisive. But where the recollectors cannot be ones who ground immediately in the same essence as the recollected, then it is merely historiological cognizance of something past—for instance, when a historiologist of philosophy, a mere scholar, reports on a philosophy, or a “historiologist of literature,” who can be no poet, recounts an earlier poetry.

15

The beginning of our Western historical “Da-sein” is the poetizing and thinking of the early and high Greek antiquity—and is nothing else, provided we do not conflate “history” with the zoological inheritance of the | successive generations of emerging and disappearing groups of living beings that “make” a “culture” the way beavers make their “lodges.” 10

16

Everything depends—the act of beginning in the other beginning depends—not in the sense of the beingness of beings—but in the sense of the truth of being—on the basic experience, i.e., on the leap to and of *Da-sein* qua the essential grounding of being itself.

17

As long as the human being experiences, possesses, and pursues himself as *animal rationale*, for that long does he indeed pertain to beings as such, but the truth of being is refused him, and thereby so is the abyss, and so likewise *Da-sein*—and so the unique decision, and so the god-bestowing beginning—and so an ordinary history, and so also a downgoing.

18

The human being is as *Da-sein* the place of the casting of being (the clearing event of appropriation) into that which then for the first time can step forth as a being—can enter into the strife of world and earth.

19

11 What we project in advance as world to things present-at-hand and to the rest is in each case only the counterprojection | of a resonance of the basic disposition. Therefore a disposition—the “between” for everything—has already—in clearing and illuminating—overthrown everything and in this way essentially occurs as the “between” which makes circulate in the “between” everything protruding and standing and falling—such that what is present and absent—beings—merely revolve like a narrow ring in an abyss.

20

The long and more and more extrinsic supremacy of metaphysical thinking has led to every essential meditation being taken as a groundless representing of empty generalities—and to ignorance of the decisiveness and uniqueness of everything essential and likewise to ignorance of the mode of meditation and of treatment required by the essential.

21

The basic disposition—is an abyssally grounding transposition into beings. This transposition in each case decides the transposed human being to an essential direction:

Disposition is more originarily clearing-exposing and assigning than is passion, | of clearer knowledge and more fecund than is thinking, more constantly bearing and maintaining than is action, and more intimate and stimulating than is pleasure.

12

Disposition is everything, primarily in the highest simplicity, and is the ungraspable ground of all things. Disposition out of the voice of the silence of being as event of appropriation.

Who surmises the full uniqueness of the historical moment? Who experiences the transition—without the compulsion to hasty solutions and escapes? Who prepares, for being, the silence of the concord? Who grasps in the apparent emptiness the unresolved fullness, that of an abyss? Who reveals to whom, that few *are*—dominated by the other beginning? Who knows that the uniqueness of every god both requires an abyssal nonrecurrence and posits the downgoing to the beginning? Who accomplishes the renunciation of the empty “eternities” which entangle us in a craving for the mere conservation of the sheer “and so forth”? Who has sustaining faith not in the human being as a present-at-hand living thing—but in the human being—as pretext—behind which is concealed a thrust of being into *Dasein*? | Who realizes that the longest transition, to which perhaps successive generations must reconcile themselves, cannot be calculated according to the hours of day-to-day comfort? Who is able to see what is great in the self-refusal and to be great in this greatness? For the answers here to become justifications and an action, the usual, popular, everyday estimations must be breached. But everydayness persists with such tenacity that only seldom does anyone venture to experience everything in general differently and to maintain an openness for what is hidden.

13

22

And even if it were only this, to reflect on what is still implicit in the fact that in the first beginning of Western thinking ἀλήθεια—unconcealment—became the term for the *essential occurrence of being itself*—then the future—invisible—philosophy would still be endowed with enough of a legacy.

23

14 It is remarkable how basely people take the projection of Da-sein in *Being and Time* and believe that the human being is grasped there only in his relation to things (the ready-to-hand) and congeners (being-with-one-another)! People do not want to see that it is above all the “understanding of being,” as projection of being, which distinguishes Da-sein and places Da-sein back into a clearing. To be sure, this clearing is essentially passed over in silence and not mastered, but it is indeed all that is in question, while everything else is necessary foreground of an indispensable determination. The projection of being is the immediate ground for the simple-manifold relation of the human being to others, to things, and to himself. Yet this ground is the closest—scarcely touched—margin of the abyss, and as this the “there” is steadfastly grounded in Da-sein—toward the clearing by which being eventuates while bearing the playing out of the encounter and strife—and essentially occurs as *this* event of appropriation. The essential occurrence, however, is the clearing “of” the self-refusal.

24

Need to leave behind—and not merely break up—all “anthropomorphizing” of being—; but who are the ones that will follow this course? And are they supposed to be able to follow it?

25

The glare of an arc light does perhaps illuminate precisely the “occurring” history of the world, but one sees in this illumination—*nothing*.

15

26

Our greatest danger?—is not the *brutalitas* of the calculative animal, and not the loss of the tradition of the essential beginnings, but is the most exceptional taste for the “spiritual” and for its configurations, the taste that, tasting and preparing all, leads these configurations to the body and soul of a religious faith, for the sake of adorning that faith, and helps to entrench the decisionlessness. But is this still a danger? No—only a very cunning activity that in another form has already long been pursuing the destruction and for this purpose has been spreading an illusion to which even those who no longer have religious faith fall victim, since they on another path already no longer accept a knowledge and a questioning that no longer require the spirit

(i.e., the *animal rationale*)—because such knowledge and questioning venture in advance the leap into being.

The *extreme abandonment of beings by being* occurs where, under the protection of an accepted and rectified “metaphysics,” there is constant talk of beings and of the most eminent being (*ens entium*), of the creator and the savior God of religious belief, and yet everything becomes blurred in indecision, because a grounding question must be excluded in advance and constantly. Here then for everyone who demands something decisive, even if mere decisions, the most beautiful and tasteful presentations become a play of figures of speech, ones which are immediately abandoned when a questioning might be at issue—then is announced only the retreat to a revealed faith and its religious promulgation. At most, a spiritual importunity succeeds in regions which can never pertain to one who is pressing forward, since he in advance renounces the essence of those regions, in that he has already, with the possession of “truth,” brought himself under cover, such that nothing can ever happen to him. How is anyone then—and so, ever—supposed to be capable of hearing? This higher mendacity of the tasteful “life of the spirit” fits into the region of the empty pursuit of “culture,” which is a pursuit equally mendacious on the other side—such that the decisionlessness is everywhere and thoroughly the *same*.

16

27

To ask *what* a thinker or a poet says must mean asking at the same time and above all *who* the thinker or poet is supposed to be addressing: merely an importunate person behind a mask of humility, someone who has already, before hearing, falsified everything said into something merely to be used for the adornment, refurbishing, and veiling of an already secured “truth,” or instead a listener who is ready to cast himself and his essence into the question-worthiness of what the thinker or poet says and thereby become a questioner himself.—But the pursuit of refinement—a pursuit today in the possession of the apologetics of the Churches and Orders—knows nothing of such meditation, and consequently the pursuit here of any genuine grounding is without power and weight—and can never have any impact.

17

28

Technology and historiology: if the agrarian world is destroyed in every way from without and especially from within (in respect to the simple

repose of the passion of the seclusion in an affiliation to nature), if technology (in the essential sense) annihilates the agrarian world, because it must do so, then *historiology* arises “over” that world—which becomes a mere object of concern to scholars—and technology, as the apex of its triumph, plays *historiology* out to the end and thereby still
 18 finds those who are incapable of meditation and who believe that something will first have genuine “reality” when it is *historiologically* “elaborated.” The scholars fancy themselves the ultimate rescuers and guardians of the agrarian world. But—they have not even “rescued” from their bustling about enough shrewdness to know that what they are here rescuing amounts merely to occupational possibilities for themselves—indeed possibilities which count as timely, i.e., which operate with all available means to keep anyone from meditating anywhere and from even learning what meditation is. My dog—the “Pomeranian”³—has more of the “agrarian world” in his snout and in his bones than do these puffed up, groundless counterfeiterers craving for professorial chairs. Yet the folkish [*völkisch*] and other snobs will “read” such a *historiology* of agrarianism with pleasure—and their associates perhaps will still use this *historiology* for “indoctrination.”

29

The “language” of “motorsport” contains the “beautiful” term “up-and-coming driver” [*Nachwuchsfahrer*]. Similarly, up-and-coming philosophers are now indoctrinated in suitable camps. Are such word formations attributable merely to the growing licentiousness in everything essential, or do they announce a more profound destruction of
 19 the previous essence of humanity? Are words already severed from being and now only a means for the violent instituting of a blind vital urge?

30

The living being—(in distinction from Da-sein) is the prematurely thwarted, self-satisfied, and dulled approach run toward the groundless grounding of an Open ground—i.e., toward *freedom*.

3. {The Heidegger family purchased a Pomeranian dog named Mohrle [“Blackie”] from a farmer at the end of the 1920s.}

31

Whoever does not have the power and the will to concede to thinkers *essentially more* than they themselves have expressed and could express should never attempt an interpretation of them; for otherwise the result is only an erudite degradation. The essentially “more,” however, is in each case a more originary thinking of the essence and of its essentiality. Because today—when it is difficult to say whether the obliviousness surpasses the exaggeration or vice versa—when everyone in *half* thoughts thinks precisely halfway and is immediately transplanted at least into the vicinity of Nietzsche, it is at times good to *know* something of Nietzsche. Admittedly, a sufficient reason for reflecting on his thoughts never resides in such circumstances—the reason derives only from the consummation, achieved by Nietzsche, of metaphysics as a whole.

32

20

The modern “world” is becoming a gigantic “prostitution” into *noise*; therein is instituted the self-consciousness of machination—indeed noise is the basic form of its self-consciousness, and the latter constitutes an essential moment of subjectivity. Noise is the promulgation in that publicness which first lets something count as a “being.” Noise is the swagger of every undertaking. Noise is the historiological compilation (“montage”) of everything past and over and done. All speaking and writing are noise. Noise is the machine—even one that operates soundlessly. All proclamation and praise are noise. Noise carries out the essential step of what is loud into the distorted essence. Noise consummates the instituting of the distorted essence in complete releasement. But even if the beingness of beings were not entrapped in noise, the clearing of being would essentially occur on quite another ground: *silence*—and would endure such grounding.

33

What is the shining blueness of the heavens which makes the rotation of the stars invisible? A clearing that conceals, a gift that is grounded in the nobility of refusal. Essential occurrence that grounds at once world and earth in an endurance and that issues from the event. Letting everything arise in advance out of the transfiguring. Yet the transfiguring derives from being and is not an enhancement of “life.”

21

34

Transition.—In times of *transition*, reality (what passes in public as real) and the essential occurrence of being are driven apart the farthest—indeed even into a forgotten alienation. In this interval resides the broadest field of the most insidious ambiguity—but this ambiguity is the authentically Transitional history—those who are transitional must not evade this field—but must endure it and for their part bear it.

22 What “now” “is”?—The *abyssal self-refusal*—is already the essential occurrence of being! Yet to a metaphysical gaze, everything seems to be a “downgoing,” which is understood as no longer standing up in the light and in the certitude of the ordered above and below of the metaphysically intended world. | The transition and the age of complete meaninglessness.

Nietzsche’s thought of the eternal recurrence of the same expresses the essence of the will to power, and in this basic thought the beingness of beings consummates its history. The consummation of metaphysics through Nietzsche is the grounding of the last age of modernity: we name it the *age of complete meaninglessness*. This name thereby has a unique metaphysical and also transitional nominative power. Meaninglessness is here understood according to the concept of meaning worked out in *Being and Time*, viz., as the projective domain of projection and especially of the projection of being onto its truth, whereby truth is grasped as the clearing of self-concealing. (Cf. below, p. 98ff.)

Meaninglessness is truthlessness, i.e., the truthlessness of being.

23 Beingness has dissolved into pure machination, so much so that through machination beings attain unrestricted power and the abandonment of beings by being accedes to its hidden “sovereignty”—one that does not stem from this power but, instead, arises out of the concealed history of being. Machination alone can keep itself exclusively under its own command to itself and therein can find something definitive. Where meaninglessness has attained power, | specifically through the human being as subjectum, as the reckoner and grasper of his own calculability and that of all things, there the removal of all meaning (i.e., the removal of the question of the truth of being—or of the accord of that truth in beingness and in its projection) must be replaced by something which alone still remains admissible as an appropriate substitute: through a *calculating* and specifically through a calculating with “values.” “Value” is the transference of the essentiality of the essence into the quantitative and gigantic, the delivering up of beings to calculation. (If these values are now—through a retrograde philosophical *erudition*, i.e., in a historiological-Platonic

way—considered to be values “in themselves,” are given out as intuitable objects, and are calculated in gigantic tables and schematized by order of rank, then the consummation of metaphysics immediately turns into the devastation of thinking. And the consequence of this shows itself in a cultural swindle and in the perverting of culture to a means of propaganda.)

35

In the other beginning, thinking is older than poetizing. But the thinking of this beginning takes on an unrecognizability which corresponds to the essence of such thinking (the keeping silent of being).

36

24

At least we now possess “the greatest track-clearing locomotive in the world.”—

“Culture” as a means of propaganda *and* “solitude” as the arrangement of the correct instituting of the unrestricted power of publicness: the former definitive and genuine exploitation of the thought of culture and the latter mindless perversion of solitude as a producible and occasional expedient—these condition each other reciprocally and together consummate the expulsion of the human being into the publicness of beings in their ground and their machination.

37

All thinking is primarily taken as mere thinking that accomplishes nothing (i.e., nothing effective or even capable of effecting anything) and that therefore can only count as sheer onlooking. Since onlooking admittedly achieves all-too-little even for this appraisal of thinking, one concedes to it the business of detached *analysis*. By reason of this trivial opinion about “thinking,” one is misled surreptitiously to an empty conception of “deeds,” which are valued primarily in terms of an anticipatory calculation of possible effectivity, and the latter is understood in the horizon of the “reality” that is already accepted without question. This disparagement of mere thinking | relies on a thoughtlessness and seeks support only in what is held to be “results.” But where is the flight from what is question-worthy greater? Is it not greatest where, in the certainty of a presumed reality of immediate life, a bustling about is instituted which is in accord with such life?

25

38

The thinker always leaps forth after himself, because he must have already overleapt himself.

39

History, because in essence the eventuation of the truth of beyng, is constantly and in incalculable forms and stages a concealed suspension of a decision regarding beyng.

40

Poor Hölderlin—how he is now “maltreated” in the timely views of literary science and of politics, and his most proper *word* is debarred him—all the more so, the more often he must turn up in pronouncements and treatises. His word is not apprehended—on account of our inability to hear the voice of beyng. But this incapacity is the servant of the | abandonment by being.

41

The thinking which is heedful of the history of beyng is, as a disclosive questioning of the truth of beyng, never a “mere” questioning on into an endless “and so forth” but is also not an answering from oneself—; this questioning is more finite than any calculative explaining and replying, because in essence it *delivers itself up* to an answer that derives only from beyng itself.

42

What is primarily “nonrecurrent” is not what historiology calculates along a “time”-line as historical in its particularities; instead, the highest uniqueness belongs to *history itself, its essence, the fact that* history, as the essential occurrence of the truth of beyng, is bestowed by beyng itself. How are we able to say this, that the uniqueness of history is the essential bestowal of beyng? The “nonrecurrence” of historiology is merely the such-and-such in the respective, never to return, now—this nonrecurrence is proper to what commonly does return as what is most ordinary. Here is strutting only a semblance of nonrecurrence, and not long ago people were on the point of recognizing in this “individualization” even the essence of history. But *such* nonrecurrence of history | is determined only out of the previous and present now of

historiology—never out of the essentially occurring uniqueness of being.

43

The claim from self to self—only if a history is entirely able to set free an expressly acquired affiliation to being, only where there lies in the claim the bestowal of the power to preserve what is most proper, can the claim ground something freestanding.

44

Being and Time is the first and, despite the fact that it breaks off, indispensable attempt to express “metaphysically” the essential overcoming of metaphysics as such (in a meta-metaphysics); since we still speak of a *meta*-metaphysics, what is to be overleapt draws itself back into its essence.

45

Hölderlin—to think *ahead* to the poet of the poetry of the history of being, without making him timely, i.e., without objectifying him historiologically. Therefore in thinking he and his poetry can never be “treated,” nor can he—as a consequence of such mistreatment—be compared “with” thinking. What then? The keeping silent of his essence—who is able to hear this silence?

46

The one who asks the question of being is never the one who answers it; but neither does he let the question stand open in the void—for his questioning is in itself, as a disclosive questioning of the truth of being, a delivering up to that which answers. What counts here is not to “acquit” oneself to a question with an assertion, but to hearken to the voice of silence. This highest transformation of the human being, however, needs to retain its protective inconspicuousness. Reckoned from what came before, this says that the meditation which is heedful of the history of being remains without any visible results—; “more enduring” than such “effects” and alone “constant” is the *other* ontological mode of steadfastness—whose assents remain in silence. And all who pertain know the one decision: whether the sovereignty will be one of beings or of being.

The always different struggle between the fanatics of machination, who carry on the past in ever new novelties, and the futural one who pertains to the last god and requires the uniqueness of *beyng*. The hardest mode of struggle of the latter is to keep from getting involved in the means and standards of machination; the mode of struggle of the former is the forceful suppression of everything that is supposedly
 29 | inappropriate. Not only does each of the ones involved in the struggle see the “opponent” otherwise and according to his own claims—but the opponents are so essentially different that the “struggle” looks as if it were no struggle. And yet it is a conflict over the same, veiled in the most alienated essential forms: here *beyng* and its truth, there being as the beingness of beings. The failure of the struggle, however, ends in war—or in “civilizing” destruction.

47

The essence of *history* (the essential occurrence of the happening) is the event of appropriation. (To endure the encounter and the strife in the self-refusal is the transition to authentic history—as the history “of” *beyng*.)

48

Travel uncharted paths and renounce the prospects they offer, only so that the path might be—a passageway to those who gaze. Philosophy is not to be disavowed out of ignorance of the essence of “worldview” machinations; instead, knowledge of its essence (the question of being) must compel a plight on whose ground philosophy arises into its necessity.

30

49

Need to let the word attain the silent mildness of the transposition into the clearing of *beyng*—out of *beyng* as event of appropriation; neither feign “words” as new “vocables,” nor seek to say something “reasonable” by using the common intelligibility of exhausted and confused language.

50

Think out in advance toward “philosophy,” but do not devise a concept “about” it and its procedure. Instead, find paths to that which alone

compels philosophy—; the thinking that is heedful of the history of beyng is still not a “philosophy.”

51

What does it mean to place oneself in relation to *beyng*? To become steadfast in meditating on the essence of truth—through the essential occurrence of this essence, a future is grounded for beyng.

52

Transition.—What is more decisive: the way and the course or the goal and its advance representation? Indeed the “goal”; for how otherwise could there be a way? Or are there goalless ways? To be sure—there are such ways, ones that do not go astray confusedly or arbitrarily but, instead, altogether open up and ordain the region of a course—| such a region is the truth of being. And here it remains questionable whether this region ever allows a “goal” to be set up. Such goalless ways are strange; the decidedness in favor of the course through which these ways are first opened up, arranged, consigned, and held in reserve can be explained so little in terms of something familiar that any attempt at such an understanding is equivalent to an abandonment of the respective way. How unique and rich is what has not gone by, which is kept open to us in the concealment of the essence of beyng? 31

53

Erudition obstructs the way to thinking; mere cognitions never lead to meditation, which arises out of a mature decidedness in favor of questioning and out of the still more essential resoluteness toward persevering within what is question-worthy. This steadfastness in beyng—for beyng alone is question-worthy—develops as knowledge of history, inasmuch as the essence of history is concealed in the most silent alterations of the *truth* of beyng.

54

No explanation of beings and no research into their regions leads to beyng. But even less does a survey of notions of beings as a whole in the manner of “worldviews.”

32

55

We must above all be *historical*, dominated by history in all our decisions, if the concealed tradition of the simply essential is to be able to bear us. Without this tradition, everything falls into historiological-technological machination. Tradition awakens only where meditation as the basic form of human freedom allows a self to be. The supremacy of historiology is a sign of the absence of tradition. Only humans of essential futurity master the *recollection* through which the having-been of beyng raises beyng into its Futural essence—one accruing to another preparedness.

56

The basic *metaphysical* positions are to be experienced and thought historically, i.e., according to their essence, only in the thinking which is heedful of the history of beyng.

57

33

What is this? The gigantic establishment of a motion picture studio whose filming is entirely independent of landscape and sun—, an establishment that can “pose” everything to order? Only one industrial establishment among others? Or one that is directed toward a supremacy in the instituting of the representation of everything? And, in accord with its | character as an establishment, entirely surrendered to historiological-technological arbitrariness?

58

*Why does the divinizing of being accompany the humanizing of beings?—*Because both stem from the same root and with its extirpation can no longer grow. This root, however, is the projection of beings as producible—makeable—things, which projection is grounded in the unmastered experience of beings as the present and constant. The divinizing of being turns being into a “cause” and “*final purpose*.” But humanizing and divinizing come into play because in advance the human being and God are degraded to present-at-hand things and the essential occurrence of being comes into a mere sham sovereignty. The divinizing of being and the humanizing of beings also obstruct every essential grounding of “truth”—which leads to the invocation of divine revelation and the self-certainty of the human being transgressing each other and wrestling with each other for power over beings; in

every case as if what is called *beyng* did not essentially occur—as if “there were” “beings” only because everyday opinion and everyday pursuit came across them.

59

34

The sovereignty of the beginning is the self-concealing withdrawal into the inexplicable, from which the beginning, without effectivity, before all else leaps over the decisions.

60

How much must *pass away* until *what has been* can arise? (Cf. p. 63.)

61

Rank is the grounded protrusion into an essential decision eventuating out of *beyng* itself and bestowing its own law and measure and from itself first and only recognizing all things of rank in their uniqueness and *in that way* alone cognizing them. What has rank recognizes rank never in an equalization, but always only out of an exaltation. The essential ground of rank is dignity.

62

History is the occurring, grounding, and downgoing of decisions about the essence of *beyng* out of *beyng* in the domain of the truth of *beyng*—as this truth and its grounding.

History is essentially the appropriation of the endurance and in the essential consequence of the appropriation is especially the steadfastness of the in-between: *Da-sein*. *Da-sein* is *historical* not in the sense of a property—but essentially and indeed as the grounding and constancy of the appropriation.

63

35

A fixed and distant star over the land of the heart.

64

The end of an age is visible only to someone already exposed to another beginning which the age itself must fail to recognize; and this

failure is not the consequence, but rather the most protracted ground, of the fact that the age is an *end*.

65

As if the *gigantic derangement* of all human productions, which is spreading over the planet, constituted *history*, whereas such derangement can only be the fluttering of a machination no longer in control of itself and therefore, reckoned in terms of the respectively Present publicness, must mark an immensity of empty violence toward the essence of reality.

66

36 It is merely a convenient sham to consider the *easy familiarity* of historiologically understood basic concepts such as “reason,” “reality,” “nature,” “human being,” and “art” clearer than the words seeking to name *beyng* and its truth originarily, out of a beginning: event—clearing—Dasein. Even if in the latter case an essentially changed thinking is required, nevertheless | the distinctiveness of the question of being is grounded not in the difference of methods and altogether not in the types of human actions, but in the history of *beyng*: whether *beyng* will bestow itself in the essential occurrence of its truth as the essence of history and of the uniqueness of history.

67

The one makes “foundering”⁴ the content and object of a metaphysics which plays with historiologically graspable possibilities of metaphysics (metaphysically interpreted) and thus “appeals” to human morality—the other *founders* in the overcoming of *all* metaphysics out of the beginning of a reserved beginning. Each has—in a fundamentally different way—an essentially different necessity.

As soon as machination attains unrestricted supremacy and beings (that which is effective and real, effectuated and effectuable, the so-called “facts” and the “real”) determine all calculating and instituting of precisely “compelled” “goals” and “ideals,” then these latter can be extolled and apparently held fast but at the same time can also be forgotten and discarded in favor of the “facts.” This abandonment

4. {Cf. Karl Jaspers, *Philosophie* vol. 2, *Existenzerhellung* (Berlin: Springer, 1932), 411.}

of the “holiest” “convictions” can no longer be branded as “inconsistent,” “perfidious,” “rootless,” and “arbitrary,” because, with the feebleness of all ideals, | in particular every domain for “ideality” has already disappeared. Machination does not merely permit, but even requires, the forming of the current machinationally effective opinion and interpretation of “happening,” without any consideration of the “principles” still proclaimed as valid. Moral indignation becomes laughable and above all is of no “use”—; but just as myopic are the opposite attitudes, which versus the adherence to “ideals” and “doctrines” extol the “realism” that considers these to be mere pretexts. The intention to act “realistically” is as childish as the preaching of the “highest ideals”; both already stand in service to machination, and they use and misuse each other reciprocally, according to the need prescribed by the machinational requirements. Essential are neither the “ideals” nor the “real results”—but rather the fact that *both*, according to the need of the unrecognized supremacy of machination, can be constantly interchanged. In each case what is then preferred can be justified “convincingly.” In other words: the essential is the machination itself that obstructs all meditation and every decision, forecloses every relation to beyng, and lets that relation be replaced by “lived experiences” which rush in one after the other and outdo one another in novelty. Thereby all power for the claims of the essential decisions slowly disappears. This inevitable exchange of requirements and goals. The place | of their justification is determined out of machination itself and merely serves its execution in the domain of historiology and technology. The age of complete meaninglessness is shocked neither by the extolling of ideals and the promulgation and vindication of the highest values nor by the renunciation of ideals in favor of “facts.” Only someone who has grasped that both are equally “necessary” to this age and are also equally inconsequential can surmise a little of what the sovereignty of beyng is capable of in the form of the accepted abandonment of beings by being. The overcoming of modernity can therefore never pave a way for itself in the establishment of new goals, but can do so only in the “experience” of being: i.e., in meditation on what is undecided of the intersecting of an encounter of humans and gods with the strife of the originating essential occurrence of world and earth. Therefore the task is not the endeavor to invent goals and expedients with cleverness, but the preparedness for meditation, a preparedness having “freedom” toward the appropriation through beyng in relation to the ground (of this preparedness) grounded by beyng itself. But as long as peoples persist in sheer goallessness or in the invention of goals, all that will remain to

them is the competition of “interests,” a production (i.e., technology) of historiology as avoidance of the unique possibility of a history, and this production mixes up “great” and “small.”

39 What if those who are small (together with their publicness) constitute that which may count as great, and if the great ones of such greatness pursue only in this way their proclamation as something great? Then it is time, since great and small have united, to posit everything on what can be made and to tolerate makeability as reality. This unification, however, only seems to stand in the power of a decree and a volition of the ones who are pursuing it—for they are themselves first of all pursued and struck by a stroke they themselves nowhere actually encounter, because it derives from being, from its self-refusal, whereas *they* know and can know only their effective beings as an explanatory domain. If technology in the essential sense has become assured of limitless possibilities in exploiting raw materials, then it has been released into its distorted essence and has become entrenched in such a way that, within the machination by which it itself is carried out, it assumes unconditional supremacy and thus suppresses all meditative attitudes, because it can offer itself as the genuine and universally successful and manageable “knowledge,” without requiring any decisions. In the age of unrestricted machination, the prospects and promises of “eternal times” become an easily squandered commodity—here the thought of “value” achieves the extreme pinnacle of its distorted essence.

40

68

Silver thistles are glittering without intruding into the clear air of a day on which late summer is starting to set in.

69

All too strongly habituated to public acclamation as the measure of the “standing” of anything, we do not surmise that what is most essential must remain withdrawn for a long time, must retain its own space, and has no need of “effectiveness.” Thereby in the future we will be required to bear the essential silently into the silence of the simplest decisions and to think essentially only of what is *most silent* and out of it to expect the enduring whereby beings become the domain of what is proper to being.

70

Is it not idle and empty to think forth into the essence of *poetry*? Or is it the fullest thinking, provided poetizing itself is grasped in terms of the event—i.e., as appropriated by beyng? The other beginning of thinking begins with the thinking forth into poetry and into its *history-grounding* essence—such grounding as the decision in favor of the truth of beyng.

71

We must bear what is confused and groundless—not from knowledge of belonging to some sort of now riotous “beings,” but from recognizing that we are appropriated | by beyng itself. This keeps open the essential decisions for which we are only a little prepared. But such a little amount is more essential than everything gigantic. 41

72

The ultimate form of machination comes into play when “reality” and “beings” assume a *spectral* character—a specter frightens, haunts unexpectedly, behaves obtrusively, has no background or content, and is the groundlessness itself which allows every sort of measure in every respect and diffuses an overpowering bewitchment—and posits itself as the unconditioned.—

In order to be appropriated by beyng qua event, we must divorce ourselves from the beingness of beings and from the supremacy of beings. We are capable of preparing the latter in surmising the former through meditation, and the former must bestow itself on us so that we can accomplish the latter. Elevated toward the bestowal and directed toward the accomplishment, Da-sein becomes grounding for a humanity which must know itself summoned to an Other beginning of history—Da-sein becomes the jointure of beings.

Da-sein is the first appropriation—; as Da-sein, the essence of the truth of beyng is fundamentally appropriated; what is thus appropriated *is* history. The beings disposed in Da-sein—i.e., liberated into the clearing of the appropriation—constitute the domain of appropriation. 42

73

Bolshevism (in the sense of despotic-proletarian Soviet power) is neither “Asiatic” nor Russian—but instead pertains to the consummation

of the modernity which was determined *Occidentally* at its commencement. Correspondingly, *authoritarian "socialism"* (in the variants of Fascism and National Socialism) is an analogous (not identical) form of the consummation of modernity.* Bolshevism and authoritarian socialism are metaphysically the same and are grounded in the supremacy of the beingness of beings (cf. the *earlier* Ponderings). The most proximate historical decision is: whether both basic forms of the consummation of modernity, independently of each other, entrench the abandonment of beings by being (i.e., the gigantism of technological-historiological-political arrangements and institutions) into unconditional results and thus in their gigantic style *are* the same, with or without explicit "political" union, or whether through them, in a mediated indirectness, a

*The term "socialism" designates only in appearance a socialism sympathetic to "people" in the sense of social solicitude; instead, it refers to the political-military-economic organization of the masses. Class: dominant stratum.

- 43 | reacquiring liberation of the Russians paves its way toward their history (not "race") and an abyssal question-worthiness of the Germans paves its way toward theirs, whereby the history of both peoples stems from the same concealed ground of an inceptual destiny: to ground *the truth of beyng* (as event of appropriation).—

The gigantic danger is *not* the "Bolshevizing" of Europe—, for what is already a state of affairs, and is so in the essential sense of a necessary historical consummation, can never be a "danger"—. Danger prevails only where a complete passing over of the *still concealed historical* essence is imminent, in such a way that this threat is not, and indeed cannot, be recognized as such. The danger is that the inexorable consummation of modernity will assert itself as the sole ground of the advancement of "history." The danger is the exclusiveness of the "results" of machination in the metaphysical sense—the unrecognizable and unsurmised subversion of every possibility of a completely other historical beginning which would announce itself as an overcoming of metaphysics (and consequently also of machination) and would necessarily have to recede far into the concealedness of what is not public.

- 44 | The danger is that in a new way and unconditionally, out of the metaphysical destiny of Western history, "*goals*" would be set up and the unique decision (supremacy of beings or passageway toward beyng) would be thrust aside as unknowable and unworthy to be known, whereby the attained goals (of "culture," of the "happiness of peoples," of the assured "vital interests") could in each case already *as goals*

claim for themselves an agreement which at the same time guarantees their “truth.”

The knowledge that we are a *passageway* to being, i.e., into the appropriation out of which the essence of history is determined as the grounding of the truth of *enduring*—this knowledge is a sign of inceptuality and of itself requires the mastery of that which unfolds itself in reticence and which remains just as remote from power and impotence as from “action” and “reaction.” This knowledge of meditation (meditation heedful of the history of being) is the *first* steadfastness in the truth of being and *therefore* is the longest one, the one that *in persevering far forth* can least of all be blinded by “results” and “effects” and least of all is subject to an overestimation of itself, but instead, as mere preparation in the limits of constant preparedness, surmises itself in gaining strength. The danger lies in the threat of the abandonment of beings by being through the forgottenness of being, and this threat | now consists not in an approaching convulsion of the content but, quite the reverse, in the entrenchment of the abandonment by being. The forgottenness of being relegates beings unconditionally to beingness and to its unrestricted unfolding and in that way guarantees the sole supremacy of beings in the sense of arranged “lived experience” and instituted “reality.” What thereby and therewith swaggers as an apparent opponent to the rejection and to the standing aside is merely impotence (belonging to the unrestricted power) and reversion into the respective past which is cast off precisely by machination. Thus, in virtue of the abandonment of beings by being, beingness becomes unconditional as machination and accordingly tolerates no condition through which it could still be restricted or be postulated in terms of “goals.” Machination is never a product of humans; instead, these—precisely when they posit themselves on themselves—are the executors of machination, ones entangled in makeability. (The everyday meaning of the word “machination”⁵ implies something superficial and derived and does so within an interpretation of beings which is itself incapable of ever grasping the essence of machination as that essence is understood in terms of the history of being.) (On the concept of machination, cf. On meditation, p. 1ff.⁶)

45

Despotic communism and authoritarian socialism are indeed the same metaphysically, but not politically. Therefore, the common metaphysical soil will always remain *concealed* in a political comparison—; historically, this means: the essential decisions regarding being and

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5. [The German word is *die Machenschaft* and has the same everyday connotations as the English cognate.—Trans.]

