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POWER OR LIFE
RETHINKING THE CRUCIAL ISSUES OF OUR TIME

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PREFACE

Whether it be in a family, a village, a business, a nation or the entire world, as soon as power aims at domination, it assumes a structure that is specific, characteristic, and identifiable. We will attempt to describe that structure and understand why it is a structure and not a movement of intelligence, why it is a mechanism, a "machine," and not an act of freedom, and why that mechanism tends so naturally towards unconsciousness, silence and destruction. Family, village, business, nation, empire, no human organization escapes power and if power turns evil, there is misfortune. The social worker, the citizen, the worker, the consumer, or the person who simply listens to the news has every reason to reflect about power: the power he exercises over others and the power that he allows others to exercise.

The objective of this book is not solely descriptive. It is not a matter of reciting the multiple dangers of power when it allows itself to be carried away by the demon of possession, domination and exploitation. It is not a matter of making it a history thousands of years long, nor to sound one more alarm by showing that, in the hands of present-day men, so highly armed, industrialized and computerized, yesterday's risks are multiplied. The question is not one of adding to the feeling of urgency. Yes! The perversion of power does propel us fatally into tragedy. Yes! It does engender wars, deserts and famines because it has a fundamental need for the sacrifice of great numbers and ecological destruction is its necessary fuel. But well beyond these considerations, the importance of understanding these relationships of domination derives from the fact that this structure itself outlines the paths of liberation from it. The more powerful domination appears, the more fragile its Achilles' tendon is.

The tunnel is dark; it is even probable that humanity is approaching a parting of the ways that will determine the future. Human society is perhaps too well equipped today, to march in the steps of Alexander the Great. Power is inescapable, but the perversion of power, its structuring around an intention to dominate is no longer compatible with the enormity of our weapons, or our technological capacities and of our media empires. We can imagine a victor who conquers bare-handed; equipped as we are, all of us are losers, and nature, too. The purpose of this book is not to exaggerate, but to point out a path and a light for the future, a happy exit from the mechanism that imprisons us, an exit that passes through the midst of it. The transition calls for a leap of consciousness that is beginning already, it seems to me, and that consciousness enlightens us, showing us acts of freedom we can accomplish starting now.

This book is in agreement, then, with those who support the hypothesis that the present danger is not a disparate collection of dangers that are ecological, economic, social, political, etc. It does not come from globalization, nor from technology, nor from an evil leader. The totality of these dangers has a common foundation: power can no longer be assumed as it has been for thousands of years. It can no longer be the reign of force; it must become the means for accomplishing a viable plan for humanity.

INTRODUCTION

For in the end justice in the hands of the powerful is nothing more than an instrument of power like the others. Why call it justice? Let us call it injustice instead, but calculated, efficient, based entirely on the horrifying experience of the resistance of the weak, of their capacity for suffering, humiliation and misfortune. Injustice maintained at the exact degree of tension necessary to turn the cogs of the immense machine that manufactures rich people, for without this the cauldron would explode. - BERNANOS

In the fifth century B.C., during the full glory of Greek dominance, Sophocles invented the prophetic tragedy. Sophocles was worried about injustice. Injustice, as soon as it contaminates power, destroys the leader's authority. The leader, now out of favor, seeks to reestablish himself through forceful means. But these forceful means sap his authority even more. Finally, the people revolt and there are bloodbaths. Can we prevent these social catastrophes?, Sophocles asked himself. For him, the tragedian exercises his craft by directly appealing to the antidote to every injustice, in other words, the conscience. The purpose of the tragic performance is to dramatize, a little in advance, a possible real tragedy so as to awaken conscience and thus avoid the worst. It doesn't depend on anything other than this form of education, because anything else would force people to act, and tragedy would have none of its force. To resist a structure of domination through a strategy of domination (such as revolutions) only adds to the misfortune. Thousands of years of human history have demonstrated this.