6. {Heidegger, *Besinnung*, GA66 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1997), 16ff.}

its truth will remain unknown. That it is in each case a matter of “worldviews” (cf., on this concept, the lecture of 1938⁷), and so a matter of offshoots of metaphysics, can be seen explicitly in the fact that with a certain unavoidability international Western (Greek-Latin) expressions must be used to designate these worldviews: evidence of their “origination” out of *ratio*,⁸ a term that contains a first predelineation of metaphysics. In the metaphysically machinational domain, all concepts, principles, and axioms are simply “expedients” which according to need can turn into their opposites. To attempt here a reckoning up of “contradictions” would mean to mistake the basic metaphysical position of the worldviews. Thus, e.g., for years the highest principle was that “politics” is not something self-subsistent but instead something that must be thoroughly grounded in a worldview, such that the “worldview” determines even what is “political.” Over-

47 night, however, there can arise a “political” necessity | to affiliate with the former enemy of one’s worldview, whereby the term “political” receives a completely different sense, i.e., the previous liberal sense.

One can now be stirred up by the fact that a standpoint has been abandoned; in truth, the essence of politics has changed. Or should this change also only appear to be such? This change is merely an expedient whose unintended and ungrasped goal is to raise into unrestricted power the metaphysical essence of consummated modernity. Only myopic and empty idealistic “conventionality” and “Christianity” will find here occasions for surprise, if indeed not indignation. To think and calculate within these expedients is essentially to abandon all binding and every possibility of binding. This abandonment signifies an actual basic relation to beings—and presupposes their beingness in the sense of machination. It is proper to machination, for the empowerment of its unconditional power, to thrust forward “values” and “goals,” indeed even “supreme goals,” as that for the sake of which “sacrifice” and “engagement” are required. Such is necessary as long as the human being still adheres to the previous ideals and has not reconciled himself to his complete machina-

48 tional subjectivity. Within the | machinational domain, where everything becomes an expedient, even the corresponding “spiritual” groundings can accordingly be set up and arranged expediently for the respective attitudes, since the “spirit” itself is indeed only an expedient standing in service to the empowerment of machination and receiving its orders thence. This is again not the “arbitrariness” of

7. {Heidegger, “Die Zeit des Weltbildes,” in *Holzwege*, GA5 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1977), 75–113.}

8. [Latin word.—Trans.]

individual “despots”—on the contrary, their essence itself consists in their not being able to possess any other knowledge of spirit than machinational knowledge. Everything “spiritual” must be an expedient calculation and so also belongs only where prescriptive expedients are encountered: all other “spiritual” pretense, which poses as “worldview” literature and is necessarily compelled to the worst dislocations and subterfuges in order to keep pace at any time, is therefore a marginal phenomenon which “has” only itself for its “public” and seeks to hide its own rootlessness (i.e., impotence for meditation) through a phraseology as inflated as possible. In the age of machination, “literature” is done up gigantically but is likewise—i.e., just as gigantically—insignificant and ineffectual.

Mere war, especially one that could break out machinationally, and could do so only thus in the age of the abandonment of beings by being, never gives rise to meditation. Only romantics expect such a thing, as do all those who have forgotten or never considered that the first world war, despite the bloodiest sacrifices, was not able to arouse any meditation. On the contrary, it became at most the first textbook case of unconditional machination and of the latter’s institutions and arrangements. The horror may be ever so terrible, the bravery unprecedented, the sacrifice incomparable, yet all this never creates the basic condition of meditation: namely, the inner freedom of the human being for the essential (not self-interested) decisions, i.e., the preparedness for the historical question-worthiness of being. Everywhere machination has already seized all possibilities of beings and has imposed on these possibilities its own interpretations, so that the human being, despite all the affliction and dismay, is no longer able to press forth into the essential regions of a plight issuing from being.

Meditation as steadfastness in the question-worthiness of the *essence* of truth cannot be forced by tribulations; it can be incited only by an essential plight, which requires a magnanimity of heart. But whence this magnanimity?

Historiologically, the proliferation and entrenchment of machination are visible in various forms: one form is the commercial calculation (covered with a veneer of morality) of the Anglo-American world. The doom hastened by this form does not consist merely in what the form produces but still more in what it cannot perform: it is alienated from every essential spiritual decision and has geared everything toward “psychology” and Logistical reckoning. Thereby this form still claims for itself a supposed cultivation of the tradition of classical antiquity. And precisely this “spirituality” is altogether suppressed into what is antiquarian and moral, and it remains without any creative impulse. On the other hand, Russian Bolshevism (in its origin, *alike*

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50

in kind with the Anglo-American world) remains in its coarseness and massiveness an innocent phenomenon—for the essential appraisal cannot be carried out according to the number of those who have been disciplined and shot, but only according to the breadth and relentlessness of the strangling of every creative historical being [*Sein*], which has nothing to do with old-maid morality.—

Hölderlin, the greatest of the Germans, i.e., the person who most essentially migrated into the domain of the historical decision of the
 51 | history of the West, calls the Germans “the all-calculating barbarians.”⁹—What does that signify? Self-accusation? Essential insight? Historical decision? Presentiment of this decision? The gigantic confusion (in which already belong the abandonment of the principles and their perversion into long-since hardly noticed inconsequentialities) has its single ground in the plightless incapacity to experience the abandonment of beings by being and to preserve such experience in a grounding knowledge—(on “socialism,” cf. p. 70f.).

74

The consummation of modernity: in the age of unconditional machination, the gigantism of criminality becomes public under the title of “truth.” English politics and its kind of actualization constitute the paradigm of the final configuration of the modernity which is now proceeding to its end. In the English “spirit,” even “knowing” and “acting” have long been displaced into the mediocrity of calculation; decisive is the metaphysical incapacity of this “spirit” for the essential historical decisions of the future. Can it be accidental that my thinking and questioning of the last decade are constantly rejected in
 52 | England alone and that no attempt has been made at an | English translation? It makes no difference at all whether the English invocation of morality is hypocritical or is “sincerely” meant in long-accustomed self-delusion and self-complaisance. What is decisive is that the English spirit does not at all transcend this appeal to “morals” and is able to evaluate as purely and simply immoral everything foreign to that spirit. The danger of this spiritless “spirit” consists not only in the relentlessness of its machinational play but above all in the fact that the resistance *against* it is too easily entangled in what is merely machinational. The distribution of the political power groups is only a sign pointing to the end of the previous age and to the indeterminateness

9. {Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 2, *Gedichte-Hyperion-Briefe* (Berlin: Propyläen, 1923), 284.}

of the historical ground of the future one. Mere “worldview” agreements, corresponding to “political” ones, can no longer suffice to ground the history of Europe into a consolidated world. Metaphysics (and thus also “ideals” in general and “morals” and “culture” as their effective forms) is at an end. The beginning of the other, however, is obscure—yet already this remains and becomes an essential event: that the other of another beginning | and of its plight is experienced. To be sure, that requires an intrinsic overcoming of the machinational essence of all things today. The most proximate decision stands out in relief: whether machination by itself still is capable of preventing the destruction of its essence, thereby letting itself endure in a new configuration, or whether machination will be broken apart by the last empowerment of its unconditionality. The decision and the way it is carried out depend on whether a preparedness of Western humanity will awaken for the grounding of the truth of beyng out of beyng itself and a unique plight of the heart will change to the jubilation of the encounter of the god for a protected earth in a simple world and thus *Da-sein* will be appropriated as the essential ground of the essential occurrence of the truth of being.

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75

What must be thought farthest in advance in meditative thinking is both the essence of *poetry* and the preparedness for the plight of poetry, since the machinational supremacy of “reality” can be broken only by the necessary sovereignty of poetry. Yet this poetry must be of an essence that accords with the history of beyng, inasmuch as the poetry states disclosively the moment of the decision | in favor of beyng as appropriation of the enduring.

54

The historical human being of the Western future must be allowed to acquire one thing as what is first: to dwell on this earth poetically, i.e., to build, for the grounding of the truth of beyng, measure and structure in humanity—in order to experience an essential plight, the assignment to being in its question-worthiness.

76

Why do we hesitate to renounce in a radical way the historiological-political superficialities of history, i.e., the technologizing of history, whenever the issue is meditation and the grounding of the future? The predominance of “facts” and of the valuing of “reality” does not suffice to explain this priority of the “political,” for that predominance is itself already the consequence of the hegemony of metaphysics, which

prevents meditation on being and dissembles the essence of history. Therefore metaphysics stands as the single great impediment to historical meditation.—

The current and ultimate supremacy of metaphysics—diffused in the forms of “worldviews” and “ideologies”—must be broken. Without this overcoming, hope and fear stiffen into the fields of historiological calculation and remain far from a transformation into the basic disposition of a preparedness incited by the Essential plight.

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77

The *gigantic*, intrinsic to the essence of machination, is not some present-at-hand oversized thing; then it would remain small, empty, and impotent. Gigantism consists in the continuously hiding and constantly lurking measurelessness of everything which becomes “extant.” Every exaggeration turns into an impetus for the next one and an ostensible justification of it. And every exaggeration is entirely calculative, although always clamped in that which is properly effective: the threat of the decisive, but in each case suppressed, measurelessness—the lurking of this measurelessness in relation to everything and through everything, the ungraspability of this incalculability which encompasses all calculation, the semblance of the legitimacy of every step of the self-concealing measurelessness, the ingenuity with which the measurelessness “enraptures” all common opinions and practices, the evasion of all questioning, the corresponding insistence on the publication of every success (—for everything made is here in advance branded a success), the unboundedness within the semblance of the most rigorous binding—called “alignment”—all these are signs of a machination that has broken out into the unconditioned. This machination eludes all explanations that are based on human activities;—qua being, it penetrates all humanity and the remainder

56

of the human “world” which is hollowing itself out and is driven into decisionlessness. The measurelessness of machination is no longer steerable or even only graspable through human presumption [*Vermessenheit*], which always moves within the acknowledgment of a measure and therefore still bears in itself the possibility of something transcending it. The measurelessness of machination demands no human presumption; it demands only the ungrasped and unknown detachment from every essential decision. This that is detached enables the sudden, constant, and often self-reversing entrenchment of all pursuits and productions in precisely that which in each case promises results. The “result” is only a pretext machination

palms off on us so that we might create for ourselves according to need a changing sphere of representation within which our activities might appear “heroic.” Such detachment is an essential *consequence* of the abandonment of beings by being, whereby beingness as machination is kept in power. But the abandonment by being—arises out of a concealed essential occurrence of beyng. All incidents, made public historiologically-technologically as “happenings,” constantly surpass one another in their meaninglessness, the one thrusting the previous one into oblivion. The technology of the machinational institution of historiology in public opinion prepares an | essential a-historicity of humans. The a-historicity would not be an essential feature of machination unless it could hide behind the gigantic historiological montage of the respectively current happening of the respectively greatest time. *The flight of the gods is so definitive that beyng no longer allows the human being to be taken as worthy of a knowledge of this flight, and so the human being is relegated to the subjectivity of the subject.* But the leap into the disclosively interrogative experience of abandonment by being as such is already steadfastness in the knowledge of beyng as self-refusal—this essential occurrence of beyng shatters all historiological-technological human “history” and appropriates the human being differently: into Da-sein.

57

For Da-sein, machination as such and, along with it, the gigantic are knowable in a knowledge which thrusts this that is known back into its insubstantiality. This thrusting away has its authentic sharpness in a *passing over*—, which disdainfully renounces even giving notice to what is passed over. In this passing over, however, there still radiates a transformative gaze which recognizes in the abandonment by being the arrival of a most remote intimation of the abyssal beginning of the history of beyng out of the essential occurrence of its truth. Here is prepared the *impoverishment into the essential poverty* whose sole possession is beyng.

78

58

“*Science.*”—The historiological aftereffect of a past educational history is so obstinate in the remembrance of the scions of today’s older “generation” that the name “science” always makes them think of a tranquil erudition that in the sphere of its “questions” and opinions lives in a peaceful “world.” Only with difficulty do the elders resolve themselves in favor of what the younger ones already know in no other way and “totally” acknowledge with the smallest amount of spiritual claims: i.e., in favor of the supremacy of the purely machinational

essence of “science.” Characteristic of this “science” is not a philology or a physics—but “barnacle research,”¹⁰ which has its own institutes seeking ways and means to keep barnacles off the hulls of ships, since such growths considerably reduce the *speed* of navigation. Here lies a “problem” of “vital” importance—science is to be grasped in terms of the essential character of such a problem. But this sort of “research” has a prescriptive character not because it is carried out precisely at present—quite the reverse, its prescriptiveness is the consequence of a change in the “origin of knowledge” and in the capacity for knowledge, and such change arises out of the essence of being as machination. The pseudophilosophy which would like to read off the essence of science from actually pursued sciences, and even I attributes the discovery of this procedure to *Kant*, is unable to recognize that Kant experienced, and took departure from, mathematical natural science as a “factum” only because the essence of knowledge in the sense of the mathesis of modern thinking was certain to him and this certainty itself coconstituted the content of the self-certainty of the subjectum.

79

Anyone who expects consolation from *philosophy*, and lets himself be at all consoled by it, must remain outside of its proper domain and can know of philosophy only its name and its historiology. All consolation avoids the danger of displacement into an abyssal transformation of humanity. Yet this displacement is in essence the appropriation of humanity to the grounding of the truth of being. Is there a standpoint that could still assess consolation and displacement against each other? Or is each, in its own radically distinct way, unconditioned? All of metaphysics tempts itself openly or indirectly with consolations and can abominate and distrust that which is essentially other to it only as what is disconsoling—or, at most, metaphysics dismisses what is disconsoling as something unintelligible (to metaphysics).

What is now proceeding is illusorily the decisive abandonment of all “lived experience,” or possible “lived experience,” of being as well as the abandonment of everything in that way reported and even already forgotten about being. What is affected and what does the affecting

10. {“Barnacle research” is concerned with the reduction of resistance to the movement of a ship by way of decreasing friction in water. It was and is carried out by the Nautical Research Institute established in Hamburg in 1913.}

are—in a similar way and similarly unprepared for meditation—especially the “object” and “subject” of machination and do not extricate themselves from this unique dichotomy, but instead throw themselves from objectivity into subjectivity and vice versa. In the concealed ground, however, everything is released from beyng into beings. The releasing creates the abyss of a latent plight which casts only the most distant shadows on the most proximate suffering of the perplexed humanity thrown back on itself.

What is now proceeding is a-historical, already something past (in essence something decided and no longer summoned out of itself into an essential transformation) even where it becomes the most important present moment. What is proceeding is but the now nearly measureless making visible and publicizing of the machination which in essence is still only running out: what is utterly without a future, i.e., what of itself finds no motive to prepare for something forthcoming in the sense of an appropriation of the essence of humanity to the task of grounding the truth of beyng. What is proceeding is the gigantic flickering of the products of the age of unconditional meaninglessness. Insofar as we know this, i.e., bear it steadfastly out of the basic disposition of feeling unsettled, we already tarry in the silence of what is forthcoming and already surmise the simple necessities of the liberation of the earth to the simple world in the open air of the encounter of gods and humans.

61

What is proceeding is definitively snatched up in advance into the calculation which itself runs ahead of machination and compels into its clutches everyone who still sets about to maintain concomitantly a role in these incidents, called “history.” All distinctions of “cultures,” “worldviews,” and “political goals” level themselves off on the same plane in which only the designations are different. And this difference sinks to nothing, for even the words dissipate into mere sounds and become one means of incitement among others. Peoples turn the defects of machination into possessions as appearances of a superiority—from the opinion that meditationlessness is an achievement. What is futural, however, that which is appropriated to what is forthcoming, is meditation as liberation to steadfastness within the question-*worthiness* of the essence of truth.

Expect nothing from beings; instead, be appropriated by beyng.

62

Perhaps proceeding now is the last change in those who execute the machination of beings. Previously, there was still a hesitancy to allow the gigantism of machination to come into play unconditionally and with unrestricted violence. Now machination has directed its executors to what is unconditioned and to the venture of unlimited meaninglessness. This change looks superficially like something “new”; it

is indeed “new”—but the novelty is only the different continuation of the hitherto and is ultimately the full culmination of the hitherto. The novelty is the extreme opposition to the beginning. The change is the unconditional denial of the possibility of a beginning. In the age of the machination that has been released into unconditionality, the works of delusion are so gigantic that they tolerate no other “works” next to them and so swagger about as the “truly real.”

81

It is easier to act in the secure domain of an immediately effective task than “merely” to reflect. Yet what matters is not what is “easier” or “more difficult,” but that everyone abide by his own destiny.

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82

What if the present were only something already past and exhausted itself in the replenishment of the past through ever new surprises and the newest ones? Then reigning in concealment would be the moment of the complete incapacity for decisions and even for the preparedness toward a decision (Cf. p. 34.)

83

Dostoyevsky says at the end of the first chapter of *Demons*: “But whoever has no people also has no God.”¹¹—But *who* does have a people, his people, and *how so*? Only he who has a God—and only in that way? But who has a God, and how so? Are we now falling into the back and forth of a counterplay which as such, in its unilateralness and bilateralness, is of no avail in either case? Whither does this counterplay point? Is it not itself borne and spanned by that which neither a people needs, nor God needs, though indeed both together need in essentially different ways in order to find and ground their essence and to *be* beings? And what is that? Beyng in its truth. Only the relation to beyng can bestow the possibility of a plight of the encounter with God; only the need for beyng (on the part of God) extends this relation into something out of which what is to be encountered can enter into the relation and can allow the relation to receive explicitly its proper essence. Beyng—as appropriation into | Da-sein, in which

64
guise it endows the event with the amplitude and arena of its

11. {Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *Die Dämonen* (Munich: Piper, 1922), 53.}

oscillation and can be experienced only at the moment history finds its essence as the essential occurrence of the truth of being.

84

Everything inceptual arises from roots and so comes from “below.” But this “below” is nothing unless it harbors the possibility of *its* “above” and brings that to hold sway. Therefore, nothing essential ever comes “merely” from below and never “merely” from above—but solely from the struggle regarding the essential liberation of both—out of their “in-between”—yet the latter is already itself the appropriated of the appropriation (i.e., of being). Mere going-down-to-the-roots (all radicalism) is ambiguous: it can mean to pull up the roots or to sink them into the soil. The distorted essence of what is radical is merely exaggeration extended to the level of the unconditioned.

Liberation is grounding in the latent essence and receives its direction from an indigenous proximity to the origin. Sham liberation leads off into what is rootless and alien, into what can bestow no fittingness.

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65

The transition—means the essential, nondisdainful passing over on the part of those who are torn away from the beginning; the renunciation of the supremacy of beings. Such a transition arises only on the basis of history: i.e., out of the essential occurrence of the truth of being.

86

The unfathomable simplicity of *Russianism* includes what is unpretentious and also what is exorbitant—both in reciprocal affiliation. Bolshevism, thoroughly un-Russian, is nevertheless a dangerous form of the distorted essence of Russianism and thus is a historical passageway; as this form, Bolshevism holds in readiness the possibilities of the despotism of what is gigantic but also the other possibility, viz., for the gigantic to fall into the chasm of its own emptiness and leave the essence of the people without a grounding.

87

We see an early form of nihilism in the fact that all “goals” are disappearing and all “faith” is becoming otiose. Nihilism first attains its essential power when goals and the attitude of faith completely sink down to a mere arbitrarily exchangeable tool of machination and the

66 bleak devastation of the earth hides within the semblance of supposedly “great” historical moments. | Even this gigantic misrepresentation of history, by way of an immediately concurrent and regulative historiological technology, is not an accomplishment or invention of individuals. Instead, it is a process which simply offers to those who are already uprooted a shelter for their groundlessness and goallessness.

88

The “highest” things *machination* allows are “interests,” including even “cultural” and “religious” ones—; “culture” and “religion” are already of a machinational essence and bear no relation to history or to the gods. These latter, admitted merely as ideas, simply become pretexts of cultural and ecclesial activity which dispatches propaganda everywhere, so as to gain prestige. “Interests” relate to that which is a matter of concern; that there occurs something like a “matter of concern” expresses precisely the constraining of the human being into the machinery of the ideals and of their domains of actualization. “Interests” could never comprehend that outside of themselves (the “matters of concern”) something essentially other might still occur, *for the sake of which* the human being is steadfast in beings.

67 Every “for the sake of which” is decisive. Decisions arise from meditation—meditation qua the relation to what is most question-worthy as such—and that is being; “interests” are fixed only on beings, i.e., on their beingness as represented in terms of ideas. The pursuit of “life-interests” remains what it is, even if the interest is directed toward individuals, a community, or a community of communities; in this way, the interest is merely expanded and is thereby completely entrenched in its exclusive validity. Thus the machination is confirmed in its gigantism. Within the sphere of the supremacy of the life-*interest*, what is “interesting” may also shoot up and its diffusion may be served by all the means of information and “illustration.” The wasteland of the life-interests apparently fills up its emptiness with a constantly changing multitude of interesting things. Then one day even the sculptures in the Parthenon and manuscripts of the Middle Ages become “interesting.” Everything becomes interesting for a while, and nothing is decisive any more. Even what is proclaimed to be “decisive” counts merely as something interesting to an interest. How could it not?

89

If the history of the West is to be rescued once again in an essentially ineptual configuration, then needed is a transformation which surpasses all the previous revolutions that concerned beings alone: the change in beyng and the concomitant decision against beings and their supremacy designate the “place” of the beginning of another history.

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68

Lines of demarcation between Russia and Germany merely veil the abysses of preconditions for a still unquestioned decision regarding the essence of Western history. Dividing strokes have to make manifest what is insidious, viz., what is essentially the same, precisely in its sameness. National Socialism is not Bolshevism, which is not a Fascism—but both are machinational victories of machination—gigantic forms of the consummation of modernity—a calculated depletion of nationalities.

91

Cowardice in the face of meditation is taken as a “heroic attitude.”

Technology is the most subtle form of the most persistent proletarianizing.

92

More important than the “romantic” expectation of a “spiritual blossoming” out of the currently a-historical “happening” is the experience of the abandonment of beings by all the truth of beyng. Only then do we know the one thing: the flight of all the gods. But that knowledge is the first and most remote nearness to their unfulfilled divinity.

93

69

The future is not the mere negation of something past, as if a present would have already thrust itself into its future by turning away from the past. Nor does the future arise out of an advance calculation of something present. In both these cases, the future [*die Zu-kunft*] is debarred from its essence: namely, as that which comes forth [*das*

Zu-kommende] upon the present, back into recollection in such a way that what comes forth, instead of introducing some object, beckons out into the self-clearing of something to be endured—which conceals its innermost essence in what is here called the *event* and constitutes the essential occurrence of beyng itself. The future: the forthcoming conveyance out into the enduring of the encounter and of the strife; the carrying away that incurs.

94

That which “activity” brings forth is always only something made but never something generated [*entstanden*]; the latter can come to stand only out of and into a proper origin.—

95

70 Lying hidden in the essence of Russianism are treasures of expectation of God, and these essentially surpass all the stocks of raw materials. Who will mine these treasures, i.e., liberate them to their essence and | not merely calculate them in terms of historiology and literature? Who is so simple that he discovers and founds equiprimordially into unity his most proper essence and also what is most alien to him? What must happen so that such might become a historical possibility? Beyng itself must first bestow itself in its truth, and for that the supremacy of beings over being, i.e., metaphysics in its essence, must be overcome historically.

96

“*Socialism.*”—If we ask about the concept imprinted in history, and not about some romantic ideal, then we find the deepest answer (deepest because most resolute and least evasive) in Lenin’s dictum: “Socialism is Soviet power plus electrification.”¹² This dictum requires a searching interpretation. In the first place, nothing is said here of “community” or “welfare” or the “equality” of all citizens; instead: socialism is “power”—the releasement of a despotism which compels and holds in pincers a proletarianizing of the entire people and accordingly often changes its tactics, sometimes even to the opposite

12. {Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, “Our Foreign and Domestic Political Situation and the Task of the Party” (Speech of 1920), in *Werke*, vol. 34 (Berlin, 1966), 414.}

ones (cf. NEP¹³). Socialism is despotism “plus”; this summative addition derives from that “empirio-criticism” of the | end of the nineteenth century which determined Lenin metaphysically through German “philosophy.” Something is added to “power”—but not as a mere appendage—the word “plus” is only a characteristic expression for the *calculative* formulation of the essence of socialism. This calculation arises from the computation of a unity according to which “electrification” must be the prescriptive and sustaining form of the carrying out of power and thus of the assertion of power as the expansion of power. But “electrification” is here only the name for the most modern main form of producible and manageable forces and networks of forces—the name for technology in its newest form, one that is perhaps no sooner instituted than it is already out of date. 71

Socialism is despotically proletarian power in which technology is not a mere appendage nor a mere means—but is instead the basic configuration of the empowering of the power. This socialism is the essence of Bolshevism. Despotism (power in the hands of a few, who are actually no one) compels an unconditioned proletarianizing and also, by way of technology, suppresses all resistance (since technology enchants). Despotism is peremptory, ruthless, and cold. Conversely, however, *this socialism*, which does not necessarily have to take the Russian form, brings technology into the unconditionality of a power whose decisive character consists | in its making impossible every “spiritual” and “historical” demand and question as a merely intellectual false need. Thus it degrades “life” to “interests” and to the elevation of the “standard.”—But what is more erstwhile—i.e., “liberalistic”—than *this* setting of goals? (Cf. p. 86f.) 72

The greatest difficulty of contemplative thinking is to have clear knowledge of its superfluity and *nevertheless* to carry out such thinking in an essentially still more simple carefreeness than could ever be the one with which the rose radiates its flowering into nature. For the rose has the “bliss” of ignorance—and of something entirely retained in the protection of the closure of the earth. 72

97

The individual—someone who, in solitude and without protection, help, or confirmation, brings to maturity the simple decisions out of the concealedness of essential history and in these decisions endures the establishment of a future world. The individual—how could such

13. {NEP = New economic politics; economic and political initiative of Lenin and Trotsky in 1921.}

a one be a “private” person? This latter outgrowth proliferates only in “communities,” because they need such in order to justify themselves out of resistance to it. They are unmitigated enemies of the individual, and their enmity is expressed | above all in the varied and continuous falsification of the individual into the “private person.” (Cf. p. 74.)

98

If today anyone still reads a book, an activity which falls in the usual sphere of refinement, then that is already recorded as the “vibrant life of the spirit”—as if that life were a matter of “reading” and of the use of books. This is the last remnant of a liberalism diverted into Bolshevism and of the cultural pretense of such liberalism.

99

War, even if an occasion and form for an always varied heroism, is appalling. *But this is even more appalling:* an a-historical people, blind to its uprootedness, and without the sacrifice of blood and without external destruction, tottering about amid the greatest historiological noise of all its orators and newspaper reporters, meditationlessness counting as reason, and the latter securing its essence in unconditional calculation.

100

The basic error: that a people might create for itself a “life”-space through “spaces”—and thereby unlearn and forget the decision regarding “life” and allow only the | “standard” to count as the measure. In power here is ignorance, to which the essence of meditation is denied: the knowledge that meditation alone opens worlds and the earth, in that it gathers them into the simplicity of a decision regarding the relation to being.

101

There still are “islands”; but lacking are those “islands” that could experience the sea out of which the islands protrude. (Da-sein out of being.) The “islands” are the unique persons of a historical destiny to whom the grounding of the essence of history is assigned as the enduring of the encounter and the strife—this history is the *history of being*. The affiliation to such history is bestowed in the impoverishment to the *poverty* whose sole possession is its occurrence as the

proper domain of an appropriation. The merely historiological history (metaphysical history) persists in a prelude. Thereby the division of powers of “historiological” reality has prepared a distribution of roles, and the mysterious ways of this distribution are slowly becoming clearer: the role of the nationalisms of various deviations is the incitement of imperialism. The role of socialism is the expansion of imperialism. The incitement serves to impel despotism.

The expansion proceeds to an invariable flattening down to a low level. The imperialism (in the sense of despotic proletarianism) elicited *in this way* is not a fixed “ideal” or “goal”—but is only a motile form that has not yet revealed its ultimate configurations. Nevertheless, this empowerment of “imperialism” signifies the conducting of modern humanity to unconditional machination; and the latter employs an irresistible lure: it grants the executors of machination the consciousness of availing themselves of machination (here in the superficial sense of the calculation that plans and institutes) in such “imperialism,” whereas in truth, i.e., in the essence of what is still concealed here as history, the surrender of imperialism into unconditional slavery to machination has already been decided. In this broad and elongated anteroom of the history of beyng, “*nothing*” happens. Because everything is impelled out into decisionlessness and compressed into the wasteland of blindness with regard to decisions, the greatest possible activity must still, on account of the allure, occupy all humans constantly and “without remainder.”

Within this anteroom of the history of beyng, we draw near | to the *Western revolution*. In this unconditional configuration, however, the revolution does not lead to something new in the sense of an Other beginning—but instead brings about the “*ending*” which has been torn away from its erstwhile beginning—that “*ending*” which is meant unwittingly in all the idle talk of the “ultimate end.” This revolution is nevertheless not the mere “Quantitative” extension of Bolshevism to Germany and westward—instead, it is as an ending something unique and peculiar. The consummation of unconditional machination as the displacement of an apparently “personal” dictatorship of an identifiable person into the despotism of no one—of the pure empowerment of the processes of unrestricted planning and calculation—the flaunting of “realities”—of “facts”—of tactics and their implementation as beings—and the empowerment of beings of such an essence as henceforth completely forgotten being [*Sein*]—; in this “history” the power of *nothingness* is first attained unassailably in its extreme form (all so-called nihilism in the previous—even Nietzschean—sense is only an occasional limited prelude to this one). Through such “history,” the essence of history first comes to the verge of a prospective decision

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between *nothingness and beyng*—| the imperialistic-bellicose and the humane-pacifistic ways of thinking are only interrelated historiological (as formative of “history”) “sentiments” that in each case are differently proposed as pretexts in whose domains no decisions are any longer possible—because these ways of thinking merely represent offshoots of “metaphysics.”

Therefore even “international Judaism” can avail itself of both of them, can proclaim and carry out the one as a means to the other—this machinational pretension to “history” entangles all participants alike in its toils—; there are “ludicrous countries” in the sphere of machination, but also ludicrous cultural pretensions. In the approaching Western revolution, the first modern revolutions (the English, American, and French ones, and their sequels) are brought back to their essence; the “West” is ultimately and most decidedly grasped in terms of them, specifically such that it still intends to struggle against them.

Anyone who in this struggle asserts and gains “world domination” is not less inconsequential than is the fate of those who are the most abraded; for all still stand and fall on the level of metaphysics and remain excluded from what is other.

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102

With regard to the overcoming of metaphysics, Nietzsche is the ultimate and genuine danger point, because his thinking appears to be such an overcoming but in truth is only the inversion of metaphysics and so becomes its most insidious entrenchment. Thus even Nietzsche’s concept of nihilism remains a half-measure, and all his attempts to elude metaphysics become all the more entangled in half-measures and undecidedness. (Cf. p. 80.)

103

Russia is not Asia or Asiatic and yet belongs just as little to Europe. What then is it? And Bolshevism is utterly not Russianism—and so arises the dark danger that a renewed and radical securing of Bolshevism (i.e., of an authoritarian state-capitalism, which has not the least to do with a compassionate socialism) and the conditioned despotism of technological and industrial intelligence might long delay the awakening of Russianism and bring about only a plundering of the Occidentally represented and utilized land—and in everything, including the essence, might think a-historically and calculate entirely

“historiologically.” What is further West certainly does not, nor do the Germans any less certainly, stand | within a Historical meditation which would be strong and creative enough for an essential liberation of Russianism. A precondition would be for us to forget much—perhaps everything—that now dominates “life.” Perhaps this forgetting will be assisted on its way by an unusual destruction of modern Europe.