Almost every week I encounter a Sophocles. And I listen. A while ago, I was at Rennens, a multicultural suburb of Lausanne. I met with some families from the Fourth World, very poor families, and talked with them about different plans to combat poverty. There was a young man there who seemed to me particularly fragile, driven by a sensitive temperament. He did not speak, trying instead to fade into the background. After the meeting, I had to find my way back to the station. He spontaneously offered to lead me on foot through the labyrinth of the city's streets. On the way, he said to me, after a long silence: "The generations are upside down. You, the oldest, still have hope. We, the young, already we don't believe in it anymore. The world is finished. Your plans are beautiful, M. Bédard, and if I weren't aware, I'd believe in them." This young man was particularly brilliant: he read a lot, was very well-informed and listened attentively to the people on the street. He had, he told me, met the universal tyrant, force at the service of injustice, and he wasn't up to the task. Neither he, nor any woman, nor any man, was up to the task." Nobody controls the beast anymore," my young guide insisted. "It's ridiculous to think that by voting for the left, you will get a hero capable of putting up the slightest resistance to it. We are an energy it uses in every way. Even our revolt serves it, since it justifies repression."

This young Sophocles had left unconsciousness behind and was blowing on the last of the fog that was hiding the landscape from me. He was right. This world is finished. Why had I believed for a single moment that these religious, economic, bureaucratic and political cogs could reflect, take account of their errors, and rectify them? One question remained for me, only one: why did this young Sophocles finish each sentence with such a beautiful smile? I really wanted to know how someone who had "given up on the world" spent his days. He led me into a park filled with children of every color. There were little ones playing and bigger ones hanging around. Mothers were seated all around, not talking much, because each one had her own language. He said to me: "You see those kids who aren't doing anything? They don't know how to play. I spend my days with them. I teach them to play checkers, chess and other

games." He stopped there. The look in the children's eyes made what he said clear as day. We continued in silence as far as the station. I got on the train for Lausanne. He waved at me, with a smile that showed he was proud of his choice, of his enormous choice.

My young Sophocles no longer believed in his parents' generation. On the other hand, he did believe in one thing, one alone, and he believed in it more than anything in the world. He believed in consciousness. He had staked everything on that light that showed him the cruel tragedy of a collective authority that had globally gone out of control. He believed in the light. And if the light destroys our last illusions, too bad, but above all, so much the better. The light is a gust of air that sweeps away all the curtains that close our eyes. Love for that light is the first sign that nothing has been lost.

Painting the theater curtains the color of roses only drives despair a little deeper in the succeeding generation. It was at the end of the road and after long dark nights that this young man chose the right action. The power of his action is that he acts in public. He publicizes a possible misfortune by creating a real happiness.

Our reasoning will rest on a few simple principles with serious consequences:

1. Domination is a complex of relationships that structures itself around a rupture of reciprocity.

A Yale study (January 2001) based on ice cores, corals and sediments, has demonstrated a correlation between the disappearance of empires and abrupt climatic changes. The Classic Maya civilization, the Old Kingdom of Egypt, the Akkadian empire, that of Crete, Palestine, etc., disappeared subsequent to a sudden period of heat and drought. We might ask whether these empires themselves created this climate that destroyed them?

When we read a history of the world's civilizations, we seem to be looking at an immense combat against stubborn nature and - even more - of stubborn men against each other. From the creation of bronze to the discovery of atomic energy, all we see is the rise of an obsession: to dominate, dominate nature, the animals, other men, the surrounding tribes, raise up kingdoms, enlarge empires, put all things under submission even to the ends of the earth. If there is any progress, it is only to implement this fixed idea. Certainly there are exceptions here and there; some "primitive" tribes got themselves "stuck" in sacralized and ritualized relations with Nature and other humans, but they have been, sooner or later, fatally decimated by the arrival of the tidal waves of a conquering civilization. This observation appears so universal, so ancient, so contemporaneous with the arrival of metal and writing, that if anything else existed before, we wouldn't know about it with any certainty.

Domination resonates so deeply with our cultures that we no longer perceive it; it is like water for a fish. Machiavelli suggested that the dominator or tyrant is one who pursues power as an end. Yet many dominators are consecrated men, unselfish, devoted to God, their country, or an idea. They live in total self-abnegation. We might even think that these people, so enthusiastic about the public welfare, are more dangerous than Machiavelli's calculating princes. Hegel believed that the superiority of a master derives from his more effective control of the fear of death. His hypothesis seems to me to be too kind to the masters, to say the least. Hegel did understand clearly, however, that domination does not depend on persons, but on relationships. What kind of relationship is he talking about, then?

I will attempt to demonstrate that it is above all not a matter of a bilateral relation

between a strong and a weak person but of a complex of at least three relations: the relation between a dominating ruler and a servile producer (what Hegel called the master-slave relation), the relation between idols and pariahs and the relation between priests and warriors. Each of these relations has been studied by different philosophers and anthropologists. For my part, I believe that these three axes should be viewed as a whole and in all their complexity. It would be advisable to ponder this, for if power is a kind of six-headed hydra (dominating ruler-servile producer, idol-pariah, priest-warrior), to chop off one or two of these heads would not suffice to finish it off. On the contrary, the more we make the guillotine fall, the stronger the beast becomes as it remakes itself.

This structure of power rests, it seems to me, on a profound rift, a radical break, a cleavage in the very essence of what a relation is. Let us take an example apart from humanity, in a matter that precedes and envelops us universally: the physical fabric of our cosmos. The relation between any two physical objects consists, necessarily and at every instant, of an exchange of visible and invisible light, of gravitational, thermic and electromagnetic waves --- All these exchanges are reciprocal, and we call them "interactions." The smallest energy particle informs all the other energy particles of its position and of its values, and it receives this information from the others. Without that reciprocity, the universe could not expand, endure, or even exist. Between plants and animals, contrary to what some people think, relationships are not based on domination, but on reciprocity. We will see that between nature and humans, between human beings and human beings, this reciprocity was broken the day when domination became the preferred mode of social relation.

Domination is a rupture of reciprocity and reciprocity is necessary for duration. A civilization can only endure so long as it maintains a culture of reciprocity. The human is, perhaps, the only animal able to break the reciprocity of its relationships with others and with nature.

Signs of this rupture of reciprocity are visible everywhere. For example: when we think of "primitive" tribes, past or present, we call them "primitive" precisely because they have endured without many technical inventions (which does not mean without progress or evolution). Anthropology supports the hypothesis that these societies have endured because of a general strategy of "acclimation." Acclimation is an essentially reciprocal relationship with nature. It is about reading nature as a living subject and adapting to her to the maximum degree possible. When reciprocity is broken, humans no longer think of acclimating. Instead they seek to transform nature to make it conform to what they think are their needs.

There is a rupture of reciprocity when humans view themselves as intelligent, free and capable and conclude from this that matter, nature and the cosmos are automatic, blind and absurd. They keep the monopoly on intelligence for themselves. Matter, life, energy, all that is not intelligence is no more than a reservoir of objects to be used for their own purposes.

For hundreds of thousands of years (perhaps more than a million years), acclimation would have been "preferred" to transformation, and humans would have "chosen" to acclimate themselves to nature as much as possible rather than risk depending on an increase in the number of technical innovations. The strategy of "transformation" (subjecting nature) only arrived at the last minute. And now, that strategy places us in peril. Everything is happening as if, after a very long calm, a storm had arisen, slowly at first, without much power, and then had progressively accelerated, taken off very rapidly and is today threatening to sweep away everything - the ecology, the equilibrium of societies. For the first time, what man fears most is himself.

This rupture of reciprocity, this pathology of relations is not, perhaps, inevitable. It is, I believe, a long period in our social evolution which is approaching its conclusion. From intimations of this end come those feelings of paroxysm, of perilous climax that haunt our present-day Sophocleses.

2. We have lost the power to control power.

It seems, then, that since the Bronze Age humans have been taking on more and more power over everything except, perhaps, over themselves. Domination is only one form of power. In domination, power is not yet at the stage where it has power over itself. The hands of humans have progressively replaced the hand of Providence, and Providence has wisely retreated in the face of Humanity's power.

As a consequence: we have been given over to ourselves, for better and for worse. The better is our high-tech heaven, the immediate answer to all of what we believe to be our needs; the worse is the human tragedy, the calamity which, with such great technological proficiency, we ourselves are making come to pass.