79

104

Where “organization” is itself “organized” as a means of power, the masses have gained power and have made proletarianizing their goal. “Leaders” are distinguished by their capacity to be the purest “functionaries”—i.e., the most subordinate executors of the instituting of the urges of the masses. “Leaders” must place the highest demands on their organizational staff (“the party”); that is the sole way for them to retain power (since power exists only in the overpowering of itself—never through currying favor). The fact that all leadership is the production of a determinate level of *consciousness* in the masses shows how essential to organization is “computation” in the sense of a representational-productive “consciousness.”—

Only as long as resoluteness toward disorder and toward the application of extreme violence bears all its tactics, does a “revolution” maintain itself in a state of “evolution” that is supposed to seem to those who are led as a termination of the revolution but that in truth must remain an unconditional intensification of it.

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105

The replacement of the “ideal” by a “human type” is only the transfer of the metaphysical projection of beingness in a general way onto the uncomprehended projector. This transfer is not an overcoming of metaphysics, but is only the most insidious forcing of its essence into that which is without history. Insofar as the human being represents himself in the “type,” he renounces every possibility of the essential occurrence of being and becomes set in the mere unfolding of the properties and accomplishments possible in his characteristic domain. In this way, metaphysics is thrust into blindness and utter thoughtlessness. (Cf. p. 78.) The human being grasps himself as the “creator”; insofar as he has therein found his essence, he has delivered himself over to subjugation by machination.

106

81 Ungenuine silence—from perplexity and ignorance—falls at once into unrestrained idle talk. Genuine silence—| from knowledgeable mastery over the decisions—prepares the essential word. A person who is genuinely silent works toward a simple stillness, which is the spatio-temporal field essentially originating out of the essence of truth itself.

The step into the other beginning of philosophy is decided by knowing that, *and how*, the essence of truth belongs to *beyng* itself. The worthiness of *beyng* to be thought could never be fulfilled through “thinking” in the metaphysical sense.

Truth: the clearing “between” of the enduring of the encounter and strife essentially occurring as event of appropriation.

107

(Cf. p. 88.) Only *arising* gods—gods coming forth—can newly fulfill the essence of divinity: the fact that *beyng* itself is required as the arena of the extreme decisions regarding a possible essential occurrence of truth. *Arising* gods—establish their divinity in the prefigured passageway of an approach to the human being, who is himself first to be decided with regard to *beyng*. The *arising* gods found the deepest history and are the precursors of the last god. Therefore, the merely underhanded and retrograde power-attitude, e.g., that of the ecclesial God of the Christian-curial Churches, has no *essential* force, even if 82 the appeals to this God might still for a long time | offer solace and support to many. But the decision does *not* concern the *consolation* of precisely present-at-hand human beings in their apparently still unaffected “pursuit of life,” a pursuit supposedly assured by the previous forms of society and structures of community. The question is not whether the humans of this age will still have available a way of escape into solace and comfort—for all this—apart from the merely semblant seriousness of a pretended meditation—remains entirely a calculation over the *security* of the human being—; “God,” introduced here only as “savior,” is *degraded* to the role of a help in time of need—and no one comes to terms with the divinity of God—instead, this business of the “salvation of the soul” always takes precedence. What the decision does concern is the essence of truth itself—that *beyng* might become the spatiotemporal field for an essential identification of the gods and for the maturity of humans to take up the task of grounding the truth of *beyng*. (And for that reason the basic question of my thinking has never been: What is the human being?—but is always the question of the truth of *beyng* as the *beyng* of truth.) The

coming and grounding of the path of beyng that broadens the clearing, meditation as going out to meet this that is coming, and the thinking of beyng qua event of appropriation—constitute what is unique and simple, whose articulation the thinking of the other | beginning prepares to dispense. The first step of this preparation is the “overcoming” of metaphysics—the leap into such preparation as pertaining to the first clearing of the essence of history. The *demand* of beyng—is the grounding of the truth of its essence, which grounding is appropriated by beyng itself.

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108

To impute responsibility for incidents reciprocally is futile, if responsibility has lost all meaning through the transference of all calculation and action to the empowerment of power. Then it becomes inconsequential who has to bear the much-invoked responsibility, because everything in the face of which responsibility as such could still be possible and necessary has fallen victim in its content to disavowal and nullification. Nor can “history” assume for responsibility the role of a “forum,” because that reciprocal imputation of responsibility has already entered the plain of the preparation of full a-historicity, i.e., decisionlessness with regard to what is essential.

109

“Pragmatic politics” [*Realpolitik*] as total prostitution.

110

Christianity is the most extreme anthropomorphizing of the | human being and is the de-divinizing of its own God. Here cries out only the lamentation of the calculation regarding the salvation of the soul, and everything divine is measured according to this salvific function. But if power now comes to anti-Christianity, an attitude that unconditionally affirms Christianity, merely in reverse, and that exaggerates Christianity to an unsurpassable extent, then the anthropomorphizing of the human being, in unity with the de-divinizing of God, would exhaust all possibilities. The flight of the gods would then be decided, especially if the Churches once again and thus ever more extrinsically and emptily (with the help of radio, motorized transportation, and the like) seem to offer resistance to anti-Christianity. For what would then be attained is that situation in which essential decisions not only appear strange but also are completely forgotten in their possibility

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and even in their mere idea. Yet religious faith retains—already in virtue of the tradition preserved in it—the capacity to offer consolation, perspective, and refuge in general—and then remains, reckoned in terms of what preceded, once again a possession over and against nothingness. Yet the latter has become so null that it can precisely no longer be recognized in its essence.

111

85 The age of the consummation of modernity faces two possibilities: either violent and swift demise | (which looks like “catastrophe,” but in its already decided and distorted essence is too lowly to *be* such) or else deterioration of the current state of unconditional machination to infinity. Unavoidable in each case is *obliviousness* to the possibility of a history which includes a decision on the truth of being. Wars and revolutions, even if of gigantic proportions, remain superficial incidents. The presentation of these incidents in public becomes ever shallower, the horror ever more desolate, and the pain ever more solitary. Here perhaps a path takes its point of departure into something other; admittedly only perhaps—for first of all the most remote meditation must think out beyond demise and the notion of infinity and toward another beginning. Demise and infinity, within their machinational context and their domains of planning, can offer views that look like a “burgeoning” and a rejuvenation and that newly display all possibilities of the previous “heroism.” And yet—the entanglement in what was hitherto becomes only more insidious in such “young peoples,” because they burn behind themselves all the bridges on which an insight into the abandonment by being could tread.

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112

“Bolshevism” and Russianism have something in common only because Russian socialism set in motion a first, though still clumsy, form of Bolshevism which was not yet in command of the essence of Bolshevism, and thereby took decisive “measures” in the metaphysical sense. These then underwent intensification and entrenchment, primarily in the form of a battle against Bolshevism. Yet this process of itself presses on toward a relentless and unscrupulous carrying out of the essential consummation of Bolshevism in its unconditional configuration. The occurrence of the shot in the back of the neck [*Genickschuss*] is only a coarse, superficial, and impotent sign of “terror.” The latter holds its genuine and essential power gathered in what

is inconspicuous and impalpable, namely, that the constant and indeterminate possibility of a severe threat to everything lies over beings.

113

The irksome din of the discontents, as well as the mania to instruct on the part of the know-it-alls, can drive on merely to the superficialities of contemporary history, whose historicity must remain closed to such persons. If the age of unconditional machination compels our “people” toward “life-interests” as their single goal, i.e., toward the conservation and elevation of the “standard of living” for purposes of promoting the advancement of culture, then, in order to reach this “goal,” our “people” need the corresponding possessions as well as the possibility to dispose of extension, matter, transportation, management, and value-formation in general. The pursuing and securing of these interests, however, unavoidably increase the breadth and height of the interests themselves, until the claims necessarily become unconditional and limitless. The satisfaction of these interests, which are intrinsically irresistible and therefore are called “natural,” includes a confrontation with the previous possessors of “world domination.” The struggle over this domination must flare up, not because the previous possessors own “too much” and the others “too little,” but because the type and form of their ownership and use have fallen short of the only way in which unconditional power can be fully maintained as power. That is the despotism of the machinationally-metaphysically (no longer morally-democratically) grasped socialism. That this struggle becomes a war (war which itself, in the ways it is carried out and in its means, must satisfy the unconditionality of machination) is not due to the violence and the craving for prestige and acquisitions on the part of individuals. On the contrary, it is the consequence of the process by which all “interests” are already unconditionally arranged and computed toward the planning and instituting of life. This process itself, however, merely unfolds the genuine, concealed, and already long-since decided | history of modernity: the abandonment of beings by being and the forgotten sovereignty of truth as correctness. But each of these is an event of beyng, an event that still withholds its essence as event and thus withholds the grounding of an inceptual history and allows only the historiology which procures for itself a present moment in technology. No wrangling with “time” and no glorifying of the results of “time” take even one step in the direction of the decisions—all that can take such a step is meditation on beyng, on how beyng essentially occurs:

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88

whether *beyng* appropriates humans, i.e., casts them out into the necessity of a transformation which provides a first illumination for encountering the most arising god. (Cf. p. 81.)

114

War is not, as Clausewitz still thinks, the continuation of politics by other means.¹⁴ If “war” signifies “total war,” i.e., the one deriving from the unfettered machination of beings as such, then it becomes a *transformation* of “politics” and a *revelation* of the fact that “politics” itself has become merely the executor of unmastered metaphysical decisions, an executor that is no longer in control of itself. Such war does not continue something already present-at-hand; on the contrary, it forces the implementation of essential decisions, ones of which it it-

89 self is not the master. Therefore such war no longer admits of | “victors” and “vanquished”; all become the slaves of the history of *beyng*, a history for which right from the beginning they were judged to be too small and so were compelled into war. “Total war” compels “politics” (all the more inexorably, the more “pragmatic” this “politics” already is) into the form of a mere executor of the demands and importunities of beings abandoned by being, beings which only through the arranging and instituting toward unconditional planning secure for themselves calculatively the supremacy of the constant overpowering of the pure development of power. Such war no longer knows “victors” and “vanquished,” but not on account of both being claimed equally and both suffering an equally great harm; instead, the ground is the fact that *both* opponents must *always* remain within what is essentially undecided—and thus can know and calculate nothing other than their “interests.” War itself *does not allow* these “interests” as such, in their character as possible “goals,” to become question-worthy for the one opponent or the other.

Nonetheless, through holding both opponents down in the sphere of some not attained and perhaps destroyed possibilities of interest, war can lead to the *verge* of meditation—though can never let meditation arise, since meditation requires its own most proper ground.

90 Struggle as war | is *not* the “father” of all “things,” if this latter term names everything which in the most preeminent sense is not *nothing*. Such struggle is never the begetter and master of *beyng*—but always only of *beings*. *Beyng* knows no begetting and cannot be mastered.

14. {Carl von Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege* (Berlin: Feddersen, 1933), 19. “War is the mere continuation of politics by other means.”}

Being “is” incomparable and nonrelational—as appropriation into the abyss.

115

How restful is the alleged “struggle” on the basis of a “truth” that is never questioned and is declared to be “eternal”! Here struggle is merely an “occupation,” the filling of the days with ever newly prepared occasions for the satisfaction of ambition and of vanity. If the measure of a “struggle” is the power and competence for “decisions,” then of what avail is that “struggling” in the service of “ideas” of power politics, state politics, and ecclesial politics? But for most of us it may be good that such activities are taken to be “struggles.”—

116

Only unique ones who are concealed to their “times” can ever invoke God and await that which is most coming to be. According to the distance and inaccessibility, there then arises the type of something ordinary and available to many, and there accords the stamping of them to a preservation of essentially occurring history.

117

91

It is essential to all “schemes” and “institutions” (ones which arise out of the plans and calculations regulating in advance the essence of what is “real” and effective as a whole) that they are never to be rescinded but, instead, undergo an intensification into unconditionality. Institutions compelled by total war determine in advance the composition of a state of peace and determine it so exclusively that a state of peace becomes basically altogether impossible; e.g., the “people’s informant service” [*Volksmeldedienst*],¹⁵ which such a war finds indispensable, will be transformed into a “natural” institution of “peacetime.” What holds for the essence of power, viz., the incessant overpowering of itself all the way to a resolution in an unconditional process of power, holds also of every instrument and preservational form of power. Therefore, only rarely and with difficulty can any backward-oriented “thinking” form a notion of the greatness of the power that has made planned calculation its first, unconditional mode of fulfillment. At

15. {Cf. Reinhard Heydrich, “Der Volksmeldedienst: Die Mobilmachung gegen Verrat und Denunziation,” in *Der Schulungsbrief. Das zentrale Monatsblatt der NSDAP*, 6. Jahrgang, 1939, 338f.}

most, one takes this greatness “relatively” as *gigantic*, without considering that the gigantic consists not in a sum total of unusual extent but in the already unconditionally secured and constantly operative possibility of measurelessness. (Cf. p. 15f.)

92

118

Every beginning is something sudden; all the more protracted and concealing remains the transition, until the rupture from which what is sudden estranges itself.

119

Futural philosophy does not simply ask about something other (the truth of *beyng* on the basis of the *beyng* of truth, instead of the beingness of beings in consciousness and lived experience), it necessarily asks *otherwise* (in the mode of a reticent transformation of humanity into steadfastness in *Dasein*, instead of in the mode of a “systematic” computation of the categories of beingness in a summary representation). Yet that transformation itself can be carried out only in the appropriation by the event—it arises out of the plight of a lack of a sense of plight, and that plight is necessitated by *beyng*. The semantic structure of the transformation, if attainable at all, is peculiar. The utterance of the transformation, as an appropriated utterance, must return entirely into the *highlands of beyng*; all didactic, persistent striving to capture such an utterance by way of an agreement about its conceptual formation is unavailing, for it masks precisely the essential human flight (flight from knowing and grounding the truth of *beyng*) which is itself a function of the abandonment of beings by being. The *highlands of beyng*—the protruding and sheltering bifurcation of the appropriation that clears the way out—must incorporate heaven and earth. The thinking of *beyng* is not | the concurrent ascent of the high-

93 lands, but is the delineated origination out of them, and such origination can be constant only in the essential space of the highlands. In this space, thinking “merely” thinks and a feature of the highlands “merely” “*is*,” without effectuating or “dealing” with anything and without attributing to itself “deeds.” Thinking—steadfast in *Da-sein*—endures the truth of *beyng*.

120

It can scarcely be said which doom is spreading more destructively: the unconditional absorption in machination through its unrestrained

pursuit or the apparent resistance to machination through the weakening insinuation into every attempt at a preparation for the collapse of machination. Perhaps this fence straddling of the Christian cultural pretension which grasps at everything and assimilates everything is the more disastrous, because it metaphysically actualizes the basic form of hypocrisy and can “morally” claim a Good conscience and provide many people repose and security. It should be no surprise if even the thinking that is heedful of the history of being and stands outside of metaphysical (and thus also Christian) notions, is misused as an aid to Christian-ecclesial apologetics.

121

94

In every war, the enemies battle for their own respective “self-assertion” and are precisely therein more united than friends ever could be. But the discord consists in *what* each claims and determines as his “self” and *how* he does so. The “cause” of a war is concealed in the alleging of goals during an age of complete goallessness. What *then* if each of the enemies basically does *not* know the goal of his war and if that ignorance is at the same time accompanied by the knowledge that such war no longer allows victors and vanquished because it definitively precipitates all beings into the abandonment by being? The ground of the essential decisionlessness could of course never be known by those who are supposedly “knowledgeable,” for such knowledge would have to destroy definitively its own content—even without warmongering. Thus the unrecognized resistance to every trace of a dawning of such knowledge.

The proceedings of a war consist not in “operations” and not in the “explosion” of bombs and the annihilation of squadrons—but only in the silent and impalpable suppression of every attempt at an essential meditation that questions history in the whole of its essence. This suppression is covered over on all sides by the noise of radio and of newspapers. The compulsion into meditationlessness, however, is not “produced” by individual rulers and agents; on the contrary, those themselves are in virtue of *their* essence the first ones to be compelled and to lose their freedom. Therefore, even all “moral” “defamation” is childish behavior (nowhere equal to or even near the essence of history) and consequently itself useful only as a “tool of war.” The compulsion into meditationlessness and into its required schemes *must* therefore thwart and annihilate, as harmful to the nation and its military might, everything that is not immediately, visibly, and palpably useful for the “self-assertion.” The compulsion thus at the same time leads necessarily to an attitude whereby the appearance of doing harm

95

must extend even to that meditation which perhaps assists the self-asserting people to the beginning of an essential history in which “war” and “struggle” are not simply renounced for the sake of a lame and empty “pacifism” but are instead displaced into the abyssal domains of the higher decisions and missions out of which there might arise for a people the attunement toward its future.

What we provided the Czechs and Poles is something England and France want to let be to the benefit even of the Germans. Except that France would like to maintain its a-historicity in a destroyed Germany, and England its a-historicity in a gigantic business venture.
 96 Whereas, the *future* Germans | are assigned the enduring of another history—for their thinking stands in the transition to meditation.

122

No one should place his hope in a thinker, unless a person hopes for the destiny of an assignment to the unfamiliar friendship of those future ones who are waiting out everything present because an intimation of what is most coming forth has been bestowed on them. The basic disposition of those who are futural is magnanimity toward what has been and patience for what is most coming. “Interests,” assurances of salvation, results, and advancements have no influence on those who are futural.

123

The notion that the humans who must ground are “geniuses” and “great” has long since taken on its modern stamp. The most insistent notion reveals itself in the opinion that those who are great are “ahead” of their “time” and that what they “created” will only later be understood and used, in order then to be surpassed by new geniuses. Competition and calculation are here in play.

Everything essential, however, is unsurpassable, not only because there could be nothing beyond, but because the measure of a surpassing cannot at all be applied here. But the uniqueness of what is essential is least of all | akin to that “eternity” which all human pretense,
 97 the more petty and loud its comportment, attributes to itself as a goal and a claim.

124

In this second world war, the invisible devastation will be greater (more intrusive) than the visible destructions.

125

My meditation of *Russianism* began in 1908–1909, when I attempted, in my last year of secondary school, to learn Russian. Since then, this volition went its own way and has been determined neither through the emergence of Bolshevism nor through the political “development” of the relation between Russia and Germany since January, 1939. The political-tactical, i.e., historiological-technological relation between Russia and Germany, i.e., between the respective “parties” leading these states, will generate its consequences “historiologically” one way or another—but this relation could never be a possible ground and space for a *confrontation* between *Germanity* and *Russianism*, as that confrontation would be understood in terms of the history of *beyng*. Such a confrontation can arise only from an overcoming of historiology through the sovereignty of the history of *beyng*. (Cf. above, pp. 70ff., 86, 87.)

126

What is most Godless is what is intended widely as “religious”; | the 98
turn toward the “religious,” a turn established and concomitantly pursued by literati in “literature.”

127

Disconsolateness grows with the craving to find in consolation the fulfillment of “life.” This craving is nourished by the opinion that “life,” whether the one to be pursued “on this side” or “on that side,” is the unique and highest ontological form a human being could possess.

128

The end of modernity in terms of the history of beyng.—The metaphysical mark of this end is the historical development of the essence of “Communism” into the age of complete meaninglessness. (Cf. above, p. 22f.) “*Communism*,” thoughtfully grasped, consists not in the fact that each has an equal share of consumables, earnings, work, and pleasure, but that everyone stands in the same compulsion through the unconditional power of an anonymous few and that the decisionlessness (the curtailing of every possible growth of a decision and of every adoption of one) becomes the average air breathed by all. This commonality, this communalizing of each with all, is as though it did not exist; that industries are nationalized and likewise banks, that landed

99 estates are split up and monasteries dissolved, that all knowledge is falsely turned into the “intelligence” which finds its use and thus its “reality” solely in the specialization of the “insiders,” that | the fabrication of a “public opinion” of the “people” through newspapers and radio is aimed only at maintaining a facade no one actually takes seriously, except for the rulers, and even they consider this facade merely one means of power among others—all this might appear, on the background of the possessions and attitudes of the previous Middle Class, to be a genuine loss and a matter of destruction. Nevertheless, this nationalization into the state signifies little, inasmuch as the state is merely a subordinate instrument of the party, and the party itself the instrument of the few, whose essence requires that they remain anonymous and that the ones who are well known by name (Stalin and the others) be tolerated only as figureheads. (Cf. p. 102.) Therefore, the despotism of the few does not have its ground in the personal craving for power on the part of individual “subjects.” On the contrary, these latter are themselves unwittingly exploited as the mere bearers and “functionaries” of the unconditional empowerment of pure power, with the one goal of letting this power get established in its own proper institutions and securing for it the repute of the truly real. To speak here of “materialism” is merely to testify how much this notion is still caught up in the fragments various doctrines have cast into it for the benefit of the “people.” This “materialism” is in the highest sense “*spiritual*,” so decisively that what must be recognized in it is the consummation of the essence of the Western | metaphysical spirit.

100

A person such as Lenin knew this with clarity. Accordingly, the danger of Communism does not reside in its economic and societal consequences but rather in the fact that its *spiritual* essence, the essence of Communism qua spirit, is not recognized and the confrontation with Communism is placed on a level which completely secures its supremacy and irresistibility. The historical power of Communism and of its proper essence as oligarchic Soviet power is the simplest and most compelling counterproof against the allegedly Nietzschean doctrines (but properly those of his exploiters) asserting an “impotence” of the “spirit.” The “struggle” of the Christian Churches against Bolshevism, for example, will accomplish nothing, because these Churches are incapable of recognizing the spiritual essence of Bolshevism, since they themselves are subservient to something “spiritual” which essentially and definitively prevents Christianity from ever grounding, in opposition to this “world-enemy Bolshevism,” a site that would fundamentally uproot Bolshevism and be of a completely different essence, i.e., the site of a decisive questioning. Prior to every “struggle” that always merely deteriorates into pseudofighting and

ultimate agreement, the I knowledge must awaken that this pure power in its unconditional empowerment still for its part refers back to something else as its origin and essential support. That something else is *machination*, and to be thought in this word is an essential decision within the Western history of being. This *thinking* (indeed not as idle staring) comes infinitely closer to the “reality” of the incidents of the age than does every petty-bourgeois sort of “engagement.” 101

It would of course be an erroneous desire if one ever wanted to see this thinking transformed into a general and universally practiced way of forming representations and opinions. On the contrary, only one thing is necessary: knowledge of the ineluctable, essentially diverse multiformity in which the historical overcoming of Communism must be carried out. The most stubborn obstacle to this knowledge is the unspecified and nearly inadvertent expectation of a recurrence some day of pre-Communist, bourgeois conditions. This deluding expectation takes constant nourishment from the mistaken view that “publicness” constitutes the sole reality, whereas what is public is only an empty shadow of history, although indeed a necessary one, not simply to be leapt over. But history essentially occurs only as the history of being.

The “only a few” does in no way mean a small number in distinction to the numberless many who are excluded from the possession of power and signifies instead a peculiar mode of the gathering of every empowerment of power into the utter relentlessness of an unconditional procedure as the origin of such relentlessness. Only the few guarantee that the most inconspicuous unfolding of power will be unrestricted and certain. This procedure is determined metaphysically and is provoked and spurred on solely by the abandonment of all beings by being, an abandonment unrecognizable as an abandonment. Only such a few can unconditionally and fully guarantee the agreement that “welfare,” participation in cultural advancements, elimination of class distinctions and vocational distinctions, and the equality of the ruled and the “rulers” are simply pretexts for the benefit of the “people,” who stand entranced before these pretexts and so do not endeavor to see beyond, into what solely *is*, namely, the power of the few. Once again: the point is not that these few possess the power; it is that their “resoluteness” alone maintains everywhere and in unassailable priority the full power of the institutions over and against every attempt at independent insight by individuals and groups and every attempt by them to impose their own will. 102

It is not flight from the essential content of political I reality, i.e., flight into the “spiritual,” but on the contrary a thinking which penetrates the political all the way to the ground of the essence of its 103

unrestricted power that will reach the domains from which the “spirit,” as a sovereign form of metaphysics, as well as metaphysics itself, can be overcome. Only where “spirit” is in advance effective, as a prototype or antitype, does the opinion regarding the rootedness of the spiritual in the “bodily” attain its prestige, reasonableness, and possible validity as a worldview creed. Yet “Communism” is not a mere civil form, nor simply a kind of political worldview; instead, it is the *metaphysical* condition in which modern humanity finds itself as soon as the final phase of the consummation of modernity sets in.

We are accustomed to pass our “life” in the sphere of familiar activities (of our welfare and of the promotion of culture) and have covered ourselves with the protective roof of fancied deliverances (“eternal salvation”). Since, however, those assurances are slowly revealing themselves as having long since become fragile and groundless, we today are falling into that widely vacillating perplexity which allows us only to be on the watch for “goals.” These are supposed to surpass the previous ones but thereby must precisely plunge into *homogeneity* with them. For if beyond the cultivation of the proficiency and pleasurable-ness of bodily life nothing | more remains except the unconditional expansion of this “goal” to the whole of the satisfied and healthy, industrialized and technicized, acculturated human masses who constantly manifest a new enhancement of these life-interests, and if even the European peoples, in willing either the assertion of the interests they have already long possessed or the first assured satisfaction of these interests, are *not* able to avoid war, then the compulsion that necessarily presses on within such interests, as compulsion toward a corresponding unconditionally instituted mass war, confirms that modern humanity still stands everywhere within what preceded, i.e., within the metaphysical determination of beings. The perplexed entanglement in beings prevents an experience of that which lies closest, namely, the fact that history in its essence is here determined by the flight from being. This flight leads to a condition that, along with the complete securing of a whole life and of its spheres of interest, nevertheless allows the uncertainty of a decision to increase beyond comprehension. The threat to humanity out of that which precisely constitutes the unconditional mastery of a sure steering of all defensive and offensive tactics, the threat which is as such inchoately surmised and yet at the same time rejected as illusory, this threat | announces something the modern calculative human being, in pursuing metaphysics to its end, could never experience—not because it lies too far beyond his customary haunts but because it is too *close* to him. It is so close that the human being, intent on security, must have

always already leapt over this that is closest to his concealed essence. The closeness, however, is not a closeness to the “body,” nor to the “soul,” nor to the “spirit” of the human being; it is unrelated to all that. Instead, it is close to the concealed essential ground of the human being: close to that steadfastness in the truth of being in virtue of which the human being can be overtaken by insecurity amid what is secure, can be cast back and forth with the fluctuation and expiration of goals, but can also thereby experience sheer nullity (an intimation of nothingness).

Nothingness, however, is not “nothing”—but only the simplest (and most difficult to endure) essential configuration of being. Only at rare times of its concealed history does being establish the core of the essence of the human being and assign this core to the relation to being. This relation is not a representation and altogether not any sort of “lived experience.” Instead, it is the presently still unaccomplished | grounding of the truth of being. This essential core of the human being nowhere and never subsists in itself; instead, it first “comes to be” 106 in the event of the appropriation of the human being to Da-sein and abides only on the basis of that appropriation. The human being cannot “make” this history and cannot ever intervene in it. Instead, the human being is himself the one seized—by the essence of history—and can only prepare a time when that which is most coming forth (of everything coming out of the remoteness of what is closest) might strike him (establish him in the core). As long as the human being remains outside of this preparation, he totters back and forth between blocked exits at the end of a long blind alley. He has forgotten to follow the way back, of course not back into what was hitherto, but into the beginning, whose dominance Western humanity immediately evaded. The beginning, in what it retains, beckons to itself the most remote future. Thinking, in keeping safe its essence, assigns the preponderance of its questioning to watchfulness for what is most coming forth. The beginning is the mystery of history, for the beginning brings itself into the sudden clearing of the suddenness of being on the way to nothingness. This self-bringing belongs intrinsically to the essential occurrence of being.

If “Communism” is the metaphysical condition of peoples in the last phase of the consummation of modernity, then | this “Communism” must already have placed its essence in power, even though hiddenly, at the outset of modernity. That happened politically in the modern history of the English state. This state—viewed in terms of its essence and disregarding the contemporaneous forms of government, society, and religion—is the *same* as the state of the union of Soviet 107

republics—with the single difference that in the former case a gigantic subterfuge¹⁶ in the semblance of morality and public education makes the unfolding of violence harmless and self-evident, whereas in the latter case modern “consciousness” divulges itself more ruthlessly in its own essential power even if not without paying lip service to the people’s happiness. The bourgeois-Christian form of English “Bolshevism” is the most dangerous. Without the annihilation of this form, modernity will continue on and on. But the definitive annihilation can only take the form of an essential self-annihilation and is promoted most strongly by the exaggeration of one’s own pseudo-essence into the role of the savior of morality. To determine at which historiological point in time the self-annihilation of “Communism” will start to proceed visibly to its end is inconsequential compared to the decision that has already been made in the history of being and that renders this self-annihilation inescapable. The self-annihilation
 108 finds its initial form in the fact that “Communism” | presses on toward the outbreak of militant entanglements which make it impossible to halt the releasing of their full force. (Cf. above, p. 88, “War is . . .” to p. 89.)

Lenin was the first to recognize, uphold, and practice the promotion of world wars as a deliberate tactic. At the outbreak of a world war in 1914, his jubilation knew no limits. The more modern such world wars become, all the more relentlessly do they demand the concentration of all military might in the authority of a few. This signifies, however, that whatever in any way belongs to the being of the people will be incorporated without exception as an element of the war machine. World wars actualize precisely this “total mobilization” (recognized and even named as such for the first time by Lenin), i.e., this incorporation of all beings into the unrestricted entrenchment of power, this immoderate encompassing of everything. Such mobilization raises “Communism” to the highest level of its machinational essence. This supreme “height” is the only appropriate site from which “Communism” is to plunge into the nothingness of the abandonment by being (a nothingness “Communism” itself has prepared) and to usher in the long ending of its demise. All peoples of the West, in accord with the respective historical determination of their essence, are drawn into this process, whether they accelerate or retard it, whether
 109 they | work to veil or to unmask it, whether they apparently resist it or attempt to withdraw from its unlimited field of effectiveness.

16. [Reading *Verstellung* for *Vorstellung*, “representation,” following the corresponding passage as published in *Die Geschichte des Seyns*, GA69, 208. Cf. the editor’s afterword to the present volume, p. 223.—Trans.]

Meanwhile, however, another history of beyng has already begun. For if beings as they basically are (here and now the beings of machination) are pressing on toward their end, then a beginning of beyng must be occurring, even though only rare and futural ones may be able, through some unusual knowledge, to think and poetize this beginning. The very act by which a beginning begins is nevertheless the most worthy and richest legacy of its own essence bestowed on the history of the grounding of the truth of the beginning in nascent beings. What is the significance of the appearance of the gigantic frenzy of machinational devastation, and of the “deeds” that are kindled by such devastation, over and against the coming of the last god and his assigned silent dignity of expectation? But the god—how so a god? Interrogate beyng, and in its silence, as the inceptual essence of the word, the god will answer. As for beings, you may wander through all of them, but nowhere will a trace of the god show itself. How then are you to become a questioner, namely, a questioner who interrogates beyng? Only through the voice of silence, which will attune your essence to steadfastness in Da-sein and elevate what has been attuned into an attentiveness toward what is coming. For only what is coming can inceptually fulfill the essence of divinity. In their coming, | 110
 the gods fathom the ground of the deepest history and are the heralds of the last god, whose lastness is his coming. He brings nothing, unless himself; but even then only as what is most coming of all that is coming. The last god does not mete out any consolation (cf. p. 98). To count on the salvation of the soul is to be compelled into that Daseinless “lived experience” from which this god remains so remote that he does not first turn away from the regions and products of such experience. Nevertheless, interrogated beyng, out of which the last god answers in his own good time, does attune to a trust in the bestowal of the most silent relation of a world to the earth, and these, world and earth, broaden to become the site of a history of the encounter of the human being and the last god. The trust is not chained to something present-at-hand and not built upon any being. Beyng appropriates this trust as the constantly inceptual, never lapsing into routine, and always more open serenity of the protracted courage for stewardship over a preparation for the event. This serenity is strong enough to take up into the essence of trust the shock occasioned by the abandonment of beings by being. In its forbearance this trust engenders magnanimity toward the invisible devastation of the essence of beyng, | a devastation that has already surpassed all the proliferating destruction of beings. 111

Perhaps for a long time humans will still not be mature enough for the pain of this magnanimous forbearance of the trust in beyng. Yet

that trust harbors the essence of joy. Metaphysics and all its subservient forms, such as worldviews and religious faith, always only attain, inasmuch as they are lost in beings, “pleasure” in and through beings and at most “intellectual” and “spiritual” pleasure. Joy is not the same as pleasure. Joy has its origin in the beginning of the history of being. Joy places the end of metaphysics and thus the end of modernity into that which the transition has gone beyond. The reciprocally attuned magnanimity and forbearance of the trust in being express more expansively what the word “care” was supposed to name. Ordinary “lived experience” and the usual opinion always find in this word only the connotation of dreariness or affliction and thereby betray how exclusively their thinking is based on the opposite, which they know as “pleasure.”