One strange fact disconcerts us: as we aim for the best, we also produce the worst. This is one of the great mysteries of humans as a collectivity. They want justice, but they produce injustice. They want peace, but they make war - "The good that they want, they do not do. The evil that they do not want, they do." Before the modern era, humans believed that Satan played dirty tricks on them, and after that we suspected our Unconscious. Today we are becoming aware that the Unconsciousness behind our collective actions is not harmless.

Our powers have grown enormous, but this doesn't always make life easier for us. Today we have the technical capacity sufficient to feed, shelter, teach, and provide medical care for all men, women, and children. Bravo! But alas, we are employing these marvelous techniques in such a way that, relatively speaking, few people are profiting from them, and nearly all are suffering the consequences (through social inequalities, wars and ecological disturbances). It seems that we will not be able to escape the necessity for a collective control of our instruments of power. In short, our principal problem is political (collective intelligence of ends) and not technical. The technical means are almost always positive, but their application is often diverted toward purposes of domination.

The most terrible aspect of the human tragedy can be expressed thus: our manner of employing power has driven us to utter helplessness in the face of our own structures of power. Our structures of power have become autonomous, and they escape us. Our States, our industries, our businesses. etc., obey power structures, not CEO's or presidents. We sense that the mechanics of decision-making escape us. Some have given up, but many remain angry, their conscience rubbed raw, with no longer any identifiable enemy to combat. With our indignant conscience, we are in a situation similar to that of Sophocles. Sophocles said it clearly: "It is the country that saves us." The country is the hull of the ship (it is the ship's hull that saves the crew from drowning every moment). If we neglect the hull, the country, we all perish. The country is formed of two components: the natural environment and social solidarity. Domination is precisely what destroys both.

3. Domination of necessity goes toward death.

Sophocles gives us to understand that the tyrant goes inevitably toward death. In other words, as soon as a power nears hegemony (when nothing opposes it any longer on equal terms), it becomes suicidal. Now, at the present time nothing can any longer oppose power with an equal force. The empire is global; there is only one empire,

the empire of force. Sophocles warns us: "the genius of man can be broken in his drive toward strength if he fails to recognize, in the exercise of the public function, that law of the world that the poet calls Justice." In sum, the tyrant goes toward death because he crushes justice (he destroys the solidarity that forms the hull of the ship.)

Let us turn our attention to a social problem that stands out from all the others, that of extreme poverty. When we have food, basic medications and an abundance of technical expertise, to allow thousands of children, women and men to die of extreme poverty calls into question our humanity, that is to say, our solidarity, and this is not innocuous.

Imagine for a moment that my brother or my friend were to die in the most extreme poverty, abandoned by everyone. He is by this very fact "condemned" to an anonymous burial. In brief: his death no longer has any tragic function. Indifference replaces the first impulse of freely-given solidarity inherent in our species: to commemorate each death. The issue is decisive: at stake is the very definition of what we are, of what we are worth in our own eyes. Imagine now that I don't protest, that no one protests, alleging helplessness as an excuse. It is then that the process of social destruction begins. This process is composed of two stages: the loss of one person's dignity, and the absence of protest on the part of the others.

The death of a single poor person is as tragic as the death of one who is rich and that tragedy must be understood, or else the bond of justice and solidarity linking humans will be broken ... Either every human being possesses a minimum of dignity, or the idea of humanity does not exist. One exception and the rule is destroyed. Why? Because that exception supposes a person who defines that exception, it supposes a tyrant or a system of tyranny (obviously a system of tyranny can usurp the name of "democracy.")

From the political and social point of view, what is a person abandoned to the extremest poverty? She or he is a person abandoned by the social bond. Reciprocity no longer works. The poor person is someone whose life isn't worth my car, not even my television. Because of this, she or he no longer has any but this one function: to reflect shame, for all must be ashamed of one person. Shame is the realization that you aren't worth a coffin. Shame consists of knowing that your death won't make a damned bit of difference. What is a tyrant, what is a tyrannical system? It is a person who designates certain people as simply means without any dignity of their own, and who does it with the complicity of an entire structure, the structure of power.

Great poverty is a disease of the social bond of solidarity. It results from the illusion that the city can manage to survive despite the injustice facing "a few individuals." Within that disease, everything happens as if the sacrifice of one person had no effect on the whole. What difference does it make if the ship's hull cracks open in one spot, provided that the wealthiest get away? This is pure illusion.

The refusal to understand the tragedy of a single individual or, if you like, near unanimity in obedience to an unjust order ---- this breach in solidarity is all it takes to sink the ship. The fracture of the hull comes from the following idea: "It is good that one perish for the salvation of all." That idea inevitably turns into this one: "It is good that nearly all perish for the comfort of a few." The driving force behind this terrible and inevitable transformation is this: the one who has the power to utter this condemnation prefers the rhetorical abstraction "all (which is only the projection of himself and his friends) to the concrete person he condemns. He substitutes himself for "all," passing of necessity through a sociological abstraction, in other words, a statistic. That is why the rule of the majority: "It is good that one perish for the salvation of all" constitutes the radical and sordid inversion of justice: "Trust each one as you would yourself."

Someone must cry out and proclaim the tragedy: a single individual abandoned to injustice places us all in danger. For who am I? I am not "all," I am a single person. If I do nothing for a single person, I lose my concrete value. My "I" becomes an abstraction, just some number in a statistical majority named "all." All keep silent, so I keep silent. The tyrant's crime consists of condemning humans to be no more than abstractions in the face of his own concrete actions. Suddenly "his justice," his idea of justice wins out over the true person in front of him.

The tyrant, and more generally all tyrannical systems (this is all the more true when it boasts of imposing "democracy") is ashamed of himself because he creates a profound doubt about the foundations of humanity. Now, shame is a process by which a person stops wanting to exist. It follows that a tyrannical society unconsciously seeks its own death and its own destruction. It seeks it, in general, by making war on others and war on nature. The destruction of nature is not an involuntary consequence of the presence of humans; it manifests their suicidal thinking.

To simplify, my argument consists of three phrases:

- Firstly, ecological disturbances, wars, and famines put our future in danger;
- Secondly, this is essentially due to a disease of the social bond resulting from our conception of power;
- Thirdly, this disease, to the degree that it can be expressed and understood, alerts our consciousness. Hope is in this direction.

The tragedy engendered by tyranny follows its course toward death. The solution is not technical, but political and, consequently, both personal and social. Since antiquity, we have gone from tyrant to tyrant, from empire to empire, while improving our methods of colonization and exploitation and rendering them more complex. Today the 'global empire' leading us is so well armed and equipped that it is attacking the great climatic, biological, and social equilibriums of the planet.

"The man of power," or, as we should say, "the structure of domination," is a mechanism, a machine, a movement reproducing itself from moment to moment, from epoch to epoch, from generation to generation, from society to society. The man of power does not have power, but responds to the dictates of a machine that sweeps him along, and the "majority" with him. Numerous are those who, exhausted, give up and take refuge either in the majority salvation (produce and consume) or in insular salvation (me, myself and I alone), the two illusions of our time. Nonetheless, whether we wish it or not, a real bond links the "I" and the "we." The point of our consciousness ("I") cannot help but encounter this link ("we"). Every injustice - and they are numerous - hammers this question into human consciousness: What have you done with your brother?

Tragedy, once it stops being denied, causes, in some way, pain to arise and this awakens us. The tyrant, the man of power, knows that if consciousness enters the world, he leaves it. He tries, then, to murder all manifestations of consciousness, but consciousness is reborn out of its ashes every time. Consciousness to the degree that it attains a very high intensity, can dismiss the tyrant by extracting from each one of us free acts in favor of justice.

If there is a basis to ethics, it is justice. But what is justice? Is it a pure invention, an artificial construction? Does it rest on a foundation? Is ethics only a minimum of good manners within domination's forms? I don't believe it.

Ethics can be thought of otherwise. There is an ethics of power that is up to the task of banishing our habits of domination.