112 And so arises the inability to know the essence of “care,” i.e., arises out of fixation on the now already commonplace metaphysics and on its ultimate triumph: | “Communism” as that which, on the human level, propels machination. The “sovereignty” of machination marks the ending of the first beginning of the history of being. The sudden breaking off of this ending is the other beginning of that history. In the first beginning, being essentially occurs as self-emergence (φύσις); in the other beginning, being essentially occurs as event. Self-emergence, machination, and event *are* the history of being, in that they liberate the *essence* of history out of its inceptual concealment, beyond its perversion as historiology, and into that which the future will think in advance as the grounding of the cleared enduring and will think out toward as the truth of being.

129

113 A people can have its “time” in which this people is precisely too late for *downgoing*, on account of lacking the essential *height* out of which the plunge would have to occur. And if what remains is only the protracted habituation to the inconspicuous lowering of the concealed standards and the imperceptible accommodation to the leveling down of the claims, then a destruction “of” being is in the path of the future and all extrinsic devastation can be taken only as the empty spectacle of a supplement that has arrived too late. But precisely then, those who know are given | a sign that a unique moment of history is in preparation, wherein humanity once again has to endure the encounter with a god. Yet the more essential the decisions, all the more silent becomes the domain in which such decisions occur. And for persons who are meditative, everything depends on their finding silence in these decisions and recognizing them amid all the noise, indeed

surmising them even in what is apparently only empty and null, and thus contemplating the nearness of the most remote god. We believe ourselves ready for the time, and we fail to recognize in what is closest that which the time offers us anew at every small bend of its path—*and this that is offered is never time itself.*

130

“Heroism”—a vain floundering in the face of what is necessary qua what is publicly inevitable. How extrinsically to beyng, how loudly and full of expense—*the passion for the poverty of the great silence pertains to those who are futural.*

131

The sign that a philosophy *is* philosophy remains the place only occasionally intended for it on the basis of its thinking, the place in which either a “yes” attaches itself | to questioning or the “no” of those who are already assured thrusts it aside. What otherwise is brought forth to surround a philosophy is mere prattle.

114

132

The *unique* ones do not need the many, the others, and their alliances in order not to be mere individuals.

133

What is “good” is not the “pleasant,” nor what brings “happiness,” nor the beneficial, nor the useful, nor the obligatory, nor a mere value; instead, it is the steadfastness of Dasein in freedom on the basis of an affiliation with beyng. But because beyng, to those who are futural, is the most question-worthy, freedom is thus that poverty of the silence of persevering which never garners its truth out of verifications.

134

At a time when the invisible devastation is more intrusive than are the visible destructions, even the ways of daily thought must be directed toward what is invisible, in whose domain is carried out a mutual approach of those few who are invisible and yet are alone real, those who have grounded the human being | upon Da-sein. These are on the one hand the individuals who stand today in the immediate

115

militant struggle and do not take support from anything present-at-hand, nor from society or comradeship. They must in their own way surmise in advance something else, something for which they are prepared to sacrifice and which they nevertheless are unable to express in words and yet do create a sacrifice. How many such individuals are in the world no one knows. But that there are some is certain. Secondly, there are the women who from an inceptual love hold in readiness silent spaces for what is noble and who, in virtue of this love, are indestructible. Who they are is withdrawn from all public opinion. And then thirdly are those we may perhaps recognize from their belonging to another history by way of a poetizing and thinking that run far ahead. Who these are, and whether they are, are matters so deeply hidden that a questioning in this regard can scarcely awaken, let alone become common. These three, invisible and solely real, prepare the “poetical” in the ground of which alone the history of humanity is fathomed. The gift of beyng belongs to these three, that they might allow the advent of inceptual decisions to reach them and, in their three respective ways, might watch over this advent.

116 The span of the heart must find its piers in the hard importunity of a daily accomplishment—and in the proximity of the trust in beyng. The difficulty for those who are properly steadfast in beyng is not “*to live dangerously*,”¹⁷ since the danger always retains the univocity and familiarity of their fixed domain. What is difficult and therefore genuine is to live *transitionally*, to make one’s way on the bridge of that span of the heart and to dispense with small expedients and consolations. The publicness pertaining to this time is very ordinary and conventional and therefore is to be encountered historiologically everywhere. But what is concealed of this time is unique, as unique as the beginning of our Western history.

135

War, which people now call “peculiar” in order to become already accustomed to it day by day and thus keep from it every essential intimation, is merely the weak interplay and counterplay of a process known only by a few—and to them knowledge is steadfastness in a truth of beyng. These knowledgeable ones are the only futurally acting ones; they need no publicity.

17. {Friedrich Nietzsche, *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft, Werke*, vol. 5 (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1921), 215.}

136

For a spirited, active person, there are today only two possibilities: either to stand out there on the conning tower of a minesweeper or to steer into the storm of being the ship of the most extreme questioning.

117

137

Theology: a “poor soul” is of no concern to the devil. A devil enters into a pact only with persons about whom he is certain they are of a devilish essence. Just as God is still divine in his harshest smittings, so his adversary, a devil, is still devilish in his most innocent behavior. But what if the devil attained his greatest devilry through the “arousing of remorse and grief” over his previous deeds?

138

The lecture course: one person snatches up something useful, in order to refurbish his “science,” another takes away reassurance, in order to edify his fluttering “soul,” a third strains toward surprises, in order to draw some charm into his wasteland—and no one surmises the way and the path or ventures a step. But wanderers wander and *are*.

139

Summer.—When to find oneself anew among the tallest firs yonder in “Hämmerle” after the last blow of the axe amid the yet for a while lingering groans in the falling of the tree and with the dull thud of the resounding earth—

118

140

Missives one has just begun to write—are at times testimony to an already finished recollection permeating all the domains of Da-sein.

*Appendix**Concerning no. 104*

nothing can be *grounded as to its form*—because no *freedom toward oneself*—toward the ground

no *superiority*—

no *effective volition*—

to be placed under the
most proper essential
law—and its unfolding—
instead of skirting it!

but to set up only
brutality as the means
the one who appeals to results
which are not of his own doing!

no openness of questioning—

or room for the strife allowed!

only *blather from the belligerent one!*

The genuine opponent of the struggle not at all recognized—| now
in the most peculiar self-praise to the skies!

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PONDERINGS XIV

α “The dinner bell
Was put out of tune
By things as trifling as snow”—

Hölderlin, *Entwurf zu Kolomb*, vol. 4:2, p. 395.¹

Here is manifest a *poetry* no longer needing to be “art,” i.e., τέχνη, i.e., “poesy,” (ποίησις). Fortunately, such poetry is altogether inaccessible to the versifiers who are now schooled in all the arts and who imitate everything. But why must such poetry be contemporaneous with an unrestricted cultural pretension? So it is thereby concealed and thus preserved from that misuse by all for all out of the arbitrariness of the unleashing of a power.

1. {*Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 4.}

We are everywhere only in the prelude of the beginning.

a

Beings never replace beyng; they are always displaced into it. The thinker projects “only” what was projected to him. The projection itself must be something projected. But what projects is beyng. Projection is the event of appropriation. (Cf. p. 62.)

There are burdens which do not let themselves be put aside and must be carried over into a time that will decide inceptually about their weight.

To think into the open region—with the burden of the thinking of two and half millennia on one’s shoulders—

It is necessary to stand knowingly in the essence of truth, if we must be decided in something true.

Have to create a thing that can wait because it does not need to “effectuate” in order to be. So as not to become deceived over “necessities” by means of reputation, one would need to have an effect on one’s “time” and come to its aid. This hospital outlook is foreign to historical meditation.

Even in the farthest corner, no unclarity should lurk and no veiling of the fact that there is now no longer anyone who could grasp even a little of the thinking that is heedful of the history of beyng—simple solitude.

To be there in fundamentally different realms of beyng, indeed ones no longer even comparable in their differences, and *at the same time* to grant to those who are oblivious a full right to their obliviousness—Da-sein as “care” (προ-μηθεῖσθαι [“forethought”]).

But care as care over fire qua light and clearing (φάος—φύσις [“light—nature”])—the care of beyng—(being and time). Yet care is more inceptual than φύσις, inasmuch as the clearing is to be grounded concomitantly. The impossibility of the “a priori.” The latter as the antecedent is the illusion of a beginning.

Only beyond love and hate does there commence the domain first determined in its possibilities of rank by a πόλεμος [“war”] itself, the domain out of which the struggle first reacquires its own dimensions. 1

There will perhaps arise, two centuries from now, the first Germans to let themselves be approached by something long preserved as that which is coming. We who are transitional must prepare these first and few ones. *Is there a greater proximity to beyng than this thinking out into the distance? Fore-thinking into the beginning.*

“Heroic realism”² is a flight into the “real” in the face of meditation on reality.

Greatness is the grounding of something inceptual or, on the other hand, since it also has its distorted essence, is the most extreme ossification of something already elapsed.

History occurs only where and when the essence of truth is decided inceptually.

The decision comes out of beyng itself. 2

In order to endure what the law of beyng demands, we need something Essentially other, and “more,” than a “heroism.”

Courses of thinking which have transpired should no longer be falsified into “works” but, instead, must become a trace and must preserve what they conceal. Yet this requires the simplest tact; for where are the abodes of silence and when is the steadfastness in the stillness, if even such things are bruited about into the ravenous void of publicness, the void that indiscriminately mixes everything into a quickly consumed verbal hodgepodge? Everything essential must first become difficult and unrecognizable.

The hopeless floundering in regard to a reform and “renewal” of the “university” still goes on. In the meantime, people observe a growing “indifference” on the part of the students in and toward the “philosophical faculty.” But what is not realized is that these observers, who identify a decline in the *number* of students enrolled in the classes, I already “see” only with the eyes of the administrators in charge of the curriculum and consequently deduce “indifference” from the lower 3

2. {Jünger, *Der Arbeiter: Herrschaft und Gestalt* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1932), 34.}

numbers. In fact, however, it is just the opposite: the hunger for meditation does smart, but nothing caters to it. At least the “wish” for the possibility of spiritual questioning is still alive, although nothing is offered that could carry out an ordered course of thought leading for the first time into the realm of questioning. People are already so accustomed and attached to the instituting and planning of “studies” as to believe that the (supposed) “indifference” could be remedied through the stipulation of a number of required classes. That the philosophical faculty of the University of Berlin—which has long since become an inflated and empty institution—has recourse to such foolish proposals demonstrates the breakdown of the university in a much more convincing way than does any indifference of the students.

Besides, all these “important” affairs are already over and past.

- 4 One was horrified in the year of possible decision (1933), remained aloof, and rushed about. After a brief interval, | one was used, saw oneself confirmed, became satisfied, and swallowed everything—“science” was indeed valid again—and now one puts on airs as the admonisher and rescuer—where one bears the proper guilt oneself. And at all times one was oblivious and will remain so. One does not see the irresistible processes—in which the essential assumes the form of that which alone has power. Through small “artifices,” one would still like to turn back what is irresistible and yet one merely promotes it; only for that reason do the “professors” still have a claim to validity. They help to accelerate what they supposedly retard.

The current world war is the extreme overturning of all beings into the unconditionality of machination.

Where the struggles over the possession of power play out in the sphere of the unconditional empowerment of power, the only “victor” is that despot who knows what he can want and does not expose this knowledge to any publicness. He can want only the pure sovereignty of power—without knowing the essence of this power.

- 5 In “heroic” times, which know nothing of their own origination, “peace” counts as weakness, because heroism is mistaken about the essence of sovereignty and does not recognize that a “peace,” which is different than the mere suspension of war, requires for its grounding and preservation higher powers than the discernment of rampant forces.

An Englishman (Thomas Buckle) says: “The locomotive has done more to unify people than have all philosophers, poets, and prophets

that preceded it since the start of the world.”³ If we take the “locomotive” in this curious statement as a kind of mechanical-technological means of transportation, then we must first ask what unity this incontestable “unification” is supposed to have brought about. Is it not that very unity which became the basic condition for the possibility of the sharpest discord and enmity—; what would today’s modern warfare be without this “unity”—? One must be an Englishman to dare speak here of “unification” while surmising so little of the essence of thinkers and poets.

England produced parliamentary (party) democracy and mechanism—*Russia* is only the decisive essential consequence, inasmuch as that country first came to terms with the essence of communism and grasped it as “Soviet power + electrification.” That these two countries will develop into the sharpest opponents is inevitable: for they both want the same thing. And *meanwhile*? We will either, on the basis of an unrecognized decisionlessness (which would like to be them both *at the same time* in variants), be abraded to nothing, or we can become a unique beginning of the West, provided we know the decision. 6

Russia lived for centuries in despotic feudalism and could not endure the “democratic” world of the Kerenski regime⁴ for six months, before accepting despotism in the form of Bolshevism. What does this signify?

Bravery: to reconcile oneself with the structure of what is essential and in this acquiescence to *know* oneself in one’s essence, i.e., in one’s affiliation with being. Recklessness is as little bravery as is fanaticism. But how are there supposed to be brave ones if a *knowledge* of the essence is denied or even reviled? 7

Hölderlin was born in the year 1770, and *Lenin* in 1870. During Hölderlin’s lucid-creative time of life, the decisive technical discoveries and inventions of modern technology were produced (1774–1806).

Today, i.e., for the coming of that which is coming, what counts is only what stands in an extremity and knows that at issue in the struggle is whether humanity will remain a serf of the devastation or will become, in a differently grounded history, the echo of the voice of the god. All other goals of war constitute a floundering amid mere

3. {Source unknown.}

4. {Alexander F. Kerenski ruled Russia from July to October, 1917.}

appearances, ones which then overnight turn into their opposites and thereby betray their nullity. All who build for the future must accomplish this duality: stand amid the gigantic machination of a complete mobilization and at same time harbor a passion for the great silence.

8 Since these I seem mutually exclusive, their *unity* is what is needed.

The “universities” are now declared to be “vitaly important pursuits.” This assessment is unavoidable today but is at the same time an interpretation of the essence of the university equivalent to a death sentence regarding this institution. The defining and supporting power of the “spirit” is withdrawn from the universities. Yet how can something be withdrawn that was never possessed or was so only for moments? Indeed those moments around 1800–1820 are nonrecurrent; and the nonrecurrent should not be compelled into the ordinary. Therefore, this “death sentence” is on the contrary the birth certificate of the modern revision of modernity.

Calculated historiologically—according to incidents and actions—a *revolution* looks like an essential change—seen historically, revolutions mostly only unite many contingencies and thrust things forward—in the direction an age was already taking and was due to take. Revolutions do not embody any decisions but, instead, wipe out what is undecided in order to further an unneediness for decisions which looks like a decidedness.

9 *Duty*—as a binding of oneself to the necessity of a basic attitude for every comportment, duty exists only where freedom is attained. Freedom arises out of the *voluntariness* [Frei-willigkeit] which casts itself off into an inceptual grounding of the essence of a humanity; this grounding is a knowledge of the abyss. Wherever there still exists an attachment to the community, a recourse to devoutness, a vocation to teaching, or a claim to lawfulness, the respective obligations can very well arise, but never can an originary duty. Kant penetrated this domain; that he nevertheless speaks of a law of reason indicates the age of Enlightenment but also points, as soon as “reason” is conceived essentially enough in metaphysical terms, to a more essential domain he could not enter, because the historicity of reason had to remain concealed to him. Voluntariness, which primarily wants freedom for a ground, is the sign of the inceptuality of a humanity. The absence of voluntariness appears primarily in the incapacity for meditation, i.e., in the withering of the passion for questioning. And if indeed a young generation is overtaken by such desiccation and flees from all thinking, then no “character” or “brawn” will be of any avail.

The stupid obstinacy of sheer violence becomes the instrument of inner destruction. 10

A new “genre” of “literature” is now proliferating: imitations of Nietzsche’s *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* with the help of rigmarole concocted out of Hölderlin, George, and Rilke—well-intentioned but muddled pulp that wants to be a glorification of “life” and of “war” and of everything the great ones have ever named or valued. It is the most insidious form of spiritual devastation, where there is not, and never was, a trace of any simple concerted meditation and where everything totters about amid (supposed) primal sounds and is discoursed upon with grandiloquence and a powerful stride, with an invocation of the gods and a knowledge of everything. And yet it is all a groundless dream deriving from a blind intoxication pretending to be knowledge. And there are still enough oblivious ones who find such a muddle beautiful and “edifying.” Yet it is only the reverse side of the tottering in thoughtlessness and calculation. Even this form of devastation must founder in its own swamp before there can commence the long meditation which does not attend to itself as an effective preservation of the silence. 11

Only someone with the courage and knowledge to think over and beyond the next three centuries can today think along here and involve himself in “philosophy.” For how else should metaphysics (which has been bearing Western history for more than two millennia and will bear the first elapsing of that history) be overcome, unless through a detachment from *its* questioning and unless this detachment leaps far in advance? And how should such detachment be accomplished, unless being itself appropriates from afar those who surmise, in order that their generation might break the devastated supremacy of beings and of reality, without juxtaposing some power to this supremacy but solely by grounding in its own ground the silence of tarrying in the disclosive questioning of the essence of truth?

To counter the reproach that the effect of the National Socialistic worldview is the destruction of “culture,” clear evidence is now provided by a newspaper report on the Führer speech of January 30, 1940. In that speech, even “poets and thinkers” are recognized as “workers”: “**Poets and thinkers**, however, do not need as much food as the men who do the heaviest work.’ (Laughter).”⁵ 12

5. {Max Domarus, *Hitler: Reden und Proklamationen 1932–1945*, vol. 2, *Untergang* (Munich: Süddeutscher Verlag, 1965), 1456. More precisely: “men who do the heavy work.”}

Nietzsche opposes the “superman” to the “last man” without seeing that the superman is merely the very last “man,” the last of all, i.e., the “consummation” of the subjectivity of the *animal rationale*: the identification of the “animal” which is the human being. Nietzsche did know of this, but he did not comprehend the metaphysical decision. Sovereignty in the essential sense—which no longer requires power: to be able to show the truth even to someone unfamiliar with it. But this only where an affiliation to being: intimacy.

There is a bravery of which recklessness knows as little as does “heroism.”

- 13 A basic difficulty impedes the overcoming of the aesthetic-optical interpretation of the Greek projection of beings, since this interpretation has been fixed for centuries and is constantly reinforced and entrenched by the modern, objectifying way of representation. Even if the essence of *ἰδέα* and *εἶδος* is grasped as “outward look” or “self-showing,” a misinterpretation always slips in, to the effect that what is meant is a “picture.” What a “look” and a “view” are, and thus offer, is grasped only as a picture, instead of our grasping that in the *outward* look a steadfastness (constant presence) *manifests itself in the open region*. And this self-manifestation is at the same time and essentially a *self-retraction* into *the essential occurrence*—and the whole is first of all οὐσία—φύσις [“beingness—nature, self-emergence”]. The coming forth—not merely a sign, but the emergence itself. φύσις is the inceptually concealed “event” that is even further dissembled in the history of the first beginning.

We are grasping the essence of *τέχνη* and altogether the essence of modern “technology” only on the basis of φύσις, if “to grasp” means here to fathom the essential ground out of which what is “grasped” is overcome because it must be overcome.

- 14 The “time” of essential thinking can never be calculated according to what is transpiring publicly and is announcing itself as a need. Yielding to this would mean: often coming too soon and equating the desire for an immediate support with the decisiveness of the questioning that establishes for itself the ground of a foothold only in what is disclosively questioned. Thus there can be times which demand, as their highest point, genuine silence. Whether anyone, and *who* in particular, grasps this cannot be determined and is also of no significance.

The transference of the metaphysics of the will to power into the domain of the petty bourgeoisie leads whither in the actuality of that metaphysics?

The impotence of thinking with respect to what is real seems to be without limit; and yet this that is real is in its reality only the consequence of a released power which for centuries has sent thinking into the field as calculative planning, which is now making straight for its end, and which is permitting all thought to totter back and forth in the now groundless distinction between “theory” and “practice.” 15

The moment is coming in which humanity will be deprived of the essential power to climb in a true way the height of a metaphysics (e.g., the metaphysics of German Idealism) and to accommodate beings into the open space of that height. Humanity is slipping down (or has already slipped) into the βάθος [“depth”] of experience and extols “positivism” as the obvious and thus sole truth. And then people proclaim the “collapse” of metaphysics. This “collapse” will then be found in every historiography of philosophy and will be part of the idiom of journalists who are close to the times and close to life. Who has collapsed here? Where has Hegel’s metaphysics ever caved in? Could that be at all? If those who feel content in the swamps and bogs of “biologism” and of facts (and have neither the power nor the desire to climb the mountain of metaphysics) suddenly announce the “fact” that the mountain has caved in and so is no longer there, because they themselves are unable to *climb up*, then what is to be retained of such a “factual history”? Does it make any sense at all to defend these thoughts against the scorers of metaphysics, i.e., descend to their level, instead of remaining *above* and *only* from the heights attempting to *overcome* metaphysics? Yet such overcoming | finds no consolation in a supposed collapse of that which is to be overcome but, instead, works for metaphysics to develop in its innermost essential power and keeps the confrontation with metaphysics, i.e., the *contradicting* of it (cf. The history of being⁶), from becoming a mere clever “refutation.” 16

The knowledgeable one—who thinks the truth of being—can experience in this age the admittedly new spectacle of humans proceeding toward total mobilization so they can fight what is in their view the supreme battle: the struggle over the acquisition of the highest,

6. {Heidegger, *Die Geschichte des Seyns: 1. Die Geschichte des Seyns. 2. Κούβον. Aus der Geschichte des Seyns, GA69* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2012), 11–16.}

unconditional *enslavement to power*—(machination). This is called the struggle over “the new face of the earth.”⁷ All slaves, however, as made abundantly clear by the first thinker of this metaphysics (Nietzsche), require *mortality*, in which they feel confirmed.

The sole recourse for global heroism is the “man in the moon.”⁸ Indeed, this thinking is at home “on the moon”; it itself no longer knows what it thinks and that it thinks. The “moon”—which has merely *borrowed* all its “light” and can never know it has done so.

- 17 Two essentially different kinds of “*downgoing*” are now not only possible, but necessary: downgoing in the sense of nonconformity with the “time” of the consummation of modernity, a lagging behind on account of a refusal to participate in machination, and, on the other hand, downgoing as disappearance into the concealedness of another beginning. The latter downgoing bears all the traits of the first one and yet is in advance and constantly different—by no means a “heroic” and “tragic” downgoing, but instead only the most silent and simplest one on the basis of the affiliation to being in the midst of the abandonment by being of the beings disporting themselves only in machination, and by no means a downgoing laden with regret and sorrow, but instead one incorporated into a knowledge that cannot fathom its truth, because indeed the abandonment by being is familiar with every question of truth only as a question of power. Despotism is the extreme enslavement to beings.

The romanticism of the bogging down of all the still-persistent remainder of metaphysical thinking is manifest in the growing “Herderism.”

- 18 Herder’s half-measures, even in relation to Leibniz and Kant, | give the impression of “depth”; people feel their own confusion and their disinclination to decisive meditation confirmed in Herder and therefore attribute “truth” to his presentations. Herder’s presentiments have historical force only if they are encountered by a knowledge which⁹

Far more pernicious than all inadequate proofs and verifications is the attitude that considers proof-claims valid where another sort of questioning and truth is necessary. For such claims signify utter exclusion

7. {Jünger, *Der Kampf als inneres Erlebnis* (Berlin: Mittler, 1922), 48. “We have chiseled the new face of the earth, even if only a few might recognize it.”}

8. {Jünger, “Sizilischer Brief an den Mann im Mond” [“Sicilian Letter to the Man in the Moon”], in *Blätter und Steine* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1934), 107–121.}

9. {Cetera desunt.}

from the essential domain, whereas the defective proofs merely have gaps which can be filled up. In any case, such proofs never produce or impede any decisions.

It might very well still take a considerable time to recognize that the “organism” and the “organic” present themselves as the mechanistic-*technological* “triumph” of modernity over the domain of growth, “nature.”

The self-annihilation of humanity does not consist in self-elimination but rather in the breeding of generations | in which the magnificence of humanity is *confirmed* to them without this delusion being exposed as blindness. The essence of *subjectivity* goes its own way and rushes into this self-instituting within the unconditional abandonment by being. (Cf. On the essence of φύσις, p. 10¹⁰) The posturing in the appropriate self-confirmation is the most intrinsic essential occurrence of *subjectivity*. Therefore, subjectivity must be radically convulsed—i.e., metaphysics as such must be overcome.

19

Why can every essential contemplative thinking be flattened down “dialectically” and yet thereby seem to be intensified and sharpened? It is because this sort of destruction must by necessity become more dangerous precisely where a grounding and a beginning hold sway most originarily. In an age that sees all language only as a means of communication and of organization and takes all thinking as “calculating,” the assault of dialectics and of “dialectical” desolation on every sprout and seed is most easily without restraint, indeed rightly so. The essential defenselessness against this destruction, because every defense must already betake itself into the domain of superficiality and must abandon what is most proper; by way of descending, a summit is never attained, let alone retained in the sense of a silent superelevation.

If a humanity is no longer able to question being inceptually in its truth and, in questioning, to ground being, and is not able to endure the plight of this extreme alienation as what can *never* be trusted, then the renunciation of “philosophy” has been decided. Out of this renunciation, there first arises by recoil the spurious claim that thinkers are supposed to be the solvers [*Löser*] of all riddles and thus even the saviors [*Erlöser*]. But since thinkers are unable to be either, they are

20

10. {Heidegger, “Vom Wesen und Begriff der Φύσις; Aristoteles, Physik B 1,” in *Wegmarken*, GA9 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1996), 241.}

obviously superfluous and null. Then it is only a step to feeling not the least restraint in agreeing with the ultimate absurdity of the people who are now coming to be: i.e., in agreeing with the “proclamation” that philosophy is—“chicanery.”

The half-barbarians are worse than “natural” barbarity.

21 The “future” of the German university resides in the polytechnic institute of the Orient; in other words, to speak of a German university has become meaningless. But such institutes of the Orient will, as industrial communities, merge into the Sinicism of racial-technological organization and will have neither future nor past.

Often an essential step of thinking is carried out while still couching itself entirely in the form of what has been overcome. Both are necessary: a watchfulness for the past and the alienation of what is entirely other. But both in the unity of the same.

Are *space and time* mere unresisting mediums in which the things flutter unstably, or is space-time (neither space, nor time, nor their amalgam) the basic clearing in which every truth first receives its solidity?

22 To be the victor—does not simply mean to emerge from battle as the superior, for thereby the victor can indeed have become the inferior, by subscribing exclusively to the goal and strategy of the enemy and pursuing these to an ever higher degree in the future. To be the victor means to set the authentic and highest goal for the battle.

In order to think what is unique and self-same (such thinking is the essence of philosophy), a thinker must always pursue his peculiar course, differently than all the others who think *the same thing*. It is not that there are merely different “formulations” of the same, since to speak here of “formulations” implies that what is to be thought, being, is an object lying there merely waiting to be re clothed in a (timely) verbal casing. There are different “formulations” only for thoughtless persons.

Standing furthest removed from the truth of history are the historians.

How *bygone* is already that which is now bandied about in empty space with expressions such as “new order” or “constructive world-picture.” It is bygone, because here only an unconditional supplement to the

consummation of modernity is delivered. But the worn-out invocation of the “new epoch” is sufficient to demonstrate that one is thinking merely *historiologically*, i.e., calculatively, and is making no headway toward a displacement and reconfiguration of power.

Rescuers of “culture” who are frustrated in the expectation of a swift recurrence of the past (*their* past) and thus seek a hideaway should concomitantly think the essence no less than do those who confirm their obtuseness through their keeping up with the times, inasmuch as they measure “time” in accord with what to them is present, i.e., palpable and useful. 23

If in a movie theater the “newsreel” set into operation is said to be brought “into *engagement*” [*zum Einsatz*] what is then the “engagement” of an infantry squad under a barrage? Ignorant people might be annoyed at this trifling with a word. But they do not realize that prior to this usage demanded by the unconditional empowerment of power, both the newsreel and the infantry squad are equally inconsequential, i.e., equally “important.”

Power is in its unconditional gigantism only a dwarf over and against being, for power must make itself a slave in the service of the abandonment of beings by being and must help effectuate that for which all its capacities are retained.

Power would renounce its own essence | if it troubled itself about “logic,” i.e., about that representation of things which seeks to hold itself outside the domain of power and to find support in what is ordinary. Admittedly, to avail oneself of this “logic” can become a means of power, e.g., by feeling “deeply” (thus not at all radically) indignant over the aerial bombing of nonmilitary installations. This indignation comes in the same breath used to emphasize that war is total, which precisely means that military and civilian installations (e.g., an office of “food administration”) are equivalent *in war* and are therefore exposed to the enemy. The indignation over enemy attacks on “civilian” sites is itself, *with respect to war*, a means of unconditional power. But that the “people” do not understand this “logic” of power and remain stupid is likewise a condition of unconditional power. Anyone surprised by this “stupidity” does not know what is happening, indeed what must happen in the limitless domain of unconditional power. 24

In the age of an unconditional and automatized economics, a similarly unconditional | commitment to power and to its essence must be 25

carried out in order to gain mastery over this economics. Where a resolute commitment to power no longer knows any limits, gigantic “results” must follow. The mechanicism of commerce extends all the way to the psychic constitution of one who is “engaged,” such that the “inner” becomes as inconsequential as the exterior, with both directed toward the flawless running of the mechanical workings. Likewise, every domain which could provide other standards of judgment has collapsed. The mechanistic result establishes mechanically (“logically,” “inevitably”) the *kind* of result which must have universal validity. In the age of unconditional makeability, “the specialist” is indispensable everywhere; the narrower his own little corner and the more blind he is to everything else, all the more securely and quickly can he be used and displaced. He can take no action, for action has its origin only where, for purposes of power, the availability of all specialists is calculatively known and ready for use. Yet this mastery over the available specialists cannot accomplish anything unless all misgivings are foreclosed in advance and every moment prepares that volition which assures a relentless empowerment of power. The unconditional service of the | gigantic power machine must have already traversed the complete desolation of everything that could still claim some sort of truth. “Culture” and “spirit,” “morality” and “conduct,” are all merely economic means to the unconditionality of power.

26

Seen from the viewpoints of the usual Christian, non-Christian, or any other morality, the unrestricted empowerment of unconditional power looks like “demonism.” But the “demonic” can exist only where remnants of the divine strive to be retained, remnants whose possibilities have long since been quenched on account of power. If taken merely “quantitatively” rather than as the unconditionality of the empowerment of power, even the “gigantic” is not a distinguishing mark of power. Where such knowledge has been attained, power is revealed in its unconditional empowerment as the pure abandonment of beings by being, which abandonment has no power over itself and nowhere any knowledge of itself. But this abandonment by being is only the empty place in the history of being, the moment the null and truthless nothingness appears as the all and the highest. The foolish indignation of moral preachers and of Christians attempts in vain to halt this process, transpiring within the history of being, of the unconditional empowerment of makeability with respect to the being | of beings abandoned by being. For “morals” and Christianity themselves, not only their very dilatory adherents, are already fused into this process. Not decisive is whether and how the unrestricted empowerment of power works itself out historiologically in a determinable way and attains validity; for even where this empowerment

27

breaks down, the superior power will merely take over the means and the procedures of the inferior ones and thus will again increase and will slowly follow the operation of power all the way to unconditionality by way of institutions and values.

The most ridiculous of all, however, are those who out of the museum of old notions produce for this process in the history of being the image of personalities of genius, ones that alone “make,” “think,” and “plan” all this in the place of the dear Lord or in opposition to him. Our notions of a god or of a devil (demon) or of a demigod do not belong here. The unconditional power creates concurrently its own holders of that power, and their essence is incomparable with that of any previously experienced sorts of humanity, none of which stand yet in the realm of unconditional power. The service toward the essence of power also enables the unchecked and unrestricted enlistment of all and thus the transformation of each into the character of power. In this way arises a peculiar superiority of the one who is decided in favor of power.

28

Resting the plow under the overly pale blackthorn tree, taking a simple meal in the noonday sun of early Spring.

No scientist grasps what a thinker is, and the poet does not need to grasp it. To the scientist, philosophy appears as a sheer *petitio principii* [“question begging”]; he sees in philosophy only a presupposing of that which, in his view, is to be proved. The scientist takes over the proofs which “convince” *him*. Philosophy is unscientific. And this judgment contains more truth regarding the essence of philosophy than the scientist could ever surmise. At the same time, however, it contains a still more fundamental untruth, in that it measures philosophy up to “science.” All exponents of “scientific worldviews” judge philosophy as do scientists.

The greatest defeat (greatest because authentically historical) consists in a people submitting to the standards and already extant claims of the opponent and adopting his doctrines and principles, even if these are left implicit or are formulated differently. Therein lies the portentous renunciation of an attempt to begin the grounding of what is solely essential.

29

“Power politics”—English;

“cultural politics”—French;

“authoritarian totalitarianism”—Russian-Italian;

“imperialism”—modern.

We ought not mourn over what is nonrecurrent, but instead must let it constantly come to meet us as something unique.

If the language of a people is externalized into a mere stock of words and everyone “in the end” has daily his own unprecedented “lived experience” . . .

30 In the meantime, the Jesuits have normatively dismissed even *Hölderlin* with a | pseudopious bow to his “linguistic art”; for the time has come; it is noticed that from here decisions could threaten; hence the slogan, “dismissal of Hölderlin,” with a concomitant reference to “Novalis,” who is more acceptable to Christianity and Europe. The Jesuits are concerned only with the opposition of nihilism and Christian cultural pursuits.

The strength to remain ignorant of many things pertains to the basic conditions of contemplative thinking.

At the time “history” becomes the exclusive object of something made, the talk of “happening” is loudest. History is thereby historiology, and historiology technology. Everything becomes univocal for having lost its essential ground out of which an origin could still exist. And in turn: because everything is univocally *made* and calculated, even the “symbolic” must be made. Indeed everything made in beings is sustained by the machination of *beyng*.

31 When the abhorrence to thinking reaches the same level as the incapacity for thinking, then the miscarried professors of medicine and the misfit teachers of elementary school “make up” the “systems” of “worldview.” And this then passes for “philosophy.”

Why does every victory in beings over beings bring with it by necessity a devastation of *beyng*?

The foolishness (presumably stemming from the circle surrounding George) of thoughtlessly naming Hölderlin together with Nietzsche leads ultimately to Hölderlin being called the “Swabian Nietzsche.” The dreadfulness could not present itself more dreadfully.

The complete devastation of beings as a whole out of the whole (out of the abandonment by being) in the violent imposition of an image of exuberant “health,” the $\phi\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$ of the first beginning of the history of *beyng* and “nature” in the consummation of metaphysics: “A

period in which the old masquerade and the moral adornment of the affects provoke aversion: *naked nature*; in which the *power quantities* are simply conceded as *decisive* (as *determinative of rank*); and in which the *great style* | again appears, as the consequence of *great passion*.¹¹ 32
 (*Will to Power*, no. 1024.) “Nature” has now been taken up into “breeding”; i.e., the forces of nature are consciously *stored*. The storage and enrichment as the highest presentiment of the future—the unconditional subjectivity. (Cf. *Will to Power*, p. 398.)

Must we say what is most proper, i.e., what is of the future? Yes. This saying, however, is not already communication and is perhaps never a sharing, because what is to be said (beyng) cannot be brought to cognition but, instead, must appropriate the human being into Dasein. But then it is indeed necessary that the indicational word become perceptible. Indeed. Provided this word has entirely found the truth of its saying, has extricated itself out of the previous way of expression and also out of the “epigrammatic” form, and has made its way to a thinking creature.

Socialism is a passageway, but so is nationalism. The former a passageway to the forceful instituting and making available of everything in all respects and modes; the latter, as the instituting of the attitude of power, a passageway to the unfolding of power into the unconditionality of | mastery over the earth. The time of peoples is over and done; they are already equipping themselves to abandon the folkish [*völkisch*] as a goal and to relinquish what is populist [*volkhaft*] as a means of attaining mastery over the earth. The certainty of this possession increases the question-worthiness of humanity all the way to that level on which such a question-worthiness can easily be argued away as a negative and erroneous opinion—up to the moment an unrestricted liberation of beings to every use and reconfiguration announces itself as the abandonment by beyng and all beings begin to tremble in the concealed storm of beyng. Then only arises the moment of decision as to whether the human being can become mature enough for a unique destiny or whether he will dry up in pseudo-bloom. 33

Without a backward or forward glance at one’s own endeavors, need to offer oneself ever again to the truth of beyng.

11. {Nietzsche, *Der Wille zur Macht. Drittes und Viertes Buch, Werke*, vol. 16 (Leipzig: Kröner, 1911), 375.}

34 Can the distorted essence of “consciousness” be eliminated if the unconscious, the body, is “consciously” bred? That would merely exaggerate consciousness | into pure calculation and would foreclose the possibility of knowledge—as steadfastness in the truth of being.

Serve by running after, being co-present in the carrying out of the institutions of beings.

Serve out of solitude by departing from beings into the grounding of the truth of being.

Do not merely surmise and certainly do not say in advance, but speak only when the word of being has matured into its inceptuality.

The distorted essence of what is merely gigantic belongs to the essence of “totality”: the essential distorted essence is the “great style,” metaphysically necessary in the extreme consummation of metaphysics, and only within this consummation is something like style possible at all.

35 Previously (decades ago), the “individuals” (“aesthetes”) invoked Nietzsche’s words against the “despisers of the body,”¹² in order to justify metaphysically a capricious and riotous life. Now the same justification in Nietzsche’s metaphysics is sought | by “communities” (where “politics” has presumably been inculcated) in order to gain prestige for their petty-bourgeois notions of the enjoyable and slaveholding life of a “master race” [“*Herrenvolk*”].

An age that makes it necessary to climb on “the marble cliffs” is still not *free* for essential *questioning*; a young generation that finds its “feeling for life” expressed “on the marble cliffs”¹³ is still not *mature* enough for thinking.

Seldom does a thinker find his way knowingly into that which he knows without conceptualization. And to that appertains what he can know: the essentially occurring truth of being.

One should not try to clarify “science” in the modern sense by way of the example of “classical philology” or mathematics, but by way of

12. {Nietzsche, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, *Werke*, vol. 6 (Leipzig: Naumann, 1904), 46–48.}

13. {Jünger, *Auf den Marmorklippen* [“On the Marble Cliffs”] (Hamburg: Hansische Verlagsanstalt, 1939).}

the research work which, for example, provides the foundations for a contemporary “army commissariat.”

The epoch of the greatest “nearness to life” as the epoch of the complete abandonment by being.

Will to power and stability of time as principles of modern technology. Essential is not the longest possible (although still indeterminate) duration of what is to be built and installed, but instead a specifically brief duration, yet one that is thereby fully exploitable and, above all, for that purpose thoroughly predictable and calculable in its stable duration—not an enduring stability, but a calculatively stable duration which provides the certainty of the highest claim. Correspondingly, everything is directed toward substitution and the provision of substitutes. 36

The battle against “intellectualism” derives from the volition to make the intellect and its role properly “conscious” and to measure the intellect up against “praxis.” “Intellectualism” is still a deficiency of “intellect,” still not unconditionally “intellectual”; thinking is still not “calculating.” Only when the “instincts” become objects of calculation and breeding, when they not only hold sway but are talked *about* and inculcated, is intellectualism complete. The embattled “intellectuals” and “liberals” then, entirely without justification, mourn the downfall of “culture”; they are blind to what is happening metaphysically. The metaphysics of the will to power intrinsically demands, | with respect to the controlling of the masses and their reconfiguration into a typology, the relentless organization of a *systematic stultification* which is accomplished in such a way that the “cultural assets” become accessible to everyone. Why should the “sacks of money” belong only to the oblivious ones who have a “lived experience” of Wagner’s *Par-sival* {sic} and believe they had a “lived experience” of the world? Why should not also “workers” and “farmers” partake in these “lived experiences,” i.e., be included in the process of stultification? They must participate in it. And the insight into this metaphysical and not merely “political” necessity is much more essential and stands higher than any snobbish refinement of an “intellectual” of the previous style. In any case, this refinement comes too late as regards what is happening and what is harboring the genuine decisions. But things have progressed so far that it is already otiose to busy oneself still with the “reaction,” one which is indeed no longer in the “action” but instead displays only its “passivity” and even then only at times and covertly. 37

I “have” no “philosophy”; instead, I am always merely attempting to think something essential which is named mediately: the history of being.

- 38 Much must be debated and recorded, just for the sake of what is mediate. For only seldom are a few destined to find immediately their proper domain. Therefore, most speech is only a debate, no echoes ever in it of a word which exists only occasionally.

What is “refinement” (according to the metaphysical concept)? The stamp placed on the attitude and conduct of a human being in virtue of which he remains in the know, beyond beings as a whole, so as thereby to be himself on the basis of this relation to being.

- Is the war an essential convulsion of Western humanity? This second world war is no more than was the first, with which it belongs together. The second world war, however, is bringing about a new order of the “earth,” i.e., a new order of this technological-organized human space. The “order” is new inasmuch as it is bringing the preformed (but always alloyed with something undeveloped) machination of being into unconditional and deliberate institutionalization, into acknowledgment, and up to the level of a principle. Humanity as *animal rationale* now first becomes unconditional in rationality and animality, and the previous essence is entrenched in what has been consummated. This is admittedly a unique kind of process, and every intention to see here only deterioration and the mere expansion of what preceded remains arrested in brief and cloudy domains and is not able to act concomitantly and be historical. The new order is the decisive victory of “power” as the essence of being and thus is the onset of the unfolding of this essence into the extreme consummation: machination.
- 39

People are already talking even “about” the dispositions and making them objects of “anthropological” discussions. That is the simplest way to elude the disposing of the dispositions, and it drifts ultimately into “anthropology” and obstructs every path that could lead to a presentiment of what was questioned under the title “Being and Time.”

The instruction at “universities,” no matter how decayed it may or may not be, operates like a whirlpool sucking things down into a realm which apparently harbors “knowledge,” whereas it merely entrenches sheer ignorance. Hence the necessity of a constant and basically unprofitable turning back from this realm into what is essential.

The foundering “world” is coming to light through the rushing floods of its *wastewaters*, which are instituted qua oceans and brought to “immediate intuition.” The “*twentieth century*” as an Americanized joke book which lacks only that “remnant” of “spirit” whereby it could still poke fun at itself. People pretend to know what is “happening” but do not surmise what is occurring with themselves. Otherwise, they would have to be unsettled by seeing that “the world” is in the American way being transformed into a “warehouse” and that this is what is “German.” But perhaps this is now “German” and “European” and the “style” of one of the “three hemispheres,” of which the “Eurasian” and “Eastasiatic” are distinct only in name from the “fourth” and “first,” the “American” one. Distressed souls speak here of the “Antichrist”; if he came he would remain a harmless lad, over and against what is “happening” and has already found its henchmen. 40

People now drivell on incessantly about the “situation” (the “ontological condition”) of the human being and in advance | shy away from meditation on being. The oblivion of being on the part of unconditional machination is not greater than that on the part of Christianity and has merely stripped off the mendacity of the double dealing which simultaneously accepts reason and situates it below faith. That the Christian faith and the consummation of metaphysics (a consummation which has become a worldview) fancy themselves the most extreme adversaries is merely evidence of the blindness on both sides. But therefore they can also, according to need, join forces. 41

Metaphysics.

All things must pass through the complete devastation which is preceded by an annihilation in the most acute form of the apparent preservation of “culture.” Only so is the two-thousand-year-old structure of metaphysics to be convulsed and overthrown. The annihilation and devastation, however, still have the institutional form of metaphysics (“ideas” and “values”).

From national socialism to *rational* socialism, i.e., to the unconditional calculation and computation of the integration of human domains in themselves and with one another.

This rationality demands the highest spirituality. The essence of the Western spirit as τέχνη. 42

After the machines for writing, adding, computing, and accounting, the production of a *machine for thinking* is only a question of “time.”

Indeed, thinking has already become computing. And why should not this “thinking” have its machine? More and more is taken from the human being, even thinking (and meditation already long ago). The consequence of this process is that the human being knows less and less what to do with himself—and all the more must he surround himself with gadgets.

Today “poets,” i.e., pen pushers, have meetings as do the shareholders and directors of a corporation. Presumably, even in the former case at issue are only the “shareholders” and their “prosperity.” These “gentlemen” have nothing to do with the much-discussed “mission of the German people.”—One does not become a “Rilke” simply by placing oneself back on the little castle Muzot.¹⁴ How fine that in such a corporation Hans Grimm¹⁵ is *not* to be found.

- 43 If contemporary obliviousness as regards what “is” has exceeded the limit of something irresistible, then a person must no longer simply drift along because of the danger of being taken “seriously” by ones who do not at all want to know what “is” but who demand something novel. Yet because everything “new” holds sway so universally, the only expedient for a pen pusher is to elevate curiosity itself into a principle in the extreme form of simulated “adventuresomeness” and to lead the reader around in circles. In this way, “heroic literature” then arises.

It is counterfeiting to say that the behavior of the adventurer would harbor a preparedness for what is coming. Such behavior is the inconsequential (because basically perplexed) craving for some enchantment, no matter which. People flee from boredom at any cost, without questioning, and without the power to question, what boredom is and why it happens.—(It is the companion of machination.)

- 44 Slowly the name “Heidegger” will manage to disappear from publicness, and the efforts undersigned by that name will fall into deserved oblivion. It is also scarcely possible, within a time, to know when it is time for this. Perhaps in the year 2327? Or is that also a mistake, one nourished by historiology and its calculations? That may very well be the case.—*But beyng is.*

14. {Rainer Maria Rilke, *Briefe aus Muzot 1921 bis 1926* (Leipzig: Insel, 1935).}

15. {Hans Grimm (1875–1959), national conservative author.}

University (science).—In this institution, grasped in its full dissolution, two endeavors are “alive.” These are apparently sharply opposed and yet in their own respective ways pursue the same (the obliviousness as regards Essential knowledge).

The one endeavor seeks to rescue the “old” science through the accumulation of erudition and of specialized pursuits and specialized questions (pseudo-“problems” which feed both “polemics” and “specialized literature”).

The other pursues a planning science “directed” entirely toward the most proximate needs.

In each case the meditationlessness is equally great; in each case an equally coarse impediment is stacked up against the other, making questioning impossible.

The antagonism between the two “attitudes” is so ludicrous that it can no longer be called humorous and instead could produce some sort of impetus to become even *more* startled now—if the two inimical brothers in this way pursue the same thing. That such insight does *not* occur is clear proof of the level the meditationlessness has reached—; but it is also a sign that *here* no possibility exists in any respect to improve or even rectify anything. But such would also be superfluous, for within what can be planned and the plans of a total plan, “planning science” is entirely at home. The exponents of this science will fancy themselves justifiably as new-fashioned and “pointing to the future,” will “devise” innumerable “goals,” and will manifest a slavery to ignorance. For their enslavement does not consist in their striving for “political” and “folkish” [*völkisch*] goals, but in their advancing these goals out of ignorance, yet deliberately so, in order to be able to march right past all meditation. Of course, this meditation concerns knowledge, not “science.”

45

Through the pursuit of the “spiritual tradition,” we now maintain a “fourth humanism”; at once a “fifth,” and in each case the humanism becomes weaker and more problematic. The fourth is attached to the young Nietzsche of the Wagner period and is not yet advanced so far that the genuine Nietzsche rejects Greece in favor of Rome and the will to power, i.e., “technology.” We are still so “spiritual” as to see “technology” always “romantically” as mere “deviltry” and romanticism. Where we place the *onset of modernity* historiologically is not essential—especially if we falsely impute to this onset thoughts and questions which have already arisen out of an *essential* overcoming of modernity through an overcoming of Western metaphysics in general.

46

Simultaneity: the Russian foreign minister Molotov¹⁶ comes to Berlin, and the most modern modernity of the Germans becomes visible. Hölderlin's hymn "of" the holy, "Wie wenn am Feiertage . . ."¹⁷ is interpreted, and the concealed history covers up its other beginning.

- 47 *The two Ms*: newspapers, which still bore something of the earlier "calendar," used to recount on this day something of the customs and joys of St. Martin's day. Now "the press" announces on this day the arrival of Molotov in Berlin.

How constantly the supposed victors over fear are "fearful" about their reputation as "heroes."

The obligatory compulsion into the service of one's office (for instruction in philosophical erudition)—and the necessity to speak out of a concealed space-time of thinking.

There are external regions in which at times one must speak outwardly in a sharp and negative way. But the limits of such regions never touch the domain of essential speech.

- 48 Solely for the benefit of questioning, renounce the well-rounded configuration which now merely | entrenches the illusion that "truth" can be immediately presented and offered. With the decline of art at the last days of the consummation of metaphysics, "style" also declines. We must, within what is without style, first find our way to the right path. That will happen while at the same time the pursuit of culture increases and against its own knowledge thus allows the essential to be gathered up.

"Hölderlin and Nietzsche" (cf. above, p. 31). By necessity the one is named with the other, because they are separated by an abyss of times. Nietzsche is the name for the consummation of metaphysics. Hölderlin has been standing outside of metaphysics since 1800 and finds something else—to which Nietzsche is never related. Both names denominate fundamentally different decisions. Yet the names are usually

16. {Vyacheslav M. Molotov (1890–1986), from 1939 to 1949 People's Commissar for foreign affairs of the USSR. Molotov was in Berlin on Nov. 12–13, 1940, to confer with Hitler.}

17. {Heidegger, *Hölderlins Hymne "Wie wenn am Feiertage . . ."* (Halle: Niemeyer, n.d.).}

taken to mean the same, whereby this sameness remains quite indefinite and may simply involve a relation to the Greeks.

It has thereby been easy to forget that the genuine Nietzsche thinks purely in the *Roman* way and in his own metaphysics could never grasp the Greek beginning of Western thinking.

*The homeland, the birthplace of the upper Danube valley in the Fall (September/October), most beautifully sung by Hölderlin in “The Ister.”—“Beautifully it dwells. The foliage of the pillars burns,/And puts itself in motion. . . . For that reason Heracles preferred to betake himself/Here to the water’s source and to the yellow shores.”*¹⁸ This is the land between Gutenstein and Beuron at the base of Wildenstein castle—(cf. Ponderings X, p. 22). 49

The heart is striving to return here—back to this concealed beginning. And here it is also good that otherwise the land east of the Black Forest watershed breaks away from the clamorous “Alemannia” which, barren in spirit, has become inflated with those who do not belong to it. Now also becoming clear to me is the foreignness of these loud persons incapable of surmising who Hölderlin is and who Hegel and Schelling were but indeed capable of broadcasting their constant noise between the Black Forest and the Vosges into the void (which they believe is fullness). But can meditation turn back again to silent growth?

Palatines, half-Hessians, and quarter-Franconians as “Alemanni”—and the “Alemanni” are swaggering, loud, and sly.

All the innumerable and still disparate foundations offering “cultural prizes” could eventually merge into one “sworn brotherhood” and hold a single competition, which would have to be worded thus: Who today among the Germans speaks the most *miserable* [miserabelst] “German”? 50

The question must necessarily, and in accord with the matter asked about, contain a foreign word [“miserabel”], for the German language has no word which could rightly express the depravity of words.

But it will be very difficult for the competitors to find the answer, if one considers that in advance only those will venture to compete who can claim some prospect of winning the prize. Perhaps that is why the question is altogether unanswerable. Moreover, the question itself is still underdetermined, since a concealed discrepancy perhaps prevails over the essence of language and of correct language. The answer

18. {*Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 4, 220f.}

would be one thing if language is grasped on the basis of the *word* and would be something else entirely if language is taken as a means of communication and an apparatus for the enforcing of opinions.

- 51 When something becomes extreme, certain ironies show themselves. For example, when one no longer has “culture” and never had “culture,” one organizes “cultural conferences”; when the farmer has become a cog in the foodstuffs industry, then thick books are written about farm life; when science is bereft of all knowledge and has become technology, it then is said to be “close to life”; when art has become impossible in its essence, then arises the festival of German art days.¹⁹—That in all this a secure and simple lawfulness holds sway shows how superficially one would be thinking if one simply wanted to place oneself in the role of the indignant citizen (indignant on account of arriving too late) and, in the manner of the emigrants, intoned a dirge about the downfall of “culture.” Here something essential is taking its lawful course, and the small purview of those concerned with refinement does not comprehend what is now to be decided; for the first task is to *recognize* without cheap deprecation the *inevitability* of these processes and to see that here for the first time history is made in the great style. Therefore the coincidence of the ironic oppositions also includes this: when an age is consummated into its extreme endings, then the apparent guardians of the past seem
- 52 | to be correct in their lamentations. In truth, however, they surmise even less than do the unconditional pursuers of what is new.

The truly uncanny circumstance that must arise in the age of the consummation of modernity, i.e., in the age of the exploration, conquest, and mastery of the earth, is *the gigantic mediocrity in everything*. Thereby everything is protected but is also only used as a means to power. “Culture” (itself already a modern formation) and “barbarity” amount to the same, their difference collapses, the one stands for the other. On this basis, the entire past is correspondingly recalculated, and the “goals” of the “future” are “posited.” Therefore to fear the advent of an age of “barbarity” is childish. That age will never arrive. But just as little will a “culture in itself” blossom. The gigantism of the unconditional mediocrity in everything becomes a genuine bulwark against every decision regarding anything essential and obstructs the way to a presentiment of what is inceptual. Everything that emerges and bestirs itself is also already calculated and arranged. *The unconditional,*

19. {From 1937 to 1944, organized eight times at the House of German Art in Munich.}

all-knowing, all-calculating, all-computing mediocrity in everything as the measure of what is highest.

Every trace of the unusual (inceptual) has been obliterated. Therefore also a knowledge of the beginning, indeed even only an acquaintance with it or a representation of it, is impossible. All times of emergence and of originary errancy are blocked. The only thing incontestably new in its essence is the unconditional machination that adorns itself now with this, now with that, from the past. (Cf. p. 55.) 53

The unavoidable misinterpretations surrounding everything essential. Yet even these can still offer help when it is a matter of elucidating the communication within certain limits, without demeaning oneself. The greatest help are the *malicious* misinterpretations; these are of course rare and different from the simply angry and begrudging ones. Maliciousness requires the crude and far-reaching “perspective” of hate. But hatred is not simply a frustrated love, not simply an indissoluble entanglement in what is hated and a dependence on it, but is instead intrinsically abyssal and cannot at all be grasped “psychologically,” “morally,” or “metaphysically.”

Misinterpretations of such an origin help, because they indeed indicate something otherwise unfamiliar. Mere praise, however, is always superfluous and an empty presumption. 54

What will Ernst Jünger now do, since the timeliness of the idea that battles are decided by superior matériel has collapsed in the new war and the “elementary”²⁰ has been revealed as the instituting of mediocrity? Now the fragility of his “thinking” is coming to light, as is the hollowness of all those who used to boast of their “lived experience” and its literary elaboration. Now all that remains is to return to the bosom of the Catholic Church, whether hiddenly or openly and together with his adherents; perhaps existing there are still a few not yet wounded people for his perspicacity.

The highest level of ordering is attained when the order has become an unconditional thwarting of all growth. For that, even growth and heredity must be subjected to planning.

The pure closeness to the essential is not the grasp and possession of it, but is the self-restraint of presentiment. Since it stands in the open 55

20. {*Der Arbeiter*, 46ff.}

domain of the advent of the concealed decisions in beyng, presentiment alone is knowledge.

“Work,” “welfare,” “culture,” and “reason” are the “ideals” of the *French Revolution*. When these ideals are actualized “without remainder” for the “masses in their millions,” and all restrictions and distinctions fall away, *this* revolution will be actualized for the first time. That is what is newest of modernity, because it is the first element of modernity and thus its last.

The *historical course* of the consummation of modernity and of its prolonged duration will be distinguished by a uniform and more and more inconspicuous encasing of all distinctions into the homogeneity of the mediocrity and rationality of all striving and planning. Here belong the rapidly ascending surprises of the extreme and overstrained incidents which just as suddenly expire again in the growing forgetfulness. (Cf. p. 52.)

56 Mediocrity is not the sovereignty of the masses; | instead, it is groundlessness and lawlessness. Destruction does not stem from the masses, but from the fact that the masses are deprived of a ground, inasmuch as the ground is the relation to beyng. No amount of organizing can provide the masses this ground.

Today the “intellectuals” are merely aiming backward, devising expedient compromises, taking comfort in the past, and giving themselves prestige on the basis of what has already been. Nowhere stirring in them is any presentiment of the inceptual decisions.

Poetry is not a floating off into dreams, but also is never the mere configuration of reality. Appraised essentially, poetry is the projection of being and thus requires in advance a knowledge of beings, ones which must give way to being. The essence of poetry is not “art,” but rather is the enduring of the remoteness proper to beyng.

A people would receive entitlement to so much as this people *is*. Fine. But who can say what it “*is*”? Who is able to provide the measure for beyng? Whoever might provide this—would he not first of all need |
57 to be “entitled” to something? But can peoples or individuals ever give themselves the measure for beyng? A people can barricade itself from the measure for beyng, lose the possibility of a measure, and yet believe it can itself determine whether and to what extent it is a “master race” [*Herrenvolk*]. Metaphysically, this belief is grounded solely in the metaphysics of the will to power, and this metaphysics relegates

subjectivity unconditionally to the “superman” and purely into a powering. As soon as this metaphysics is accepted without evasions and concealments and “socialism” is simply acknowledged as one means of power among others, then the self-definition as a master race gives itself a “right” in the sense of the “justification” which in advance the master alone has granted as a possible one. Thereby, however, everything of being is abandoned and is calculated in terms of *values*. No decisions can be made here regarding the affiliation with being, because they cannot even be “brought up.”

The political homogeneity of the future opponents first brings to light the hardness of the impending struggle.

The hatred of the Italians for the Greeks and the intention to annihilate them arise from an implicit recognition that *ancient Greece*, to which we of today have certainly almost no relation, and not ancient Rome, is the ground of Western history, provided history means something other than a mere cavalcade of conquest and pillage. Setting out here is something which aims to justify the groundlessness of the age by depriving it of every possibility of an inceptual recollection. And that signifies an exclusion from the essential decisions in which the essential history oscillates: the commencement of the age of a-historicity. In such an age the first planned incidents are already announced in advance as “historiological” ones. “Historiological” is then equivalent to “important” for the technology of the presently undertaken projects. The “historiological” becomes that which is genuinely calculated. From here, the wretchedness of the zeal of “historiologists” of all sorts is easy to gauge.—

58

If small persons become arrogant over “refutation,” then they thereby unwittingly indicate that on which they have become dependent and from which they have learned what is essential, such that they cannot hope to heal themselves from it by any art of hiding from the insightful ones any longer. Where vanity and careerism can be found in every nook and cranny, it is then fitting to be indignant over the vanity and ambition and to praise the superiority of those who let everything count as valid because they are incapable of any decision, evaluate everything from a literary point of view, and season everything to taste. Where then the public and universal lack of any presentiment arises also in everything essential, such bustling ones have found their best hunting ground. The publishing industry is disreputable enough to offer accommodation to all this. We then speak of a flourishing literature.

59

“Being” at a time when beings race right past beyng.—

60 Historiology “explains,” “produces” connections, and draws everything together into a *single* intelligibility. Historical meditation recognizes that everything historical | (each decision regarding the essence of truth) is alien to every other one and that an alienation prevails in the ground of history, because in each case the same happens in the same inceptuality. Historical meditation easily seems to bring what is alien into the compulsion of what is essential to such meditation and so seems to interpret all things precisely in terms of itself. In truth, however, the constantly inceptual incomparability of the same with itself must precisely appear therein as well as the inexhaustibility of the beginning that returns into itself.

The thinking that thinks on the basis of the essence of beyng must not strive to make *itself* understood; instead, it must turn those who “understand” into questioners and do so by means of the unconstraint of the simple saying of what is said to the point of inaudibility. Here questioning is not doubting and not the mere craving for cognitions, but is rather the beginning of the relation to what is remote and forthcoming. The saying receives its simplicity from what is inceptual.

61 Technology reaches its apex not in the complete instituting of the machine and the motor, but when “myth” and what is called such are made objects of calculation and the tragic is delivered over to dramatical reckoning. In that way the ground of history, the discourse of beyng, is obstructed by historiology everywhere, and tragedy becomes an “object” of planning.

Must we not be blind, in order to have the night constantly right before us? Yet anyone who has never beheld the light has also never seen the night, and how could anyone perceive the light if his eyes are shut to the night? What does it mean that brightness can be dim? There is no bright or dark without the clearing.

To bring under the rubric of the “philosophy of existence” is to provide an opportune mask. For, the complete misinterpretation and the historicizing, which are posited thereby, can become burdensome when seen by day and can provoke an attempt at “rectification.” Accordingly, the mask, bestowed in this way, ever again deserves many thanks.

62 To name “God” and to speak still in the sense of metaphysics and (re-)ligion) and to think not at all of the one who speaks himself, such that

nothing might be omitted from this one in the projection [*Vorwurf*] which must first find the “between” of beyng and be appropriated by it.

What you believe you “have” “before” yourself becomes always something behind you and beyond you—and you yourself are concomitantly projected toward this. (Cf. above, p. a.)

This outweighs everything: to be summoned by the claim of beyng.

Hölderlin—if we take the hymns he did not publish as “literary remains” [*Nachlaß*], then we already misinterpret everything, even if we have not at all started to look into these poems. We take them as something left behind, unfinished; we then believe we know, on the basis of the already familiar poems, what would have become of these “unfinished” ones. In this way we dismiss the genuine task of grasping this supposedly unfinished work precisely as what is genuinely decisive, namely, the other beginning in another law compelling everything to renounce precisely that which is already familiar. The “remains” then are manifest | as what has gone far *in advance*, what leaves us of today and those to come *ever further behind itself*. 63

“Literary remains” is here a misleading rubric that indeed reverses the true temporal relation and prevents us from recognizing in what is supposedly incomplete that which harbors what is coming, from which we remain excluded as long as we fervently, and apparently having made progress, and with an air of regret and superiority, take what thus lies there as an occasion for a false calculation of that which (according to our—quite inadequate—opinion) it should have become. Here, too, the literary-historiological rubrics (i.e., customary opinions) carry on their mischief and impede the preparation for the genuine decisions.—With regard to Nietzsche’s “literary remains,” something analogous, but only analogous, holds—even those “remains” think in advance—but in the sense of a consummation and an end. Here is no beginning of a decision. Even Hegel’s “lecture courses” have still not been brought into the proper context, where the relation to the other works is *once again* different. Hegel is complete with the “Phenomenology,” i.e., the “System of science,” and is fixed in the unconditionality of Absolute knowledge.

We often escape into the world of fairy tales and child’s play and seek to retrieve this world or to mourn it as bygone. We thus misinterpret everything here excessively through relations to the biological and developmental. We take the more recent and older time as Lost 64

childhood and do not realize that the deficiency is to be sought elsewhere: in the fact that we, as adults, do not find our way to the poetry and the modes of thought appropriate to *childhood* and outgrowing it. In the course of the flight to childhood, we abandon the necessity of a poetizing and thinking which, like all of this (even the childlike), must not be explained and interpreted according to the stages of life but, instead, is to be grasped as originating out of being itself.

It is well known that in every era the “generations” come into confrontation in respectively different ways and experience (and relate to) “time,” i.e., past, future, and present, differently. The “elders” fail to see what knowledge is for “young people” today. But the lack of cognition is already the consequence of an incapacity for “thinking,”
 65 | and thinking is odd, because it is not simply a neutral instrument, does require a relation to being, and can be carried out as meditation only in terms of that relation. The incapacity for “thinking” (not a mere lack of schooling in “logic”) derives from a disturbance in the dispositions, a shutting off of disposition from the voice of being. But since disposition can never abandon itself, it flees into the brutalization of the heart, and a justification for this brutalization is procured through a reference to the necessity of “jaggedness” and “adamancy.” The brutalization spreads open an inner void, one which must be constantly refilled through the clamor of a stubborn and pompous self-assertion which is only a harbinger of power and chases after the overpowering of power. Hence the craving for a constant surpassing of others, i.e., for a constant slighting and degrading of others (a pressing of oneself up along with a concomitant stepping down while expecting and calculating to be above immediately and be able to press and step more and more and have to bend down—*seemingly*—ever less). In truth, this brutalizing and hollowing self-magnification falls
 66 | ever more acutely into the enslavement to something it itself, in accord with | its incapacity for meditation, can never surmise, namely, enslavement to power and to its machination as the essence of being. One feels omnipotent, expert, and superior with regard to all beings and intends to be master over everything, and yet one is merely *in service* to a way of being (the unleashing of the essence of power) which has concealed itself in the semblance of nothingness and holds those who have no power over themselves in a constantly increasing delusion. Even the dominance of this semblance belongs to the machination of power.

How does it happen that in authentic thinking, which (as appropriated by being) indeed attempts to ground the truth of being in the essence of that truth, the essential steps are often fully prepared and yet are not carried out? Does the reason lie in the essence of human beings, namely, that they can never be transposed into Da-sein and become Da-sein themselves, but that they rather only always and at most perhaps can become importunate with regard to Da-sein and even this only seldom? In the meantime, they are overburdened by their attentiveness to beings and by the previous interpretation of being. An essential step is for us to put into effect the knowledge that philosophy is as old and as historical as the commencement, history, and consummation of metaphysics. There is “philosophy” only since Plato, and it proceeds to its end in Nietzsche’s metaphysics. “Philosophy” is then necessarily replaced by “worldview.” This replacement means that philosophy is consummated in the distorted essence of metaphysics, in which guise the “worldview” has been developing unconditionally since the commencement of the consummation of metaphysics (i.e., since the time of *German Idealism*).