The tool employed in this research is philosophical and not sociological or political. It has to do with an application of the phenomenological structure proposed by Raymond Abellio in the middle of the twentieth century. We have eliminated most of the technical elements from this applied work, however,. That way, this book can reach all those who want to understand power and participate in change. If I am indebted to Abellio for the analytic and synthetic aspect of my study, the notion of "collective insanity," is best illuminated by the essays of Hermann Broch. The structure of power can easily turn to collective insanity. We are not safe from the fits of rage Hitler's Germany knew. The situation is more serious today since global mechanisms are involved. On the other hand, the poison of domination has become so obvious that it suggests its own antidotes. It is here that philosophy can best provide a nudge in the right direction by suggesting possible paths.

In Part One:

-I will define a certain number of indispensable concepts: domination, power, force, authority, exclusive values, inclusive values these somewhat didactic pages are inevitable.

-Next, I will attempt to disassemble, reassemble and engage the principal gears of the structure of power. In this way we can observe and predict the "machine of power's" functioning.

-I will apply this "machine" to small social systems like the family.

-Once this dynamic is well understood, I will try to demonstrate the cyclical life of the structure of power, its way of expanding, dying, and being reborn elsewhere.

-Having come to understand the short cycles (decades or centuries) of migration from one empire to another, we will be enabled, I hope, to glimpse the outlines of a great cycle (thousands of years) which could very likely herald the changing of an age.

In Part too:

- Since domination is for many the result of various kinds of submission, an ethic of the use of power becomes obligatory. If and only if civil society regains its power will the global democracy arise that is essential for the ecological, economic and social 180-degree turn that can save our future. Then the question arises: how can civil society exercise power without falling into the trap of domination?

- Even though domination shows great taste for death, it also gives evidence of the opposite: a great taste for life. This taste is nothing other than the foundation of ethics.

- It remains that the universe itself, at first glance, appears to turn toward death and justify domination. This vision of the universe is false and out-of-date, however. We can foresee another vision, more optimistic and, more than that, more in accord with the latest scientific facts.

- On this basis, a human person can develop a solidly-grounded feeling for life, and this desire will provide her or him with a real and useful power. Using this power

allows us to advance toward universal democracy, that social dream born of the Renaissance.

In sum, there is a future for human beings, and a way to escape the seemingly inevitable disasters caused by domination, and it is this that we will attempt to examine here.

PART ONE:
The Analysis of Power

Chapter 1: Power, Authority, and Force

The first two chapters form a brief synthesis of what has already been said in the literature about the paradox of power, while defining the concepts we will be employing later on.

1. Power based on force requires the use of exclusive values. The authority of wisdom rests on integrative values.

Philosophers attempt to delimit principles that jostle against each other in reality. To do this, they frequently manipulate language by returning to the origin of words. We are going, then, to try to delimit three notions: power, authority and force. There are all kinds of definitions of these three terms. The *Littré* gives numerous ones. They are very diverse. To avoid all misunderstanding, let us agree to use simple language. Let us say that two elements make up "power:" "force" and "authority." It is, to be sure, a simplification valid only as a point of departure.

Power, the ability to influence the course taken by a person or object, is composed of a mixture of two ingredients:

- Force, which bends something or someone toward an objective, a definite behavior, a form, a pre-established target (the goal must be reached);

- Authority, which stimulates persons to freely engage their consciousness, their intelligence, their judgement, and their actions in a common direction (we cannot clearly predict the goal, but we understand the process).

To aid in understanding these two notions, let us borrow an analogy from our neighbor the horse, a social animal. A society of horses is very complex. It doesn't conform to the idea of a pyramidal hierarchy. For example, if A is chosen by B as a protector, and if B is chosen by C as a protector, it does not follow that A is the protector of C. Each relation is subject to a direct mode of election. This social bond is the determining factor in the horses' survival and must not be distorted by contests of force. Certainly, the protector does enjoy certain privileges: he eats first, he makes his subordinate back away, he has a better chance to reproduce, etc. Yet he is chosen because the individual horses perceive, wrongly or rightly, that A hears better, has a keener sense of smell, and - above all - is a better judge of danger and of opportunities for water and food. In brief, he is chosen under the others' surveillance, because a number of individuals have formed the hypothesis that he is favorable to the future of the herd. As long as his judgement is good, and his decisions are profitable, he retains his "authority."