67

“Worldview” is thus the legitimate replacement for “philosophy” and is at once the mode and type of the “steering” of “philosophy,” insofar as the latter survives in a scholastic and pedantic way as “metaphysics.” Thereby “philosophy” becomes the “scholasticism” of “worldview”; “scholasticism” in a double sense: 1. by creating the conceptual apparatus for the worldview and 2. by remaining in the attitude of the *handmaiden*, in that it openly or tacitly submits to the “truth” of the worldview and renounces every leap into inceptual or even originary questioning. This process pertains intrinsically to the consummation of metaphysics and is not at all grasped if one sees in it only “downfall.” For one is then comparing current “philosophy” only with a state in which it was supposedly “free” and “in bloom,” whereas in truth it merely gaddled about goallessly in some sort of historicism (Kantianism, Hegelianism, “philosophy of life,” Cartesianism (phenomenology)).—Metaphysics and its consummation bring philosophy to its end. And the beginning of thinking can no longer be a beginning of philosophy. On the other hand, this beginning can still for a long time to come make itself unrecognizable and misinterpretable in the form of “philosophy.” Therefore, the apparent sameness is an abyssal difference: the slandering of “philosophy” out of faith in “worldview” and the overcoming of “philosophy” out of the beginning of a more inceptual thinking in the age of the consummation of metaphysics. The essential step out of “philosophy”—while remaining bound to the

68

semblance of a mere modification of previous philosophizing—requires above all a knowledge of the proper appurtenance within the limits stipulated by the truth of being. This step must indeed *remain* the prelude to ineptual discourse.

- 69 It is easy, and false, to take my “interpretations” as “historiology”; they are carried out everywhere—especially in the “lecture courses”—with the intention of saying the unsaid. This looks as if the interpretation is a view that is supposed to be attributed to the thinkers. In each case, the interpretation is an overinterpretation, for it goes beyond the limits of what “lies there.” Attached at the same time is the other danger that thereby the “proper” questioning, whose “peculiarity and “novelty” are not the point, might nevertheless lose its singularity and then seem to be carried out still within the thinking of the metaphysicians. Here a *sharp distinction* must certainly be drawn insofar as the issue is the communication of the futurally necessary thinking out of its proper beginning. It is not in order to rescue an “originality” but, quite to the contrary, in order to experience the ineptuality of the other beginning in the history of being, that what is unavoidable, after the history of metaphysics has become more essentially familiar, is *opposition* to metaphysics. But the appropriate kind of presentation is difficult to find, because there can be no question here of a “refutation” or even of a reckoning up of “mistakes” which are to be “improved” in the future. To devise an “improved” philosophy is an ambition of philosophical pedants.
- 70 The perplexed, supposedly “descriptive” drivel over “technology” can find no end. The brothers “Jünger” take this theme as a perpetual occasion to betray ever anew their now already familiar obliviousness of the literatus. And where with Nietzsche’s help the facts of modern technology were once seen more clearly (i.e., in *Der Arbeiter*²¹), one no longer dares to go back, because even there only pretexts remain left over. “Technology” is not to be found in “technological things,” but instead essentially occurs as an ultimate and extreme mode of the truth of beingness, namely, the mode of machination.

The puerile endeavors directed to a “*German*” philosophy do not realize they are merely emulating a “*French*,” i.e., propagandistic, “nationalistic” way of thinking and are abandoning everything German, namely, meditation and the venture of essentiality. And what if those who in this way bustle about fall into historicism and unearth and

21. {Ibid.}

calculate the “Germanness” in the previous philosophy? As if these gentlemen somehow knew what is “German.” Or do they first want to find it through this “seeking”? | What is essential to, e.g., “German Idealism” is not that it is “German,” but that something essential was thought there; not that some Germans accomplished this, but that what was accomplished is binding on the essence of the history of being and compels a still more decisive questioning. With that fruitless rummaging about for something German, one can of course easily present oneself as timely and as supposedly close to the people; but we can also uncover in this activity the genuine emptiness and the incapacity for thinking. All of this stands in the slavery through which the abandonment of beings by being incorporates its slaves as the would-be masters.

71

Timeliness is insubstantiality, even when it gives itself airs as the only possibility left open (for “current” affairs) and claims therefore to be indispensable and therefore necessary and therefore even “free.” What sort of foundry for semblances is behind this idolization of timeliness? And to what extent is the “untimely” only a belated slave of timeliness?

“Growth” in the historical sense is reconciliation to the beginning of the truth of being, this reconciliation understood as a rising up out of the beginning. All “growth” having such an essence is an unintentional self-concealment, an originary knowledge of silence.

72

The “philosophy of existence,” which Jaspers alone grounds and develops, finds its core in the clarification of existence, its keystone in metaphysics, and its guideline in the (scientific) orientation to the world. The “philosophy of existence” is a metaphysics of subjectivity—but over and against Nietzsche and German Idealism it is a return to Kant, though not in all doctrinal components. In the “philosophy of existence,” as in all “metaphysics,” the question of being does not attain the rank of a question; it remains altogether unrecognized and misunderstood, insofar as the question of being means the disclosive questioning of the truth of being.

Silence can awaken the false impression that the silent one had something to *say*.

But silence can also be a seldom-grasped sign that something essential must be kept silent. Then there would indeed be a disclosive silence; certainly, but only within the history of something already spoken.

- 73 The most severe (because the most hidden and thus most obdurate) dependence *on* one's time befalls the person intent on untimeliness. For him, the constant glancing at the "times" becomes a principle.

The goal of all organization is the unconditional, thorough, fastest possible, always reversible, utterly controllable replacement of each thing by the other and vice versa. Here for the first time the essence of the masses (which does not consist in their incalculable agglomeration), i.e., their massiveness, becomes an unconditional "organ" of unconditional machination. Therefore, "organization" is what is properly "organic."

- "Christian philosophy."—Whoever uses a presumed concept of "Christian philosophy," or even only uses the name, is henceforth rid of the burden of proof he otherwise would be saddled with, the burden to show that he has surrendered to thoughtlessness. For he does not form a notion of what is "Christian," let alone put one into practice, as belief that Christ is the son of God, a belief requiring assent to the Bible as *the* source of truth. Perhaps he means that Christendom is Christianity and equates Christendom with support of the intrigues of the political power of the curia of papal Rome. He only half understands the whole of the essence of "Christianity"; in other words, he does not understand it at all. And he takes "philosophy" to be historiological play with general concepts, the pasting together and balancing off of views about the "world" for the satisfaction of intellectual needs. He takes even philosophy only "by half," as a device for the embellishment of his supposed "faith." "Christian philosophy" is in this way and in each case the coupling of two "half measures." And it might be tempting to calculate whether two "half measures" must indeed amount to a whole. But this calculation would go wrong if it failed to see that such a computed whole can only be a whole half, i.e., a complete half, in which the half measures are not eliminated, but are only intensified, so that the whole presents the utter nullity of the notion of a "Christian philosophy."—To be sure, the impossibility of this concept is seldom recognized in its acuity, because no one ever comes to terms with "Christianity" or "philosophy," instead of assuming a more innocuous concept of them and thereby believing one is confirmed in the opinion that "factually" such things indeed | "are"—i.e.,
- 74 people constantly proclaim them, people who have a vested interest in them. Indeed many might at first find it difficult to accept that, in essence, a "National Socialistic philosophy" does not in the least differ from "Christian philosophy." Anyone who thinks clearly regarding
- 75

politics will therefore also be consistent and reject every “philosophy” within a “worldview”; such a “philosophy” can at most have a purely technical-scholastic meaning.

Anyone who takes to the public streets, for instance by publishing something he has written, unavoidably comes into the view of gapers. But those who gape provide the measure for the way a person is “seen,” in case this can still be called “seeing.” That the gaping is always mistaken is something that must be endured. The attempt to instruct the gapers would be foolish. But then silence will be interpreted once again as it applies to those who are curious: as exasperation or irresoluteness. Who considers the possibility that a word might be necessary only so that there could then be silence?

My relation to Kierkegaard.—I have never expressed myself on this relation, since that would be possible only through a confrontation with Kierkegaard as a “Christian thinker” (a name which is of course to be understood in the modern sense and by no means conflated with “Christian philosophy”). People are now saying: Heidegger has appropriated Kierkegaard but has omitted the Christian belief and—has misused Kierkegaard *atheistically*. This opinion, set in motion by someone or other, maintains (or, better, assumes without thinking) that the questioning in *Being and Time* is the same as Kierkegaard’s, with the sole exception that the Christian aspect has been omitted. In truth, the question *Being and Time* poses altogether for the first time is utterly foreign to every metaphysics and even to Kierkegaard. Why then does the name “Kierkegaard” crop up, and why is his vocabulary appropriated and “existence” thematized “existentially”?—Because Kierkegaard attempts, within Western (specifically modern) metaphysics, to grasp the *selfhood* of the human being essentially, on the basis of subjectivity. 76

Yet Kierkegaard is intent on Christian salvation, and *Being and Time* on a completely different question, one which is neither Christian nor anti-Christian—but lies altogether outside of Christianity, outside of theology, and outside of metaphysics. | For precisely that reason, however, meditation on human selfhood, meditation compelled by the question of being, becomes the first necessity—admittedly in such a way that already *in the approach* to this question (out of the question of being and only out of it) all subjectivity is abandoned and the human being is grasped as Da-sein. (Cf. the annotation in *Being and Time*, p. 235.) “Philosophically,” in the sense of the question of being posed there, more is to be learned from Kierkegaard’s edifying writings, 77

wherein the existentiell, selfhood, rather than Hegelian metaphysics, is brought to knowledge. But Kierkegaard's selfhood is read more originally—i.e., existentially—in *Being and Time* from the viewpoint of the existential analytic—i.e., the viewpoint of the preparation of the truth of being out of the knowledge of Dasein.

It may hold of Jaspers that he secularizes Kierkegaard, inasmuch as Jaspers—with the assistance of Kantian systematics—does in fact appropriate the basic attitude of Kierkegaard (cf. the threefold articulation: world-orientation, clarification of existence, and metaphysics) and therefore affirms transcendence theologically—but does not carry it out in terms of Christian faith. Nothing of all this can be found in *Being and Time*, a book which is then branded as “atheistic”—without asking whether, with the more originary question of being, metaphysics as a whole and thus all of theology do not lie completely *outside* the domain | of essential decision. Is it in fact so?

A certain Bollnow, a prolific writer who even counts himself one of my “disciples” and must therefore know “it,” is now publishing a work on the essence of the dispositions.²² It is possible to write, and have opinions, about everything; why not also “about” the dispositions? Perhaps “psychiatrists” and other people can make use of it. And they should have abundant use of it.

Yet—what has this to do with *Being and Time*, what has this ink slinging to do with philosophy, i.e., with what is to be decided at this concealed moment of world history? Nothing at all.

But Bollnow intends this. Indeed—he “explodes” and “convulses” the approach and the philosophy of *Being and Time*, whereby he merely “supplements,” brings overlooked “aspects” to cognition, and attenuates the deficiencies. And how does the philistine deal with this ambiguous convulsing and “exploding”? He takes it as settled that *Being and Time* is a “philosophical anthropology.”²³ He detects, in a way illuminating for everyone, crude deficiencies and mistakes in this vain formation; thereby the matter is settled. The philistine seems not to know, or does not want to know, anything of the fact that *Being and Time* is asking something completely different and that it even (which would be the minimum that | could be noticed) explicitly (cf. *Being*

22. {Otto Friedrich Bollnow, *Das Wesen der Stimmungen* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1941).}

23. {Ibid., 7ff.}

and Time §IV and *Kantbook* §§36–38²⁴) repudiates all anthropology. Nevertheless, the philistine has the incontestable advantage, within the discipleship and then more generally, of having brought the crudest misinterpretation of *Being and Time* once again expressly on its way. Let his “elevated” and “happy” dispositions be allowed him. Perhaps, but only slightly perhaps, one day a very depressed disposition will overtake him regarding his “happy dispositions.”—

Phenomena such as this ink slinging, which indeed have become the rule, are all rooted in the long-since-decided detachment of contemporary opinions from all essential thinking. People take refuge in a philosophical activity which the older generation has frequently enough demonstrated to the “rising” one. Previously, this author, in his discussion (D.L.Z.²⁵) of my treatise “Vom Wesen des Grundes,” accomplished something better. But the things said there are supposed to have been the thoughts of someone else.

One should not be so loud in one’s indignation over the psychoanalysis practiced by a Jew, “Freud,” if and as long as one cannot *in general* “think” about each and every thing otherwise | than by “reducing” it, as an “expression” of “life,” to the “instincts” or to the “atrophy of instincts.” Such indignant “thinking,” which in advance altogether excludes “being,” is pure nihilism.

80

In order *not* to understand something, actually not understand it, we must indeed already have grasped some things truly. (Cf. p. 82.)

To interpret oneself is to descend below one’s level. This statement holds, provided “interpretation” is conceived as the standard for the lowest level of understanding. Then “to interpret” means to make oneself comprehensible to those who lack understanding and who adhere blindly and obstinately to their “views,” ones that have befallen them out of the blue. To make oneself “comprehensible” to *these* who lack understanding means in fact to renounce essential knowledge. But is *this* way to make oneself understood indeed the essence of interpretation and self-interpretation? Interpretation is projection upon something still concealed, something that determines. Self-interpretation in the genuine sense means precisely to go out *beyond* one’s level and

24. {Heidegger, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*, GA3 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1991).}

25. {Bollnow, “M. Heidegger: *Vom Wesen des Grundes*. Halle, 1929,” in *Deutsche Literaturzeitung* [D.L.Z.] 51 (1930), columns 1879–1887.}

to overcome oneself. But the only one who can interpret himself is one whose discourse harbors something essential, such that out of the latter arises the necessity | of a surpassing projection. The self-interpretation, however, is not any sort of self-mirroring or self-preoccupation. It is in truth a transposition into that which determines, to which we merely appertain.

Renouncing *this* self-interpretation then means preserving one's "level." But one who simply maintains a level, instead of constantly elevating it, has already begun to subside, *along with* his level; and for that he no longer needs others, to whom he makes himself comprehensible or distances himself.

Ernst Jünger, the origin of the quoted statement,²⁶ has, to be sure, provided a "self-interpretation" in the bad sense in *Marmorklippen*; there he descended below the level of *Der Arbeiter* and did not attain, let alone surpass, the metaphysical decisions of *Der Arbeiter*, ones he himself indeed did not grasp or explicitly pose. Yet he has made himself "comprehensible" in this regard to the half-Christians and to the supposed champions of a bygone "refinement."

What is happening when an era is catapulted into an excess of calculability and into the computation of everything and even takes this excess of reflectedness | "into account" in its calculation and reckons the most overly strained "reflectedness" as "instinct," i.e., as the non-"intellectual" holding sway of originary stirrings and safeguards "of life"?

Lack of comprehension and incomprehension—

Questioning and incomprehension.

Lack of comprehension is lack of understanding as the incapacity for essential thinking. Such incapacity is both an inability and an unwillingness.

Questioning is an incomprehension deriving from the passion for a knowledge that surmises and that may endure in a relation to what is essential even if it must tarry in errancy.

Thus one incomprehension is not the same as another. (Cf. p. 80.)

Every configuration of a "text" must be based on an interpretation. Yet interpretation indeed presupposes an already established text; certainly—but not in such a way that interpretation is based on the text.

26. {"Epigrammatischer Anhang," in *Blätter und Steine*, 226.}

Instead, the text is at once already brought into an interpretedness and an interpretability and kept mobile in this open domain.

We who have come afterward must—assessed from the little *we* have at our disposal—constantly delve very deeply into the work of the few unique ones, so that the simplicity of that work might become clear. And *if* we do grasp this simplicity, then we can indeed easily and readily renounce much that is interpreted into it. And we may then further cross out (cf. p. 86) the interpretations and let them be as one-sided. 83

Only aberrant eras (which assess the truth of something true exclusively by the number of people who agree that it is true) can believe that a word is not a word, just because there is no one strong enough to hear its voice.

“Hymns”—“one” includes among them the thoughtless noisy bombast rolling on and on unimpeded within the long-since-decided devaluation of words, feigning a disposition, and producing empty befuddlement.

The nonpublic is not the “private,” but is rather the domain of a decision for steadfastness in the truth of being.

The currently much-lamented “disappearance of refinement” is not dangerous. But what is dangerous, indeed has already gone beyond mere menace, is the process of that destruction which bursts forth from the absence of all *discipline* in regard to the “spiritual.” The presentiment that in thinking and speaking the highest rigor remains the first requirement—this presentiment has already been lost. No amount of “cultural accomplishment” can awaken this “discipline” but can only extinguish the last embers of the knowledge of it. 84

The “farmer,” who once walked the fields, and the worker in the food-stuffs industry, who today is well supplied with radios and movies and has to do with “tractors” and “motorcycles.” To struggle against “urbanization” is absurd, if the countryside is already more “citified” than is the city.

When the tastelessness and repugnance of public “tokens of honor” are no longer descried, then the interpretation of reality according to effectivity has won the upper hand. A human being is then only that

- 85 which | he accomplishes. This holds indeed primarily and only of the machine. Nevertheless, the human being also accomplishes in such inflation only that which he *is*. And he is insofar as he appertains to being. And being? (Cf. p. 86.)

“Hölderlin and Weinheber.”²⁷—the “poet” Weinheber²⁸ is left with all due respect; but this conjunction is exactly as tasteless and oblivious as the one of “Kant and Heidegger.” This remark is not supposed to support the equation of “Weinheber” and “Heidegger,” since we would do well, even in other cases, to leave the bandying about of “names” to the newspapers.

Where and when language has been entirely abandoned to utility and words have lost all their weight in “idle talk,” there the unrestricted consumption of words appears as the “natural” relation to language. All speech based on the experience of the essence of what is to be said, every lawfulness and strictness, every rarity and dignity of the word, must necessarily be branded as “artificial” on the universal background of “natural” speaking and writing which go on and on.

- 86 Under the “regime” of the devastation of language, all building counts as “unnatural” and “inorganic.” Moreover, what opens up here is a glimpse into the consistency suitable in a higher degree to everything malicious.

The excess of interpreting-into is, in the domain of essential interpretation, never an excess, because we always fall short of the fullness of simplicity. (Cf. p. 83.)

If the human being accomplishes only what he “is” and yet brings about great accomplishments, “is” he then not great? Certainly—measured against the greatness of what can be accomplished, but not in relation to the eminence of being. The great accomplishments could precisely become a proof of the smallness of being. Perhaps humans must be very small and entirely alien from their essence (the preservation of the truth of being) in order to carry out “enormous accomplishments” and take from them the basic measure for everything: namely, “unprecedented *magnitude*.”

27. {Adolf Beck, “Josef Weinheber in seinem Verhältnis zu Hölderlin,” in *De Weegschal* 6 (1939–1940), I, 1–6; II, 17–22; III, 65f.}

28. {Josef Weinheber (1892–1945), Austrian lyric poet and National Socialist.}

Truthless times seem to feel the “halest.” That is admittedly a viewpoint of swine, but indeed still a “viewpoint,” if the human races submit to it.

All *nonoriginary*, i.e., metaphysical, questioning, thinking, calculating, teaching, and “believing” require by necessity a “history” (a past) reinterpreted according to the respective measures in each case. This reinterpretation thrusts aside the beginning, makes it ineffective, and robs it of the possibility to summon decisions. All historiology, which carries out such a *rewriting* of “history,” is driven on by anxiety in the face of the inceptual, and this drivenness gives rise to the experience and interpretation of itself as a genuine advancement. “Progress” in all its possible disguises is the “idol” with which the unfamiliar anxiety in the face of the beginning is completely covered over, whereby the obstructed beginning is replaced by proposed goals. 87

If something is “almost revolutionary,” it may count as unconditionally innocuous.

In the future, what is incomprehensible must be ventured; *every* concession to understandability is already destruction.

Happily there are still other Germans besides Herder, Schopenhauer, and Wagner, the cooks in a steaming peoples’ kitchen.

If the noise of a “heroic” inebriation becomes the measure of decisiveness, then everything essential appears in its simplicity as the “banal” and becomes rejected before it is even considered. 88

If what is coming can never be seen with the former eyes, then could what is coming ever be seen? And if not, then how could a being ever strive to present *beyng*? Therefore, what counts is not primarily the endeavor not to boast about beings; on the contrary, only one thing is necessary: to become of another gaze, of unseeing “eyes,” to *think essentially* and renounce “proofs.” This renunciation, however, starts the first fulfillment of riches.

The time is coming when only seldom will anyone be allowed to know of the beginning of Western history in Greek thought, the beginning from which an essence of truth was decided. Therefore, instead of lamenting the regression in “humanistic refinement,” we must welcome the covering over of the Greek world to everyday discourse.

89 We need to acknowledge that a chasm separates the inceptual Greek world from the Roman world and that both cultivated something like a “humanism” only in their last hours and in basically different ways. What was essential in each case, at the high points of their history, was the decision in favor of beings as a whole and this again in different ways.

“Situation analysis”—posing as “philosophy”—and the literary “critique of the age” are extreme cases of a fall into timeliness. But this fall is endowed with the semblance that through this hidden enslavement to contemporary currents a “breakthrough” (it does not get more facile) to “being” would be carried out. The adepts, high born from the contemporaneous literati of the stock of Ernst Jünger, then carry out “spiritual” confusions by taking care that nothing eludes the talking and writing, under the constant assurance that one naturally, as the “theologian of adventure,”²⁹ knows everything and is at home only in the nearness of being, qua the appointed custodian of being.

90 One then of course no longer has need of “superlatives,” because they have been made the rule out of the abundance of exaggerations, and the immense number of amassed thefts has been forgotten, while for the initiates these thefts still stare out of every statement. Why should a person, laden with so much stuff he has read up on, not play the magnanimous and well-intentioned individual who merely disseminates what indeed never belonged to him? Even a “metaphysics” is now discovered in Jünger, very belatedly, I should say. For this metaphysics, i.e., the one of Nietzsche’s will to power, already existed before there was a “war of superior matériel” in which Ernst Jünger merely “experienced” what he already knew from Nietzsche. If the man of letters lionizes the man of letters, then we need no more proof that the proclaimed nearness to being—is a fraud.

What essentially underlies the bestowing of a gift is not the giving away, but is the immunity to the decisive ingratitude which accepts the gift for the sake of renouncing it.

91 The English have for the past three centuries abandoned every essential beginning. What they no longer have the Germans will still not have in the coming centuries. Out of this intermediate void arises the war, which is *not* an essential struggle, because it is conducted around

29. {Gerhard Nebel, “Versuch über Ernst Jünger,” in *Feuer und Wasser* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1939), 224.}

the nothingness of what is null. This war originates out of an abandonment by being of the now-ending modern humanity. No goal given to this humanity reaches what is essential. But the Americans take this state of nullity as the promise for their future, since they indeed nullify everything in the semblance of universal “happiness.” Americanism is the pinnacle of nihilism.

If one already calls thinking “abstract,” in distinction to intuition, from which it has removed everything sensuously intuitable, then one should also know that there is a *phantasy of concepts* which surpasses even the poetic imagination of poets.

Expansion, diffusion,³⁰ and (in their wake) generalization are the unconquerable enemies of what is essential and of what is essentially “great.”

Around the year 2300 at the earliest, there may again be history. Then Americanism will have exhausted itself, fed up with its own vacuousness. Until that time, humans will make still unimaginable progress into nothingness, without recognizing, i.e., overcoming, this space of their rushing about. The recollection of what has been and of what essentially occurs in concealment will be more and more muddy and confused, i.e., superficially “reduced” to a few evident propositions and opinions. The “historiological balcony” is becoming the “symbol” of the complete a-historicity. A certain pseudoriches thereby enters into the history of the protracted expiration of modernity, such that in this end state of civilized barbarity the ones battle for civilization and the others for barbarity—with the same craving for calculation. Thus a wasteland corresponding to the emptiness will be reached, and this wasteland entirely spreads round about itself the semblance of a factually unprecedented fullness. 92

The purely gratuitous experience which is given concomitantly to the thinker himself, although he may have nothing for himself, is the recognition that, in his saying, the unsaid becomes manifest and through concealed relations permeates everything he says. This experience is the assignment to an affiliation with being. 93

German blood will be let in vain unless the spiritual decision of Western history is ventured out of the concealed spirit of the West for the sake

30. [Reading *Verbreitung* for *Vorbereitung*, “preparation.”—Trans.]

of the preserved spirit of Europe and is attained by struggle in long meditation.

A teaching staff that avoids the exertion of true thinking and of long meditation must not wonder if “illustrated sheets,” “films,” and mere charts and graphs become the privileged means of instruction and the devastation of the spirit is taken for the spirit itself.

94 “*Culture*”: every gaze at “culture,” every pondering of the now evident cultural-“*political*” essence of “culture,” easily falls into the danger of misinterpretation by a critique which prematurely determines that “culture” is supposed to be “activity” and attributes to the production of an “ensemble” that which is supposed to arise freely and decisively out of mature origins. The danger looms that “culture” would be interpreted as a mere facade of political-mechanical technology. We have now been definitively exempted from this danger. The self-interpretation of “culture” has removed all uncertainty. The Reich Leader [*Reichsleiter*] Baldur von Schirach has now, in a “programmatic speech” in Vienna, designated himself the “**activity guide for the Viennese cultural ensemble.**”³¹

The real question, “Where do we stand?” which is to be asked concomitantly with the question, “Who are we?,” does not serve a “situation analysis,” as if the task were to determine a position on an already calculated course—the real question concerns the emergence of space-time itself out of the inceptual experience of the truth of being.

95 Nothing is done by merely lamenting contemporary (in part, ineluctable) phenomena in the alteration of schooling and of “refinement”—by way of a comparison of the present time with “earlier” ones. To be sure, nothing except that the “spirit” is now made subservient to the most proximate goals and to blind activity. But the struggle is not about that and not about “culture.”

The fable that Nietzsche rediscovered “pre-Platonic philosophy” will one day come to light as a fable; for Nietzsche has indeed bequeathed the *most superficial* interpretation of these thinkers, i.e., of what they *thought*, due to his very great obliviousness regarding what is reserved for essential thinking as that which is to be thought.*

31. {Baldur von Schirach, *Das Wiener Kulturprogramm: Rede im Wiener Burgtheater am 6. April 1941* (Munich: Eher, 1941).}

* Nietzsche is the last thinker to have sacrificed himself in favor of “Platonism”; for through the inversion of Platonism he completely enveloped himself in it and allowed the overturned and the inverting to run out ultimately into the indifferetiation of the sheer powering of power.

Not everyone who “thinks,” i.e., represents conceptually, and by no means everyone who “occupies” himself with “thinkers” (who say what is essential and rare of being) is a thinker.

In the age of unconditional “wars,” the last remnant of a knowledge of the essence of *struggle* wastes away: namely, the fact that struggle, as a confrontation, does not annihilate the opponent but instead rescues him to a higher possibility of his essence, so that the one involved in the struggle creates for himself in this way the possibility of an essential surpassing of his own essence and thus effectuates a preparedness for the truth of being. 96

The attempts to learn and to imitate the act of interpretation do already from the start fall into the error of believing that there would be a schema for interpretation. In truth, the essential step of any interpretation is the recognition that everything to be interpreted demands in advance *its own* respective interpretation and places to the side all ulterior designs and their techniques. Kant must be interpreted “differently” than Plato, and the latter differently than Heraclitus—for the projection casts even the interpreter into the respectively self-opening region of a unique discourse. All “historiology,” qua science, entrusts itself to “techniques” and thereby finds no restriction, since “something” “emerges” in every case.

The worst of all deviltries is “collegial propriety.”

The triad of “ideals”—faith, obedience, struggle—characterizes the basic constitution of the Jesuit order. Those three requirements are of course anchored in a previously secured reality, since they are *ad maiorem dei gloriam* [“to the greater glory of God”]. 97

Henceforth, what counts is “faith pure and simple,” “obedience pure and simple,” “struggle pure and simple.” These then seem to be higher. But in truth they are belief in belief, obedience over and against obedience, struggle for struggle. This unconditionality reaches into the void of nugatory nothingness: unconditional perplexity as principle of education. Can an “empire” be grounded on that?

Kant remarks at one point that for everything “new,” something “old” can be found, whereby the “new” is then deprived of originality.³²— In this regard it can be asked whether now also for everything old something new can be found and how the old is constituted with respect to the oldest, the inceptual, over against which (since it remains *outside* the computation of “old” and “new”) the new and newest can be of no avail. We can never juxtapose to the inceptual | something subsequent, unless we renounce surmising anything of the inceptual.

A person can never redress a great harm, when an essential issue is to be decided, by offering his people something “folksy” [*“volkstümlich”*]. For such is determined according to the findings of those who make noise and are inessential and who can never know that wherein the decisions develop.

Barbarity does not mean that a people is “primitive” and “uncultured”; instead, it means that the common herd is “refined” or, as a district party whip [*Gaudozentenführer*] put it, “tanks up on refinement” [*“Bildung tankt”*] and thereby remains the common herd.

You oblivious ones!

The petty-bourgeois mentality does not require the petty bourgeoisie; it is extant also where there are only workers and soldiers. And not everyone wrapped in a military uniform thereby proves he has overcome philistinism. Perhaps he merely introduces a new form of it.

99 Appropriate translation of the foreign word “culture” [*“Kultur”*]: *pursuit of amusement* [*Vergnügungsbetrieb*].

Appropriate translation of the foreign word “propaganda” [*“Propaganda”*]: *the art of telling lies* [*Lügenkunst*].

The importance of fostering Germanness would make it necessary to Germanize many foreign words. Nevertheless, people are *opposed* to an overly extensive desire for translations. There must be motives for that opposition. Why do the terms “culture” and “propaganda”

32. {Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik die als Wissenschaft wird auftreten können*, Werke, vol. 4. (Berlin: Cassirer, 1913), 255: “because human reason has been peregrinating over untold objects throughout many centuries and in many ways, so it can scarcely fail to happen that for anything new something old could be found having some similarity to it.”}

manage better? Why is it more effective to express spiritual [*geistig*] meditation (or even only the volition toward it) with the word “intellectualism” [*Intellektualism*]?

The apparent arbitrariness of linguistic usage does in fact stand under the concealed law of the word and of the distorted word [*Unwort*].

In the incidents that follow one upon the other and that monopolize all “interest,” nothing can be decided any longer, for everything is already decided. The incidents are merely the late consequences of this decision.

The appalling immaturity of today’s youth | can hardly guarantee the 100
intrinsic durability of a German empire.

Greatness is what can establish freedom round about itself and for that reason compels us to experience and establish the liberation to freedom as what is necessary.

The illusion of history.—What is happening when “sensations” are made the greatest “sensation” and this pretense is pursued as what is properly “sensational”? What is happening when the human being is driven from one sensation to the next and is supposed to be of the opinion that this (*viz.*, other people proclaiming something as a sensation) is what is real? Then historiology has gained mastery over history. For “historiology,” qua “science,” can count only as the philistine form of the pursuit of sensations and is indeed only incrementally distinct from the production of something sensational.

“Epistemology”—is a kind of “philosophy” stemming from further West, from French-English thought. Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* is in no way “epistemology,” for reason is regarded as “practical” | and the 101
supersensible maintains its priority in the doctrine of the postulates. The essence of the “epistemological” interpretation of the being of beings consists in taking beings as objects, *i.e.*, taking being as objectivity, *i.e.*, representedness. Accordingly, there are no beings in themselves; representedness belongs intrinsically to the object, and the mode of lived experience belongs intrinsically to the occurrences experienced. This foreign thinking appears most saliently in negative examples: consider a scandal of the greatest “proportions.” As long as the scandal is taken only “in itself,” it would still not at all be grasped in its being, for to be an object (*i.e.*, the way of representation) pertains intrinsically to the scandal. If it were now possible to extract the

scandal of the greatest “proportions” completely (i.e., “without remainder”) out of publicness, so that the scandal were “not” represented publicly, then the “proportions” would first attain gigantism. Such an objectivity, apparently effectuated through nonobjectivity, could be reached only if the foreign thinking had been allowed to become unconditional. Then would arise, seen metaphysically, the possibility of a scandal of utterly unsurpassable “proportions.” Kant speaks | of a “scandal to philosophy.”³³

The dreadful historicism circulating throughout the “sciences.” It is most extravagantly pursued by the historiologists of art, with their “nineteenth,” “sixteenth,” “twelfth” centuries, and so on and also with their unrestricted search for style—the fact that this pursuit is now underpinned racially and communally-regionally [*volklich-landschaftlich*] and is “concretized” does not change anything about the attitude. Decisions are made here not about “art,” but at most about artistic styles and movements.

The astonishment at those who are disillusioned.—One expects philosophy to “hold together” all the scientific disciplines, but one finds that such a philosophy “no longer” “exists”; hence, disillusionment. And one expects philosophy to put a rule in our hands and a firmness in our hearts for the practice of active life, and one finds that philosophy does not do so; hence, disillusionment. The conclusion drawn from the disillusionment in each case is that there is nothing to “philosophy.” The disillusionment always arises from expectations which indeed persist but of which it cannot be determined whether they can be the measure for the demands | placed on the essence of philosophy. Perhaps these demands are taken only from something extrinsic. Perhaps we may be astonished at this way of judging. Perhaps the astonishment can indicate that philosophy (or what takes up the peculiar essential task of philosophy) is not at all to be appraised according to the “claims” placed on it but, quite to the contrary, that the decision about “claims” must first be made according to what philosophy thinks (as being). The difficulty of this reversal of questioning perhaps harbors *the* impediment rendering “philosophy” inaccessible. What threatens to make “philosophy” something alien is not the “abstractness” of

33. {Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Leipzig: Meiner, 1926), B, xxxix: “With regard to the essential ends of metaphysics, idealism might be considered ever so harmless (which indeed it is not), yet there still remains, as a scandal to philosophy and to human reason in general, the fact that . . .”}

philosophical thinking but, rather, is the deep-seated perversity of everyday opinion.

The essential thinking of being, the thinking which *in the future* will be “philosophy,” does not need to proceed as an intricate and conspicuous “breakthrough” to something, as a kind of establishment—; this thinking is the stillness of the perception of that which the steadfastness in Da-sein has already recognized. And thus ordinary opinion again faces an impediment, one erected through the inconspicuousness of thinking, whereas we always only and more and more expect what is enterprising and “large scale” and let that which is “important” be conveyed solely thereby.

The human being always recognizes only what is already familiar. But out of which recognition does the familiar first come to him? 104

The essential thinker does not “effectuate” anything. He merely grounds, and whether the ground will be taken over and come to bear something is not in his power or even in his intention.

The adulteration of language: yesterday the radio declared, over and against American propaganda, that South America considers itself its “own hemisphere.” For that reason, we already have a “radio science.”³⁴

If Catholic literati today write about “Ignatius of Loyola,” then that is the purest involuntary self-ridicule imaginable. These gentlemen do not notice (or, to be more precise, merely act as if they did not notice) how little separates them from the *ostensible* despotism of an authoritarian state. The only difference is that the supposedly Catholic-Christian Jesuits erect *still another screen* before the will to power—namely, the *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*.

The basic question regarding the essence of history will remain unasked as long as meditation does not consider whether *madness* does not pertain to the carrying out of history. Of course, madness should not be taken as the “psychiatrist” understands it. In general, the question is where the domains for the basic experience of madness [*Wahnsinn*, “illusory meaning”] lie—outlook on the essence of “meaning”: 105

34. {The first and only “Institute for Radio Science” was founded at the University of Freiburg in the Fall of 1939. Cf. *Schriften des Instituts für Rundfunkwissenschaft an der Universität Freiburg im Breisgau* (Berlin: Decker, 1941).}

the question of the “meaning” of “being.” “Meaning” is taken nowadays as the content of “propositions.” Thus the “proposition” and “meaning” would have to be thought through first of all.

History essentially occurs when the unique solitary ones, as those who ground the essence of truth in the highest reciprocal acknowledgment, pass one another by.

To what extent can the foreign words be expurgated from the following “proposition”:

106 To an “unprecedented” “extent,” the “deployment” is “ultimately” becoming “without remainder” the “lived experience” of the “guarantor” of “European” “culture” and is “this | all the more as” “Bolshevism” will one day demonstrate its intrinsic unsuitability by the fact that it is incapable of actualizing Bolshevism, since the “crusade” against Bolshevism is merely deferred, on the basis of “political affliction,” but not sublated. The actualization of nihilism is a metaphysical mission. [*In einem “bisher nie dagewesenen” “Ausmaß” wird “letzten Endes” der “Einsatz” “restlos” zum “Erlebnis” des “Garanten” der “europäischen” “Kultur,” “dies umso mehr, als” der “Bolschewismus” eines Tages seine innere Unfähigkeit dadurch beweisen wird, daß er nicht imstande ist, den Bolschewismus zu verwirklichen, denn der “Kreuzzug” gegen den Bolschewismus ist nur aufgeschoben, aufgrund “politischer Bedrängnis,” aber nicht aufgehoben. Die Verwirklichung des Nihilismus ist eine metaphysische Sendung.*]

An age in which adolescent doctoral candidates, students of miscarried philosophy professors, are allowed to attack writers of history such as Ranke and Jakob Burckhardt and to do so with “arguments” (not with “accomplishments”) they have garnered out of a half-understood Nietzsche—such an age can spare itself the “apologetics” through which it would be proclaimed the redeemer of “European” “culture.”

What difference is there between the following processes: Barmat and Kutisker³⁵ making a good profit for themselves out of the postwar democracy and, on the other hand, elementary school teachers, with the help of the National Socialistic worldview, becoming “philosophers,” about whom a serious person never bothers? There is no difference;

35. {Iwan Baruch Kutisker (1873–1927) and Julius Barmat (1887–1938) were, independently of each other, imprisoned in the 1920s for major financial crimes in which politicians were also involved.}

for in the latter case the historical essence of National Socialism is grasped just as little as is, in the former case, the historical essence of parliamentary democracy.

Every age, if it is honest, finds the wily and the obtuse, ones who knowingly and at the same time also unknowingly attend to the most sinister business of the age. That is then called “partaking in the spirit of the times.” To what extent does Jünger’s interpretation of the “present” have to adhere to superficialities? At a time of the destruction of the German language “to an unprecedented extent,” the German Academy is awarding a prize to a “work” on the “variation of mouth positions in the pronunciation of German vowels.” What tasks could still be left for the “human sciences”?

The highest—not yet attained—task, the development of meditation *on history*.

Why do the Anglo-American “world” and “Bolshevism” belong most intrinsically together, despite the apparent opposition between capitalism and anticapitalism? Because both are in essence the same—the unconditional development of subjectivity into sheer *rationality*. In the former case, what corresponds to this rationality is, in repercussion, “sentimentality”; in Bolshevism, it is Asiatic dullness.

The moment, essentially occurring far in advance, of the decision in favor of the essence of history—is allotted to the Germans—but on the basis of a claim of being on them. Therefore, the decision cannot be reckoned historiologically out of what is present.

Thinking must not submit to such a claim. But it must also never disparage the claim and brand it something base; instead, the claim must remain standing in its rights and must be recognized as something necessary and hence ineradicable. Therefore, the dialogue with this claim is of a peculiar sort: apparently without prospect and yet essential.

The stopping everywhere now of the disgusting review magazines has the benefit of allowing a decision as to whether a person who would still like to say something does truly know what he wants to say. It could very well be that no one desires to hear any longer, and then the word will be reassigned whence it arose as something genuine, namely, to silence. The pure separation of abilities is good wherever a beginning is prepared.

At times, however, [the word] must have departed into the most everyday everydayness, in order to place intimations within what is most perverse; but never so as to distort it and certainly not for the sake of refutation.

Now a “Europe of reason” is supposed to arrive. We recall having heard the same pronouncements many decades ago from the accursed “lands further West.” And who then are the rational ones there, claiming to know what reason is? Can reason know what it is? Or is not rather its most intrinsic error the fact that it mistakes its distorted essence and in the fabrications of its errancy understands itself less and less?

- 110 A plea to those who attend the “lecture courses”—such students may indeed name their “sources” if they utilize in a “literary” way that which they hear; not so that the name of the lecturer might be known, but so one might not attribute to him as his “doctrine” something half understood. If the students are in a hurry to purvey what they have half understood as their own discoveries, then this cannot be a motive to imitate the haste and surrender to a bad timing simply on account of the endangering of a claim to priority and so as to maintain this claim and forestall that which must have *its own* time. But the stated plea to the students is hardly to be fulfilled by them, since indeed the mark of literary schemers is that they *cannot* distinguish between what is their own and what they have appropriated, for to make such a distinction they would first have to possess something which actually is *their own*. The lack of that is supposed to be covered over by the too-hasty promulgation of unverifiable “discoveries”; therefore, even all the hustle and bustle of careerism may be left to itself.
- 111 How few today still truly know, from genuinely doing it or from the even more genuine renunciation of it, that “*writing*” is the most richly mysterious, and thus the most *rigorous*, handcraft.

It makes no matter whether the Bolsheviks kill *one single* person, without due process and trial, simply because he is of other convictions, or kill hundreds of thousands. Our age, accustomed to the quantitative, believes that here a hundred thousand is “more” than one, whereas a single individual is already too much to be encompassed by a number. So that we do not confuse the German attitude, we must not, even here, become addicted to numbers.

Otherwise we might face the danger of believing that the execution of a few is not so bad as the execution of many thousands and

that “gangsterism” [*“Untermenschentum”*] would commence only after a sufficiently great number of killings.

How good it is that one can seldom know *what* must be ventured if *thinking* has become necessary. Yet what is ventured does not concern the *content* of a view which perhaps is distinct from other views and even from all others. That remains extrinsic. What is ventured arises from the fact that thinking itself shrinks back from that which is most proper to it, from that which it is underway to think. And again, this is so not because there is nowhere available the support of any confirmation or immediate agreement, but because what is to be thought itself, *beyng*, surrounds itself in the strangeness of things that are simple and are overly close and lets a transformation of the human essence remain impending. 112

On the essence of metaphysics: “world-imperialism” can be called such, because it is synchronically, with unessential differences in the external “political” form, coming to light *everywhere* in the “world,” i.e., everywhere on earth. But its name also signifies that the domain of its diffuse emergence is also the *object* of its *volition*. Even its purpose bears different names and is in its denomination also as synchronous as in each instance the genuine goals are concealed behind some sort of “cultural” “missions” and solicitous intentions. Yet world-imperialism itself is only something pursued and driven by a process having its determinative and decisive ground in the essence of truth in the modern sense. The basic form of this truth unfolds as “technology,” whose essential delimitation cannot be captured by the usual notions. “Technology” is the name for the truth of beings insofar as they are the “will to power” unconditionally inverted into its distorted essence, i.e., insofar as they constitute the *machination* which is to be thought metaphysically and in terms of the history of *beyng*. Therefore, *all* imperialism is *conjointly*, i.e., in reciprocal increase and subsidence, pursued to a *highest consummation of technology*. The final chapter of this consummation will consist in the earth itself blowing up and the current humanity disappearing. That will not be a misfortune but, instead, the first purification of *being* from its most profound deformation on account of the supremacy of beings. 113

In this process, which we grasp only extrinsically as long as we think of it as “world-imperialism,” absolute subjectivity attains its consummation even according to the circumstance that for humans now there *remains altogether no means of escape* on earth; that is, the self-certainty of the subjectum has now been caught and enclosed unconditionally in its most proper distorted essence, and self-relatedness, in 114

the sense of absolute reflexion, has become definitive. This unconditional self-entanglement of humans in their own metaphysical perplexity is *confirmed* in that to such common understanding (now wasted away into something most common) this all appears as “breadth,” “fullness,” and “freedom.” To “see” all this merely means to grasp the abandonment of beings by being. But *how* nevertheless to relate this abandonment, as the essential occurrence of being, to the forgetting of being? (Written on the way to the hut.)

Do pave path upon path to beyng, but take care that these paths never become a highway. How things that are still beings put themselves “in good order” is already inconsequential, since no truth is proper to them.

- 115 The wickedness in beings can never become an affront to being; for even the being of anything wicked is being and therefore is concealment.

Into what sort of inebriation will the growing frenzy for numbers ultimately deteriorate?

The naive maintain that madness is mere confusion. Madness intrinsically includes the unconditional validity of what is systematic in the most proper system. There is no madness without organization.

Previously, there were only certified engineers, certified people in matters of machinery and canalization. There are now finally also “*certified psychologists*.” Already foolish people are appalled by this. But no one with insight can deny that anthropology must irresistibly become an anthropo-technology. Henceforth one will no longer be subject to the danger of taking “psychology” as a kind of “philosophy.”

- 116 But it is indeed also already superfluous to provide now | explicitly for a *decisive removal* of psychology from the neighborhood of philosophy. Moreover, such an endeavor would cause difficulties, since “philosophy” exists only in name: calculation is unequivocal: certified engineers, certified political economists. The next stage is the certified poet and in general the certified functionary of culture.

On the essence of language and of the word, or: the German language in reorganization, and the prostitution of “German science.” “The new colloquialism” is manifestly no longer a *German* language, since even “non-German peoples” are involved in configuring it. The new formation is the now organizationally and technologically guided and

thus much more effective variation of an earlier international underworld slang. The commissioned head of the organization of the new colloquialism, Dr. E. Zwirner,³⁶ is a *preeminent* scientist, so that the new enterprise is fully assured. The further question will be in what way a new “poetry” is to arise out of the “new colloquialism.” In order not to allow a favorable occasion for an “organic development” to pass by here, it was advisable to establish at once a syndication of the new research institute with the “imperial chamber for culture” [*Reichskulturkammer*]. Such a syndication could obviate the danger that “language” would be degraded to a purely “technical” “problem” and that functionaries for “culture” would lose their places. Thereby also the priority of the *German* element in the “new colloquialism” could assert itself prescriptively. As long as the “Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gesellschaft” serves only as the “registry” of the new linguistic formation, then this is mere “prostitution” before a matter of fact. The relevant agencies were, on the contrary, heedful to bring it about that a *new form* of “philology” would be able to arise out of the above-proposed syndication of the “institute for the new colloquialism” with the “imperial chamber for culture.” The time might have come to abandon the previous consideration of “philology” and liberate that discipline from the bond to the interpretation of old authors and texts. Instead, linguistic science must be shifted immediately into the proximity of the “vital” emergence of a newer language, not only so as to acquire thereby an object that is “close to life” but also to receive the possibility of influencing decisively the emergence of the language. In this way, “science” finally, immediately, and intrinsically becomes a “political act.” It then no longer needs to take refuge in the ever-problematic and desperate endeavors of the conservative and exasperated affirmers of the past who at any given moment try to demonstrate after the fact and on any roundabout way whatever the folkish [*völkisch*] utility of their sciences. The reconfiguration of philology, following the example of the new institute for gramophone records, might also provide a new *impetus* to antiquated “philosophy departments.”

1941

“Emergence of a new colloquialism.

Berlin, July 13. The Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gesellschaft for the Promotion of the Sciences has, **with the consent** of the Reichsminister for Science, Education and Popular Refinement, taken into its charge the

36. {Eberhard Zwirner (1899–1984), from 1940 the director of the institute of phonometry of the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gesellschaft, previously chief of the department of brain research at the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut.}

German *language archive in Braunschweig* directed by Dr. Eberhard Zwirner. The **institute**, through **phonometric** gramophone recordings, is to register and describe the manifestations of the German language. On account of the establishment of the Reichswerke ‘Hermann Göring’ and the Volkswagen plant, natives of the most diverse provinces and regions have been **thrown together** around Braunschweig. This venture harbors a **special** scientific possibility to **observe** and record the formation of a new colloquialism through the gradual fusion of languages of the most diverse German stems **and even of non-German peoples.**³⁷

- 119 The now-published reports on the Bolshevist death cellars must make gruesome reading.

The recently established institute for the new colloquialism could also acquire a significance for popular education, whereby schooling in proper diction might prevent gross errors in speech. Earlier, all of this had to be pursued only casually and, as it were, with the help of the hickory stick. Earlier, the maidservants, for example, if they did not want to break themselves of their maidservant German, merely received a reprimand. It was of no help. The well-meaning letters always ended: “Hopefully this letter finds you hale and hearty.”

The most infallible sign of the originariness and genuineness of an essential humanity that grounds history is the *relation* of this humanity *to words*. Where this relation is indefinite and a matter of indifference, there all essential grounds of a people *are* already convulsed. External destructions are only late consequences of an already extant devastation.

- 120 *The outbreak of the war against Bolshevism* has finally relieved many Germans of a burden, insofar as they were concerned over what they saw as an overly close bond to Russia. Only a later age will be able to appreciate correctly the “document” that received global publicity on the morning of June 22, 1941. Already the first sentence provides an insight into the times immediately preceding the outbreak of the war: “Oppressed by many cares, and condemned to months of silence, I can now at last speak openly; the hour for me to do so has come.”³⁸

37. {This text is a newspaper clipping pasted into the notebook. The specific newspaper cannot be identified.}

38. {Domarus, *Hitler*, 1726.}

At the same time, the “underhandedness” of Bolshevik politics is coming to light. The Jew Litvinov³⁹ has reappeared, and for his sixtieth birthday, the editor in chief of Moscow’s *Izvestia*, the famous communist Radek,⁴⁰ wrote the following: “Litvinov has demonstrated he understands, in the Bolshevik way, even if only for the time being, the need to seek confederates precisely where they may be found.”

Why are we recognizing so late that England in truth is, and can be, *without* the Western outlook? It is because we will only henceforth grasp that England started to institute the *modern* world, but that modernity in its essence is directed toward the unleashing of the machination of the entire globe. Even the thought of an agreement with England, in the sense of a division of the imperialistic “franchises,” does not touch the essence of the historical process which England is now playing out to the end within Americanism and Bolshevism and thus at the same time within world-Judaism. The question of the role of *world-Judaism* is not a racial question, but a metaphysical one, a question that concerns the kind of human existence which in an *utterly unrestrained* way can undertake as a world-historical “task” the uprooting of all beings from being. 121

39. {Maxim Maximovich Litvinov (1876–1951), at first people’s commissar for foreign affairs of the Soviet Union, then from 1941–1943 ambassador to Washington.}

40. {Karl Radek (1885-presumably 1939), in the 1920s a member of the central committee of the CPSU, journalist, in 1937 sentenced by show trial in Moscow to ten years imprisonment, then never heard from.}

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PONDERINGS XV

All references to what is historiologically graspable and to incidents and to what is contemporary are aimed at those who are a-historical only in a transcending which leaves all this behind. But these fraying of the fluttering semblance of concealed history must at times be named, just for the sake of a foothold on which a leaving behind could be carried out. This holds also of *globalism* [Planetarismus] and its *idiosyncraticism* [Idiotismus].

If in the human domain the acquisition of beings amid beings requires a sacrifice such as the one of a war, then what will the appropriation of a word of being require of humans?

Being can be grasped even less on the basis of a being if the distinction between the two has come into question. A person could strive to see the mountain forest from the steppes sooner than he could approach being on the basis of beings. And yet in dominance is the insidious notion that the way from beings to being would be the "most natural" one.

The great doom everywhere threatening modern humanity and its history is that a *downgoing* is denied to humans, since only something inceptual can go down. Other things merely perish and specifically in the endlessness that offers the possibilities of its own kind of "infinities."

The decision which still disposes of the essential impossibility of all "world history" is the one concerning the grounding in being of a temperament in which the reverence toward dignity qua the inceptuality of being will triumph once again over the brutality of beings which is on its way toward endless persistence.

If history is proceeding toward an end, then a beginning must already prevail. The inceptuality of this beginning, however, is concealed, though it can be sheer downgoing. Or the downgoing is the transition into the other beginning and already comes out of it.

Only those who belong to the past respond to the confrontation of thinking. Those who are of the present are merely the contemporaries of what is fleeting. And we never attain those who are of the future. But the past points into what is inceptual. And the very beginning contains what is forthcoming.

Those who think that way do not need any community in order to be unified in what is unique.

The ever-increasing anxiety in the face of “thinking” rests on an incapacity for *experience*. Genuine experience does not require “empirics” and resides in the disposedness through being. Here arises the insight that there is a phantasy of concepts which contracts all beings into the essentiality of being and precisely does not “abstract.” The “abstract,” as the bugaboo of the publicly noisy “heroes,” will once again arise as testimony to the wretchedness of an age which up to this very hour has not created the least of what the much-slandered nineteenth century has deposited in the essential ground of history. Only the fact that this century saw the consummation of Western metaphysics gives it an essentiality distinguishing it from what preceded and endowing it with the historical destiny to remain historically essential beyond the hubub of the twentieth century, even when that century was supposed to carry out the endeavor to withdraw from recollection everything genuinely past in history and to offer only its bustle and the | meaninglessness of the various Americanisms. 1 2

It is said that the motorized battle has now overcome the mere battle of superior matériel, especially by reintroducing “movement.” In truth, the battle of matériel is now first brought to its essence; the matter partakes more of matériel and thereby becomes more exclusive. The human being is completely subservient to machines, although he believes and pretends he is their master. Moreover, matter, as a being, does not and never did have its essence in the physical; instead, its being can be designated, following the metaphysical way of thinking, as “spirit.” Matter comes into its *essence* through movement and motility and thus becomes “more spiritual” and so precisely partakes “more of matériel”; and thereby matter first shifts into its violence and becomes appropriate to the kind of being (*brutalitas*) that is basically already sovereign. The mark of the reality of everything real at the end of metaphysics is the *capacity for* brutalitas. Therein exists the “mastery” over technology.

With the approaching end of metaphysics, the works of the thinkers are becoming more and more noninceptual. On the other hand, what is inceptual is small in extent and requires no “proportions.” Nevertheless, not everything quantitatively | meager is already a beginning or even only a predelineation of one. 3

In an age that has become groundless, to hear from its spokesmen that genuine thinking would move in a “form of thought” which “belongs to the past” could be a good confirmation of the correct path, in case

genuine thinking has not yet arrived at no longer choosing disdain of contemporary judgments as a kind of liberation and even at passing over disdain as the ultimate bond to the times.

Where the measureless is sovereign, “proportions” become null, because their intensified succession makes every measure forgotten. The forgottenness is necessary, in order to maintain, in the unconditional insubstantiality of beings, the illusion that “goals” are attained—whereas they are not even desired.

That which power and its essence pursue is something necessary. But the releasement of power into the uniqueness of the determination of being is not necessary. What is coming: the transformation of power into dignity. The inceptual other *courage*.

- 4 Kant-scholasticism or Hölderlin-mysticism or a wrangling between them or some other sort of “historiological” activity—these are all equivalent. Here no meditation touches what is inceptual. Lacking here is altogether a meditation and even a trace of the knowledge of what belongs to meditation. The previous noise merely finds in this way its continuation.

The dependence on the opponent can become so decisive in confrontations that it compels an assimilation of his essence and loss of one’s own essence. Every conquest over an opponent is then only the entrenchment of one’s own distorted essence. All victories and successes are already defeats as regards capacity and volition.

The *animal rationale*, having arrived at its distorted essence, is now set into a topspin in a *danse macabre*.

Errors: believing that being is in beings, that beings are the real, that reality consists in effectivity, and that effectivity makes meditation unnecessary.

- 5 Writings and books about reality, about the “there is,” are in truth superfluous, since, if required, the real indeed provides for its reality. But a treatise about that which altogether “is” not—such a treatise could still have some justification, although never any use. Yet who might read discussions about what is not at all? They are not written for those who might or might not like to read them, but only for those who *must*.

In the age of the unconditional abandonment by being, unsurveyable and therefore calculatively “great” incidents transpire. But nothing decisive can ever happen there, because nothing is any longer at stake, on account of everything having lost its intrinsic weight and all things weighing equally much, i.e., equally little. That is a peculiar sort of “greatness,” the one of the impossibility of decisions.

“Unconditional truth” in the most modern thinking, where truth has become exact certitude, means the same as unconditional conditionality in the selection of facts and in the style of the communication of those facts. In this way, there arises a gigantic correctness, on the basis of which | an individual person can never at all decide what is true or false. That distinction has been effaced as an antiquated one. We still lack the presuppositions for thinking through the essence of unconditional conditionality. It may be surmised that this sort of “truth” infinitely, i.e., essentially, surpasses everything we are otherwise accustomed to call “nihilism.” A *supernihilism* leads again to “reality,” i.e., to the reality of the utterly worthless nothingness. Admittedly, one who is blind to the essence believes such a thing does not “exist,” because “he” does not “see” it. The question arises as to what extent Christian supernaturalism and this supernihilism belong together in opposition and are the same. 6

We have a task. The question is only whether we are capable of *being* this task itself; every German soldier has fallen in vain if we do not hourly strive for the rescuing of a beginning of the German essence, beyond the now quite released and definitive self-devastation of all modern humanity.

Where historiology finds connections, it reckons at once with dependencies and influences. Only in this way does it have in advance a field for its deductions and explanations. It cannot see that historical “connections” exist precisely in originary alienation and that to be other derives from an inceptuality which is already determined by the essence of history. The incompatibility of everything inceptual cannot be rectified or even merely grasped in the “form” of mere “oppositonality,” which then could still be bent straight “dialectically” into a congruity. 7

Soviet socialism has carried out the first, decisive step toward the unconditional motorizing of humanity; the other socialisms have merely followed behind this one in essentially Dependent resistance. Soviet

socialism recognized itself primarily as that system of the unconditional empowerment of power which assigns technology to its definitive metaphysical place. According to Lenin, Soviet power is “socialism + electrification.” In the domain of these essential steps in the consummation of metaphysics as machination, what matters essentially is not who maintains this system of unconditional power, but who inceptually recognizes and ventures it in its essence. The others are epigones. Where the machine is not ventured as the anti-god, and a-theism is thus not carried out unconditionally, there all the drivell about the human “mastery” over technology remains a helpless embarrassment. The metaphysical wretchedness of the Italians over and against Russia is becoming obvious. Only unconditional human existences, ones that do not shrink back in the face of the ultimate subjectivity, are strong enough to submit unconditionally to the metaphysical essence of technology. But even Russianism has not attained this unconditionality. Cf. p. 9.

Long paths have to be traversed before thinking thinks simply out of that which is to be thought, so simply, and replying only to being, that this thinking no longer entangles itself in its own net, because it is then no longer a net and a trap but, instead, an affiliation to what is appropriated in the event.

Americanism is the historiologically determinable appearance of the unconditional perishing of modernity | in devastation. Russianism, in the univocity of brutality and rigidity, has at the same time a rooted headwaters in its earth, and this univocity has predetermined itself as a world-univocity. On the other hand, Americanism is the amassing of everything, which amassing at the same time signifies the uprooting of what has been amassed. As soon as the amassed is raised into the constancy of pure historical producibility and becomes unconditional, then everything is at once graspable, although likewise everything is deprived of its origin. Russianism does not reach down into this metaphysical zone of devastation, for Russia has in itself, independently of the “socialism,” the possibility of a beginning, and such a possibility is denied in advance to everything American. Despite all this, Russianism is too indigenous and antirational for it to be capable of taking over the historical destiny of the devastation. In order to take over the abandonment by being, institute it as such, and perpetuate it as an attitude, what would be required is a *rationality* complete to the highest degree and calculating everything, and this could also be called “spirituality.” Only such “spirit” is equal to the historical task of devastation. The English “master race” [“*Herrenvolk*”] has assumed the role of servant within | this devastation, and the

metaphysical nullity of English history is now coming to light. The English merely seek to rescue this nullity, and thereby they carry out their contribution to the devastation.

One day people will appeal, against Americanism and its rootlessness, to the Western history of Europe. Fine. But is this appeal itself justified? Can it be justified if it simply uses “European culture” like a present-at-hand requisite and from it, according to circumstances, exhibits something earlier, for which the “present” can do nothing? When will the Western appeal to the West first attain its essential justification? How will this appeal first experience the West as history and open itself to what is coming, rather than—ignorant in all things—imitate Americanism and carry it to excess? Where is the justification for the appeal to one’s own historical essence, if everything depends on undermining the capacity to perceive this essence?

It will be retorted: yes, but those who are “spiritual” can indeed¹ dominate, they indeed have the possibility to do so. Not so fast! What is claimed in saying they can “dominate”? What sort of freedom is bestowed here in the summons to be “assertive”? Does this not already decide everything which must | first come into meditation? Is the “spiritual,” as it may be named by custom, at all of such an essence that it can “effectuate” the “dominating”? “Domination”—that adherents are hired and assembled and true believers indoctrinated, always persons who are *never* willing or able to take up a relation to what is essential. “Dominate”? How so—if it depends on making oneself ready for the fact that there is something which never requires domination but which demands instead reverence and long meditation and patience? “Domination”—such as a kind of car “dominates” the market in the auto industry. “Domination” the way a demagogue over the human masses obtains a hearing for himself and does so in each case on different grounds and often on no grounds at all? “Dominate”—as if the essential were a “business,” a matter of “production,” and according to success in those fields would first be awarded its essential justification.

“Dominate,” they cry to us. No—“*Be exposed,*” we call in return—free yourselves from the temptation of the frenzy of those who dominate and from the pseudoreality of “domination.” | “Dominate!”—is not Americanism thereby already raised to a principle? What else could one want?

The pestilence of this apparently self-evident and universally valid demand to “domination,” as the measure of the essentiality of anything, destroys even the *possibility* of meditation. And here the

1. [Reading *ja* for *ja nicht*, “indeed not.”—Trans.]

11

12

devastation has already started. What then comes after the “confrontation” with America?

Expose yourselves to the essential plight of being. Learn first that no “biological” breeding of humans and no anthropological glorification could ever be capable of anything unless being determines the relation of humans to itself and inceptually decides the human essence. Expose yourselves to the possibilities our history holds open for this meditation and transformation, but cast off the vanity of the “present” ones, who measure world history by the yard like a cloth merchant.

The “modern” human being is on the verge of making himself a slave to the devastation.

- 13 Anyone who as a historical human being must act historically requires above all steadfastness in what is essential | and specifically a steadfastness that has already inceptually settled the essentiality of every essence.

“Politics” is of a modern essence and as such is always power politics, i.e., the carrying out and instituting of the empowerment of power in the beings overpowered by this politics. The highest type and highest act of politics: maneuvering the opponent into a position whereby he is compelled to proceed to his own self-annihilation. Accordingly, politics must have deep breath and a long arm and be capable of accepting shocks for a very protracted time; it must not let itself be confused by occasional defeats.

What matters is not the “refinement” or the “prototype,” but the assignment to being and the equanimity of an essential presentiment.

We are discovering “Americanism” only now and late enough and only halfway as a political opponent (cf. above, p. 8).

- 14 The lack of all self-knowledge entails an obliviousness to the essential sameness of this phenomenon with all the others on the globe and the leaving indeterminate of the historical ground of all the phenomena. But that is precisely *globalism*: the last step of the machinational essence of the power to annihilate what is indestructible on the path of devastation. The devastation is capable of annihilating the indestructible without being obliged ever to grasp at all that which is indestructible. But devastation undermines the possibility of the essence of something inceptual. For the indestructible is not some substantial thing present-at-hand somewhere, but is the inceptual.

Neither annihilation nor ordering nor new ordering can essentially satisfy a historical determination; what can do so is only the poetizing of the essence of being and the constructing of a grounded affiliation to being.

Globalism is the historiologically conceived determination of the abandonment of beings by being, inasmuch as this abandonment is everywhere the same and covers the entire earth. The homogeneity and leveling down of humanity to a kind of achievement of an order of life, | despite the apparent heterogeneity in the provenance and scope of the “cultures” and the communal [*volklich*] assets (Japan, America, Europe), have their essential ground in the circumstance that power itself, as soon as it attains unconditional empowerment, intrinsically demands a sameness, a monotony, in its ever more simple means. Every power tries to expand and thereby collides with every other one in the same machination. This sameness of essence is the ground of the historiologically determinable totality and unconditionality of the essence of power. 15

At the start of the third year of the global war.—Ordinary understanding would very much like to calculate history and yearns for a “balance sheet.” Moreover, there are humans who are past help by accomplishments, no matter how impressive the latter are. Thus insofar as we think only historiologically and not historically and still incorporate globalism into the change of history, instead of using it merely and at most | geographically, as the framework of “historiological” incidents, and insofar as we allow only “facts” to be valid, ones that are always only half true and therefore are erroneous—insofar as we do all this, the following observations might be encountered: 16

1. We have been gaining victories now for two whole years.
2. The number of those to be provided for will grow, since even the conquered regions will be subject to blockade.
3. The regions to be administered will extend more and more.
4. The possibilities of political activity will all be exhausted, since there is no longer any partnership.
5. The multiple-front war, which through a brilliant politics was held to be eliminated as a main danger, is a matter of fact through our own resolution.
6. The opportunity for an essential decision within the sole remaining confrontation *as regards the war* has disappeared.
7. In all regions of procedure and planning, the only visible goal is a single mere “and so forth.”

8. The assimilation of the enemy in the mode of his actions has been completed.

- 17 9. World-Judaism, incited by the emigrants allowed out of Germany, cannot be held fast anywhere and, with all its developed power, does not need to participate anywhere in the activities of war, whereas all that remains to us is the sacrifice of the best blood of the best of our own people.

10. The suitable veiling of these European-German circumstances and the transition from the encircling to the boxing in of Europe will be called the “new order.”

In opposition to these things, it must be considered that the conducting of the current war, versus the first world war, has the advantage of being able to learn from the first and indeed has learned from it. In order to confront in a timely way the just-named ten points, which, in whatever variant, will readily muddle a clear gaze at history and prevent meditation, our universally well-devised propaganda would have to incorporate them.

The historical mark of the newest phase of modernity will be this age itself taking care to make everything new superfluous and impossible.

- 18 Then we would reach a situation in which it could be decided whether what is old should again come into its own. But what is old can never be brought back, and where there is only the newest and nothing new any longer, nothing old can exist either; the newest is what is unconditionally without memory, what occupies itself constantly with itself.

We still nowadays encounter Germans of the opinion that English Christianity would be a source of a future configuration of history. This opinion knows nothing of the hollowing out of Christianity in general, namely, that it has long since forfeited its capacity for history or has transferred that capacity to modernity. This opinion also knows nothing of how the “superior” Englishmen make Christianity capable of political power in a supposedly preeminent way. For the rest—if one has already resorted to calculation: other than technology and the metaphysical preparation of socialism, other than commonplace thinking and tastelessness, what has England contributed to “culture”? Nothing that could ever be of help to the Germans. Therefore something else must come to their aid.

- 19 The restrictedness of opinion and of rapid calculation would be indulged too much if I were to declare explicitly that my thinking does not dissolve into an “exegesis” of Hölderlin’s poems. If my relation to

them, which is a historically essential one, is to be named, then the question must first be asked as to whether only through an inceptual thinking a space is opened for this poet, a space which, as thoughtful, has already transcended the poetizing, despite all the worthiness of its essentiality, and has unfolded into the grounding of an inceptual *knowledge* that is averse to all dull feeling and to every semblance of a formalistic rigor in reckoning with empty concepts.

The “war effort of German philosophy,”² “installed” in opposition to the “philosophy of existence” (with which, moreover, I have nothing to do), is setting for itself in 1941 (when we Germans are entering the third year of the extreme struggle over existence) the task of demonstrating that there is *no* such thing as “care.”

Germany is so blockade-proof that it can still permit itself the self-blockade from spiritual meditation, in that, deprived of its proper essential history already long ago through historiology, it has raised bulwarks of the mere comparison of ages, epochs, centuries, and their styles, and passes these off as inhabitable domiciles of a “spiritual” life. Indeed this thrusting forward of historiology is an essential consequence, and even the dowry, of metaphysics and so is something Western and not restricted to the Germans. But the Germans in their absolute metaphysics promoted historicism at the same time, precisely as the ultimate perplexity, and then have made of it a virtue which proves its excellence in the technology of the mass order. 20

Even globalism is still a historiological determination of world history; it is not a determination heedful of the history of being. In the world-historical task of the ordering of the masses, the massiveness of humanity is affirmed above all, and technology is assigned the unconditional role of the prescriptive type of knowledge (findings, ἱστορία).

The most dreadful degeneration of the historiology which is in any case already thoroughly entangled in its distorted essence is the “history of art,” whereby what is meant is the “historiology of art.” The interminable trifling and paltering with its “objects,” the reckoning up of the “fourteenth,” “sixteenth,” “nineteenth” centuries, the puerile vanity of the knowledge that discovers such “ascriptions,” and the journalistic presentation of the description and discussion of worldless works of art—all this is intrinsically an abomination, one that 21

2. {The “War effort of the human sciences” (1941) was a project of the Reichsministry for science, education, and popular refinement.}

moreover takes refuge in “beautiful things” and nourishes the illusion that it is indeed a “spiritual” attitude and a “fostering” of “culture.” Because the historiologists of art are least of all—i.e., not at all—capable of entering into a confrontation with the object, since indeed they are historiologists and not artists, their activity effectuates in all directions an expansion of historicism as well as the most inner corruption of the already intrinsically groundless “human sciences.” Which historiologist of art could ever attain the insight that “art” is at an end? Which historiologist of art would have the courage even only to imagine what that end entails? Instead, the historiologists believe themselves able to contribute to the construction of a new “art.”

- 22 Corresponding to *globalism is idiosyncratism*, a word not meant here in the psychiatric sense of eccentricity of mind and spirit. It is intended instead in terms of the history of being, and it thinks the ἴδιον, that which is one’s own, wherein the contemporary human being finds himself within the mass order. This that is one’s own is the same, and in it even the other and every other, the “they,” find themselves and reciprocally affirm themselves. Idiosyncratism means relegating what is one’s own to that which belongs to everyone: e.g., the normative influence of “illustrated magazines” and the binding force of the entirely “they”-like claim of the radio, where “no one” speaks and consequently even as regards any ever so insignificant “concert,” each violinist and trumpeter must be announced by first and last name. One finds oneself everywhere in what is one’s own, which is yet precisely what belongs to everyone. Idiosyncratism is the essential restriction to the mundane, i.e., the global. And the global can exist only in the mode of the idiosyncratic. This restriction entails a renunciation of all meditation, in such a way that the renunciation is not at all recognized *as* renunciation, and even the possibility of meditation is recognized just as little. Idiosyncratism is therefore not a prerogative of
- 23 “idiots” [*Idioten*] (i.e., persons of limited aptitude). Quite to the contrary; idiosyncratism includes the unconditional shrewdness, resourcefulness, and dexterity of the technological-historiological human being. Only the global human being can be idiosyncratic, and the idiosyncratic human must be global. The idiosyncratic essence of the radio, for instance, has still not been completely developed. It is not enough that a radio is playing on every floor of every home. Each “family” member, the servants, the children, must have his *own* radio so he can be everyone, i.e., can quickly and easily know, hear, and “be” what everyone else likewise is. The radio set is the symbol of the correlation between globalism and idiosyncratism—not merely a

symbol in the old “sense,” but technologically-historiologically, i.e., as the gadget which accomplishes the correlation of globalism and idiosyncratism but which also first comes into production (and receives its “development”) out of this correlation.

The genuine harbinger of the unity of globalism and idiosyncratism, but also the genuinely appropriate heir of that unity, is Americanism, the assuredly most desolate form of “historiological” a-historicity. 24

Long paths are still to be traversed, ones on which beyng must come to words, even though we have already twisted free of beyng. The other beginning—that is the inceptuality of the beginning.

The genuine experiences which are allotted to the current generation, but which this generation is unable to take up, intuit, and place back into their essential beginning, constitute the untrammelled outbreak of the unconditional criminality of the modern human being according to his role in the empowerment of power toward machination. Criminality [*Verbrechertum*] is not mere breakage [*Zerbrechen*]; instead, it is the devastation of everything into what is broken. The broken is broken off from the beginning and assigned the domain of brittleness. Here resides only the one possibility of being—in the mode of order. Order is only the counterpart of criminality, as the latter is understood in terms of the history of beyng (not juridically-morally).

There are those who call themselves “Platonists” and mean the religious Confessional Front.³ Religious “circles” bewail what they have identified as a decline of “culture.” They do not surmise how they themselves are “working” much more on the undermining of all “thinking,” helped by their “rescue operations” for the “spiritual tradition.” The question, however, is where the genuine domains of decision regarding “being” are prepared and opened up. The question does not concern who and what from the past (the past that long ago slipped into mendacity and unfruitfulness) are protected and rescued or whether beings obtain *their* satisfaction. The question is only whether or not being, as the domain of historical decisions, is proceeding toward its inceptuality. The “how” of this preparation can be very painful and difficult. Could it be otherwise, when at issue is the 25

3. {The “Confessional Front” or “Confessional Church” was from 1934 to 1945 the resistance movement of the Protestant Church against the National Socialists and the “German Christians.”}

uniqueness of being? But if someone has recourse to faith in “Christ,” there arises the predicament that this faith cannot occur in “philosophy,” which one pretends to be pursuing. One thus calls oneself—rather than confess to being a believing Christian and then abandoning even philosophy as a “folly of the world”—an “incorrigible Platonist.” And yet one still complains about the counterfeiting involved in Bolshevism. It is in | such activity that the devastation first shows itself.

Something is racing over the planet, something no one anywhere can control, assuming anything ever was governed by someone who meant to govern it. The essence of power is unrolling in its distorted essence and becoming the robbery of its own overpowering. Human mettle has become so vacillating that people intend to gain information about themselves by making the human being a basic theme of “knowledge,” i.e., a theme of historiological-technological-biological explanation and planning. The flood of American anthropologism, which those who are knowledgeable had already basically overcome around the year 1912, is inundating the last dams still perhaps standing here or there. The “certified psychologist” is not simply replacing the “philosophy professor” (that is an inconsequential process in the renewal of the university) but is even becoming the prototype of the only “thinker” still “possible.”

27 Prior to the advent of the beginning, we must, in the inconspicuous affiliation to being, disclosively await the event in which a truth of being might reveal itself once again. Yearning and pain belong intrinsically to Da-sein. But Da-sein receives its dignity only from becoming the steward of the space-time of another future. Into this stewardship we may incorporate all the things gone from us, because they belong to us from former times. Something in its extreme distorted essence is racing around the planet. And yet already long ago hearts had begun to consent to what is inceptual. And this consent is already a richness in which those who know recognize themselves. And even where this knowledge seems to remain indeterminate, like a “gut” presentiment, the simple affiliation to being is still something genuine. Being provides the only measure for what is essential. Not even a departure can ever convulse this affiliation. The departure is only the counterword to the word, harbors the most beautiful tarrying, and in each case is the beginning.

28 Americanism is the victory of unconditional “abstraction,” the victory of the disregarding of the essence of being. All engagement is sunk

in abstractness and therefore lives in the delusion of being concrete and of having to battle against “abstract thinking.”

Pragmatism is the “worldview” drawn out of the onset of the fall of Nietzsche’s consummated metaphysics. For this “worldview,” being remains the actuality of calculative and planned effectivity. The politically possible deviations from this worldview are themselves merely forms of the actualization of that essential characterization of being, without the essential beginning of that characterization recognized as such. This “worldview,” carrying out the most extreme fall and departure from the inceptual Greek determination of being, nevertheless takes its name from the Greek language (πράγμα, πράξις [“practical thing, praxis”]), and that is a sign of the contempt and derision into which being has allowed its own distorted essence to slip away.

—For this reason, however, the number of German pedants in philosophy is growing, pedants who, in a brazen or bashful way, proclaim and in every case exploit the trivialities of American pragmatism as great discoveries for anthropology.

Americanism is the organization of the unconditional meaninglessness of “existence,” joined to the prospect of an enhanced “standard of living” (electric heating and cooling of homes, increase in automobile ownership, rise in the number of moviegoers and of other “economic-technological-cultural” amenities of “life”).— 29

A party meeting recently was pleased to communicate to the people that after this war the commemoration of the fallen will not cost as much money as previously, because accounts would be settled with the “Churches” for the “sacrifice of souls.” In the future, these obsequies, which could indeed “occur” in quite different “proportions,” will be supplied “totally” free of charge.

The essence of exaggeration harbors at its very heart the inexorable-ness of the ever-more-rapid devaluation and deactualization of whatever had just been attained. Why? Because exaggeration has already accepted groundlessness and the renunciation of repose in an essential goal as principles.

What if a people forces its own essential volition into starvation? Then this people has lost its historical beginning and, along with that, itself. Then this people can neither win nor lose a war: for *it* . . . is no 30

longer, to which the one or the other (victory⁴ or defeat) could be assigned.

The thought that has become familiar under the title “Decline of the West”⁵ is still trapped within the narrow domain of romanticism, although Spengler knew something of the brutality of czarist power. But what still characterizes the kind of “effectivity” of this thought is the belief that the thought could be refuted through a simple reference to today’s continuous progress. Things are “going forward” everywhere. There is no “ending” or stopping in sight. On the contrary, the assurance of beings is already on the verge of actualizing an endless progress in the form of the gigantic. Yet even this is perhaps only a superficiality of history and does not display anything of what is eventuating.

- 31 The future of the West in the age of the consummation of modernity: an unconditional super-Americanism with Prussian strictness.

“Recreation” is no longer a matter of a common citizen traveling to the Riviera, but of a tycoon flying to Borneo or going reindeer hunting in Finland. The new possibilities of organization will become infinite and the enthusiasm unlimited. The bonds to anything of the past must break apart very quickly. The globe is being overrun with a new kind of “happiness” whose deficiencies are rectified, if need be, by movie theaters and other “cultural” institutions. Some day no one will any longer want to know what the West was. *Animal rationale: Homo faber*. [“Rational animal: The human being as artisan.”]

- 32 *The new measures*: “infinitely great,” “still greater,” “totally great.” What is “totally great” is the superinfinite but can presumably only for a short time serve to express “greatness” sufficiently. In truth, however, it is entirely a matter of indifference whether something “is” “infinitely great” | or “totally great” or “superinfinite” or whatever. These long since antiquated judgments are merely expedients for grasping the already decided valuelessness of everything.

Beauty is what stands in essential unison along with the genuine plight and the inceptual necessity.

Grasped in the modern sense, “science” is a way to guarantee certainty. The development of the modern sciences and of their

4. [Reading *Sieg* for *Krieg*, “war.”—Trans.]

5. {Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, vol. 1 (Vienna: Braumüller, 1918), vol. 2 (Munich: Beck, 1922).}

functional character is of an unconditional and therefore also irresistible univocity. There used to be congresses of the sciences. It is necessary that the Congress Central⁶ should unfold into a science of congresses (congress-sociology). Congresses of sciences and the science of congresses belong together. The decisive step of this essential connection was carried out in its proper effectiveness when Descartes determined the *ego cogito* ["I am thinking"] as *cogito me cogitare* ["I am thinking of myself thinking"]. To "battle" (supposedly) against Cartesianism today means to chop off one's own head (calculating apparatus). | But even this ignorance of the essential pertains intrinsically to self-certainty and consummates the forgetting of being. 33

The inner consistency and the irresistibility in which globalism unrolls is an event which could confirm everywhere the essence of the history of being to the time period of the unconditional abandonment of beings by being, provided a confirmation could be possible and necessary there. In the unrolling of being, we are rolling into the extreme publicness of the distorted essence of being. But what rolls concomitantly with us, with those who know, are no longer the knowledgeable ones themselves, for they are standing on another star.

Only in appearance is *progress* a principle of "liberalism." In truth progress pertains to the essence of an age such as modernity which takes what is constantly new as what is genuinely true and real. The constantly new is essentially linked to the craving for unconditional self-certainty which at all times, everywhere, "under all circumstances," and in every | situation must reckon with what is required by the "world" that is already directed toward complete sovereignty. Therefore anything present-at-hand within the sphere of plans and advance calculations is by necessity already antiquated. This constant novelty is therefore not a result or demand of a mere roving curiosity; instead, the increasing succession of ever new things is the inner law of the reality which has determined itself as "will." Yet at first it remains indeterminate as to whether and how the "will" (which is not meant "psychologically") is a will of reason or of love or of power or of everything in a semideveloped mixture. What is new becomes ever newer, more common, cheaper, more fleeting, more arbitrary, and thus necessarily louder and more importunate. The new, and along with it everything real, has relinquished the decisional power over to 34

6. {The "German Congress-Central" was established in 1934 and from 1936 on came under the Reichsministry for popular enlightenment and propaganda. It pursued "congress-sociology."}

groundless impertunity. The essence of what was first called “Americanism” is now prepared. The new must surpass itself, and what is most unprecedented is consequently already ignored. Therefore now even what is most inconspicuous and (appraised in terms of a supposedly still extant “world”) inconsequential must be grasped as the indcisively decisive.

- 35 Thus “progress” in the “sciences,” especially the natural sciences, is useful. So possibly is also progress in the “human sciences,” but rather more only in service of the maintenance of a cultural-political facade. Modern human science, e.g., the historiology of poetry and art, thereby falls into a licentious will to progress, a will that behaves in a measureless and prescriptive way at the same time, and pauses before nothing when the issue is to place history (meant as the past) in a new and the newest perspective.

The following “new perspective” on poets can offer a sign of what has been noted here about the essence of modernity. In discussions of the “army post office” (which is certainly an essential institution and one carried out with great efficiency), it was naturally at first established through “historiological” learning that “antiquity” did not “yet” possess a proper “army post office.” Then the statement followed: “Nevertheless, we can perhaps see the war poems of Pindar, which soon spread throughout the land, as a kind of ‘army post office.’” Who could deny that here a “science” is being pursued that is close to reality? And who does not grasp | how much unsure violence is expressed reluctantly in the “Nevertheless . . . perhaps”? The poet Pindar, from a “postal” “perspective,” might be considered unconditionally on the basis of an understanding which no longer needs to adhere to the words of the poet. The characterization as “army post office” would suffice.

36 It will be said that all of this is foolish and superficial. It may be so—to a superficial regard, one incapable of recognizing such superficialities as the only surface of a superficiality of the Complete leveling down of everything.

Mutual yearning is that mystery in which hearts, without knowing it, constantly exceed themselves in their affiliation.

The transformed present time, in which occur the fallen of the best youth, has its own radiance whose illumination must be preserved for the future young people. That is still our sole service. “Commemorations” flutter away into the unimportance of empty ceremoniality.

χάρις—none of our words grasps its essence, even if we bring together 37
consonant terms: grace, favor, charm, radiance: the innermost myst-
ery of the nobility that inclines toward us and yet remains reposing
in itself.

To bring joy is the purest joy. But how will we bring joy unless we
are already within what is joyous? And how will what is joyous come
to us?

The impossible is the highest human possibility: grace or doom.

The West and Europe.—“Europe” is a planetary concept which includes
evening and morning, Occident and Orient, indeed even transfers the
weight to the *land of the morning*, the East.

The “West” is a historical concept which determines the essential
history of the Germans (and also determines their origination) out of
a confrontation with what is Eastern; but this confrontation does not
devolve upon what is Western.

“Europe” is the actualization of the *decline of the West*. There is no 38
longer the least inducement to take the field against the “pen pusher”
Oswald Spengler.

What is a tautology”? For instance, the term “deceptive propaganda”
[“*Lügenpropaganda*”].

Essential thinking knows no haste, for it is not supposed to go “fur-
ther” but rather is to tread “in place.” The question is only: where is
the place and which is the site?

“Interpretation.”—to interpret oneself, says Ernst Jünger, is to descend
below one’s level.⁷ That holds, provided “interpretation” means to
make oneself comprehensible to those who are denied the basic con-
dition of understanding, namely, the projection that always bears the
understanding. But if interpretation is thought not in this negative
and deficient sense, but positively as the originary inceptual fulfill-
ment of the bearing projection, then interpretation is an ascent, not
a descent. One can interpret oneself and others only by surpassing
them. Interpretation then takes on the semblance | of something 39
merely comparative and subsequent. This semblance does no harm.
It is not necessary that those who one day declare that some

7. {Jünger, “Epigrammatischer Anhang,” 226.}

interpretation is self-evident should notice that they themselves have been unwittingly raised to a higher level and have been compelled to another origin.

Through super-Americanization we will never overcome America and the “Anglo-Saxon world,” but only go to ruin on them. When will the essence of the fatherland come into words? Science—is cognition without knowledge, i.e., without steadfastness in the truth of being. Knowledge is cognition without the objectification of what is cognized and without transposing the cognized into beings.

That which knowingly comes above from below and lifts the below upward, destroys the above and thereby also—the below.

The sole and in every respect first “man of letters” in Germany today is Ernst Jünger. *Homo literatus*.

- 40 In view of today’s massive thoughtlessness, it is no longer a great feat to take a half thought (which is intrinsically more ruinous than “no thought”) and still achieve success as an “author” and find “readers.” This circumstance has repercussions on the authors. Consequently, their own “production” becomes increasingly more thoughtless but thereby also more vain. The brothers “Jünger” are a good example of the enslavement to superficiality. And yet—

All “progress” proceeds from the great to the small, whereby what is small can puff itself up into the gigantic, without discarding its smallness.

Why is an organized appearance, systematically given out as the truth, something essentially other than a natural, unavoidable, and even unnoticed appearance?

- 41 Perhaps with the departure of many sacrificed sons of farmers the homeland is always preserved more purely and more permanently and turned back to its destiny more surely than in our endeavors, which often remain arrested in the past.

The whole world interprets. No one thinks.

The Russians have for a century known very much very precisely about the Germans, about their metaphysics and their poetry. But the Germans surmise nothing about Russia. Prior to every practical-political

question as to how we must position ourselves toward Russia stands the single question of who the Russians genuinely are. Both communism (taken as unconditional Marxism) and also modern technology are thoroughly European-Western and are only instruments of Russianism *and not Russianism itself*.

Insofar as technology and communism assault the West out of the East, in truth the West is assaulting the West in an uncanny self-annihilation of its own powers and intentions. Besides its public aspect, history always also has its concealed one.

Consummated metaphysics will find the fitting site for its rebirth in Russianism. From there someday, as a counterprojection, this metaphysics will come to meet the beginning. 42

Editor's Afterword

This volume 96 of Martin Heidegger's Collected Works [*Gesamtausgabe* (GA)] comprises "Ponderings XII–XV," four of what the thinker himself called the Black Notebooks [*Schwarze Hefte*]. The publication of the "Ponderings" is thus complete.

"Ponderings X," in GA95, contains a remark on the character of these "ponderings" that unfold in fifteen notebooks. They are not a matter of "aphorisms" as "adages" but of "inconspicuous advance outposts—and rearguard positions—within the whole of an attempt at a still ineffable meditation toward the conquest of a way for the newly inceptual questioning which is called, in distinction from metaphysical thinking, the thinking of the history of being."¹ "Not decisive" is "what is represented and compiled into a representational edifice," "but only how the questioning takes place and the fact that being is questioned at all."

Heidegger also refers in a similar vein, in his "backward glance over the way," to "especially notebooks II, IV, and V," i.e., to the respective "Ponderings." They are to capture "in part ever the basic dispositions of questioning and the directives into the extreme horizons of attempts at thinking."² The emphasis on the "basic dispositions of questioning" reinforces the indication that the "ponderings" are a matter of "attempts at thinking."

Following this up, I have inserted as an exergue to the first published Black Notebooks a later remark (presumably from the early 1970s) to the effect that at issue in the "black notebooks" are not "notes for a planned system," but rather "at their core" "attempts at simple designation."³ It is striking that in all three characterizations of the Black Notebooks, the word "attempt" claims an essential significance.

As "inconspicuous advance outposts—and rearguard positions," that is, as pre-ponderings and post-considerations in the basically polemical thinking of being, the Black Notebooks assume a form not yet seen in Heidegger's many already published writings. If what is indeed "decisive" is "how the questioning takes place," thus how the

1. "Ponderings X," p. a, in *Ponderings VII–XI* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2014). The page references correspond to the pagination of the original manuscripts, which is printed in the margins of the published volumes.

2. Heidegger, *Besinnung*, GA66 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1997), p. 426.

3. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, GA94 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2014), p. 1.

question of the "meaning of being" finds expression, then we are encountering in these notebooks a new writing "style," a concept often mulled over in the "notes."

Besides the published work of the 1920s, the courses, seminars, essays, lectures, and treatises on the history of being, we become acquainted in the Black Notebooks with a further way of expression on the part of Heidegger. The question of how all these various modes of speech cohere does perhaps belong to the most important tasks of a thinking which would seek to understand Heidegger's thought as a whole.

The Black Notebooks present a form which in style and method is possibly unique not only for Heidegger but also for all of twentieth-century philosophy. Compared to generally known sorts of texts, it comes closest to an "idea diary." Yet if this designation thrusts the writings that come under it mostly to the margin of the total work, the significance of the Black Notebooks in the context of Heidegger's "way for inceptual questioning" will still need to be examined.

According to the literary executor, Hermann Heidegger, and Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, Heidegger's private assistant between 1972 and 1976, the Black Notebooks were brought to the German Literature Archive in Marbach around the middle of the 1970s. On the occasion of the shipment, Heidegger stated that they were to be published only at the very end of the Complete Works. Until then, they were to be kept "doubly secret, so to speak" (von Herrmann). No one was to read them or look them over. The literary executor has decided against this directive, because delays in bringing out the still-unpublished volumes of the full project of letting Martin Heidegger's thought appear in due form should not prevent the publication of the Black Notebooks at this time.

Why did the philosopher want to have the Black Notebooks published only as the last volumes of the Complete Works? The answer might very well be related to an already familiar stricture according to which the treatises concerned with the history of being were to be published only after all the lecture courses. For these courses, which intentionally do not speak about what is contained in the writings on the history of being, prepare for what these latter are saying in a language not accommodated to public lectures.

The Black Notebooks are thirty-four in number. Fourteen bear the title "Ponderings," nine are called "Annotations," two "Four Notebooks," two "Vigilae," one "Notturmo," two "Intimations," and four are named "Provisional Remarks." In addition, two further notebooks with the respective titles "Megiston" and "Basic Words" have come to light. Whether and how these belong to the Black Notebooks must

still be clarified. Volumes 94 to 102 of the Complete Works will in the coming years make available the thirty-four manuscripts first mentioned above.

The writing of the notebooks spans a time frame of more than forty years. The first extant notebook, "Intimations x Ponderings (II) and Directives," bears on its first page the date "October 1931." "Provisional Remarks III" contains a reference to "Le Thor 1969," so that the notebook "Provisional Remarks IV" must stem from the beginning of the 1970s. One notebook is missing, namely, "Intimations x Ponderings (I)," which must have been composed around 1930. Its whereabouts are uncertain.

* * *

"Ponderings XII," the first notebook in the present volume, stems from the late summer or fall of 1939, and "Ponderings XV," the last one, stops at the end of 1941. Heidegger mentions, besides other historical events, the start of the war with the Soviet Union on "June 22, 1941"⁴ and the subsequent "war effort of the human sciences."⁵

"Ponderings XIII" contains two passages that were incorporated into other writings. Pages 98–112 of this notebook were further elaborated in the "Draft for KOINON. On the History of Beyng" (GA69, pp. 199–214). And a thought on p. 116 was again taken up in the "Letter to Individual Soldiers" (GA90, p. 273).

In the "Ponderings" published herein, Heidegger continues his interpretation of the "machinational signs"⁶ found in the everyday occurrences of the National Socialistic German Reich as it drives on to war. Underlying this interpretation is the explicit intention to recognize in specific phenomena of the time the state of the "history of beyng."⁷ Heidegger has obviously taken distance from National Socialism, which allows him even to refer with biting mockery to a sentence from a "Führer speech."⁸

It is altogether evident that Heidegger intensely observes and contemplates even political events such as the visit of the Russian foreign minister Vyacheslav Molotov⁹ to Hitler in Berlin in November, 1940. The thinking is involved in historical happenings. Heidegger

4. "Ponderings XIV," p. 120.

5. "Ponderings XV," p. 19.

6. "Ponderings XII," p. 2.

7. Cf. *ibid.*, 53 as well as "Ponderings XIII," p. 55.

8. "Ponderings XIV," p. 12.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

sees indications everywhere of a decline in the history of being. "Europe," he says toward the close of "Ponderings XV," is the "actualization of the *decline of the West*." There is "no longer the least inducement to take the field against the 'pen-pusher' Oswald Spengler."¹⁰

Of course, Heidegger's way of considering the "machinational signs" must not be understood as the taking of a *political* position. It is instead a matter of a stance toward events that is attentive to the *history of being*, and therein Heidegger occupies a special point of view. It is in this regard that he understands the ever greater unleashing of the war machine as the "*consummation of technology*," whose "final chapter" will be "the earth itself blowing up" and the "current humanity" disappearing. Yet that "will not be a misfortune but, instead, the first purification of *being* from its most profound deformation on account of the supremacy of beings."¹¹ This notion of a "purification of *being*" seems to have led to consequences needing to be taken into consideration.

It must be pointed out at the start that Heidegger, more strongly than in the previous "Ponderings," presents as this "deformation" everything found in the domains of "religion," "culture," and "science." Even a presumably rather innocent science such as the "history of art" is in one place called the "most dreadful degeneration of the historiology which is in any case already thoroughly entangled in its distorted essence."¹² "Machination" dominates the world and all the regions therein.

Heidegger sees a further "sign" of "machination" in "Bolshevism," which arises out of "Western-further westward, modern, rational metaphysics"¹³ and has nothing in common with "Russianism." "Americanism" appears as the "pinnacle" of "nihilism."¹⁴ Thus "Americanism," "National Socialism," and "Bolshevism" present the "machinational essence" of the metaphysics which is proceeding on to its end.

This seems to show itself also in the world-historical significance Heidegger ascribes to "Judaism" or "world-Judaism." Thus he recognizes an "occasional increase in the power of Judaism," whereby "Western metaphysics, especially in its modern evolution," offered "the point of attachment for the expansion of an otherwise empty

10. "Ponderings XV," p. 38

11. "Ponderings XIV," p. 113.

12. "Ponderings XV," p. 21.

13. "Ponderings XII," p. 69.

14. "Ponderings XIV," p. 91.

rationality and calculative capacity."¹⁵ The National Socialists encounter this "increase in power" with measures noted by Heidegger. He says at one point that "*with their emphatically calculative giftedness, the Jews have for the longest time been 'living' in accord with the principle of race, which is why they are also offering the most vehement resistance to its unrestricted application.*"¹⁶

This interpretation of the role of "world-Judaism" reaches its peak after the entrance of the Soviet Union into the war, when it is brought up that this Judaism, "incited by the emigrants allowed out of Germany," cannot be "held fast anywhere" and, "with all its developed power," does not need to "participate anywhere in the activities of war, whereas all that remains to us is the sacrifice of the best blood of the best of our own people."¹⁷

Such statements about "Judaism" show how much Heidegger was involved in his thought of a "purification of *being*." He specifically wants to emphasize, precisely by underlining the words "of being," that he contrasts his thinking with the National Socialistic phantasies of racial purification which relate in fact to "beings," namely, "race." Indeed at the same time Heidegger interprets "world-Judaism" as a phenomenon that, on the side of "beings" and their planning by way of "machination," has exercised an essential influence on events.

* * *

The "Ponderings" appearing in volumes 94 to 96 of the Collected Works comprise fourteen of the thirty-four (or possibly thirty-six) notebooks with black oilcloth covers. The pages are in an unusual format: 5¼ × 7½ inches. The originals reside in the Heidegger literary remains at the German Literature Archive in Marbach am Neckar. I as editor had available copies bound in blue linen, with the titles printed on the spines.

The present volume 96 brings together the following texts:

- "Ponderings XII," 106 pages;
- "Ponderings XIII," 120 pages and one supplement;
- "Ponderings XIV," 125 pages;
- "Ponderings XV," 46 pages.

15. "Ponderings XII," p. 67.

16. *Ibid.*, 82.

17. "Ponderings XV," p. 17.

Added to these pages are indexes Heidegger provided at times for the notebooks. Only "Ponderings XV" has no index. The brevity of this notebook also suggests that the entries in it were interrupted.

The manuscripts are fully worked out. They display hardly any slips of the pen. There are no inserted sheets.

Detlev Heidegger prepared a typed transcription of "Ponderings XII–XIV," as did Jutta Heidegger for "Ponderings XV." Hermann Heidegger checked these typescripts.

I transcribed everything once again from the manuscripts, while constantly looking at the already prepared typescripts. Then I proof-read the typescripts. Finally, the galleys and page proofs were checked both by me and by my collaborator and student, Sophia Heiden.

Heidegger numbered the individual entries in "Ponderings XII" and "XIII," perhaps imitating his own treatises on the history of being, perhaps following the example of certain writings of Friedrich Nietzsche. This changes, however, beginning with "Ponderings XIV"; it and all further Black Notebooks no longer display such numbering.

Letters ("a," "b," "c") with which Heidegger sometimes designated the first pages of a notebook, as well as the page numbers that begin thereafter, are here reproduced in the margin of the text. The vertical stroke in the middle of a line indicates a page break. A question mark within braces ("{?}") flags an uncertain reading. All cross-references in the text are to notebook page numbers. All underlinings found in Heidegger's own text have been changed to italics; underlinings in cited texts, which would be italicized on their own, have been printed in bold.

More than in other volumes of the Collected Works, certain of Heidegger's remarks, especially ones referring to historical events, were supplied with an editorial explanation. Thereby the reader can see at which time Heidegger composed which of the "Ponderings." Also with regard to persons and institutions, ones which might be unfamiliar to younger readers, I have attached concise clarifications. There could obviously be no completeness here, in an edition that is supposed to come "straight from the author's hand."

In some cases, though very sparingly, I brought Heidegger's idiosyncratic spelling as well as his characteristic syntax into conformity with current rules. At the same time, I intentionally retained certain peculiarities, for instance that of occasionally capitalizing adjectives (e.g., "Propositional communication,"¹⁸ or "Transitional history"¹⁹) or writ-

18. "Ponderings XI,I" p. 51.

19. "Ponderings XIII," p. 21.

ing *Gebahren*²⁰ [for *Gebaren*, "behavior"]. Also, Heidegger's notorious coinage of hyphenated words was not standardized but, instead, with a few exceptions, is reproduced just as it appears in the manuscripts.

* * *

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Peter Trawny
Düsseldorf
Dec. 13, 2013

20. *Ibid.*, 95.