Authority is a reciprocal relationship that involves the consent of others. Let us say that authority comes from a judgement that is free, direct, and always open to change, accommodating individuals with a view toward assuring the future. Authority is founded on obvious qualities such as sincerity, congruence (acting in accordance with stated values), honesty, competence, concern for others and above all perhaps the ability to summarize the ideas of each individual. Authority comes from each one freely and following his or her best judgement, thinking that this person or this institution is favorable to the future of the group. Authority produces an addition of judgements - the judgements of all the members of the group. More precisely, authority creates a social bond whose nature is to multiply the individual intelligences.

Authority comes from the word *auctor*, "author," "creator." We call Bach an authority in music because Bach's music, without the use of any constraining force, has charmed many people. If Bach had threatened people, bribed people, or manipulated people to make them buy his music, we wouldn't speak of Bach's authority, but of the use of forces of dissuasion, retribution, or manipulation to subject the music to a predefined direction.

"Force" acts in the opposite direction from authority because it imposes itself thanks to a considerable quantity of physical energy (employed directly or indirectly.) Force tries to "force" people to choose and to act in a given direction. They are threatened, they are bribed, the information they receive is manipulated, etc. Thus, the judgement of each one is inhibited. In nature, a herd that allows itself to be imposed upon by force is assuredly on the road to ruin. To surrender to the "strongest," the one who plays tough, is to become the weakest of groups. To surrender to the "strongest" is a disease of the social bond that leads to misfortune. For example, if a group wishes to climb Mount Everest and plays into the hands of the would-be strongest, it is almost guaranteed to fail. To succeed in an exploit that requires a great deal of intelligence, adaptability, and judgement, the best in each one must be added and not subtracted. Now, you cannot get the best out of each one by intimidating, by manipulating, or by paying people to keep quiet or do nothing, etc.

In human society, we can speak of three types of force: dissuasive force, retributive force and manipulative force. A force is something that goes against our will thanks to means that erode our alert, educated, informed and conscious judgement. Force blinds us. It inhibits our intelligence. Certainly, force engenders cunning, but the nature of cunning is to oppose intelligence to consciousness, thus fragmenting the human spirit.

That said, let us not believe that force is always selfish. Except in certain cases, the tyrant at the head of an empire, of a small factory, of a ponderous bureaucracy, or of a family does not seek evil, but good, and wants it very much and relentlessly, sometimes. Force is attached to good, as is authority. But force places exclusive values foremost, while authority places integrative values foremost. The reason is simple: force has no meaning if there is not a goal, an objective, a form planned in advance, one to which humans and things must be bent. Such a goal, such a form obviously excludes the other goals and the other forms. Authority, on the contrary, elicits a synthesis that emerges out of the dialogue.

More precisely, what is the difference between the two?

- Exclusive values are precise, definite and closed forms which allow us to separate technically, through exterior signs, the good from the bad. Because of this, evil is viewed as capable of being set aside and eliminated (separating the tares from the wheat). For example: water is considered pure to the extent that everything other than water has been removed from it. A water with this type of "purity" is obviously sterile; it cannot engender what it is not -- one can only reproduce it. In other words, it has no history. An exclusive value is, one supposes, a sort of primary element (like pure water) that exists and is universal. It is not cultural, consequently. Everyone can produce pure water, and all pure waters are identical. They are homogeneous. We don't think that there is any internal contradiction in an exclusive value. If there were internal contradictions, we would be forced to eliminate them, choose one and exclude the other. Justice, for example, when it is viewed as an exclusive value, is perceived as something that can be recognized through criteria definable in advance. We can know a priori what is just and what is unjust. This is made compellingly obvious to the mind through revelation (for the religious powers-that-be) or through reason (for the

secular powers). It is possible, then, to combat injustice, and if injustice is eliminated, the world becomes just.

- Integrative values are aspirations that can only be understood negatively. I know in advance that the integrative value I desire has never physically existed, does not exist and will never exist in final form. What does exist will never "conform" to what I desire. An integrative value is not a precise form, and, what is more, I know that no precise form will ever be satisfactory. Yet this aspiration drives me nonetheless to produce, to invent, to create along with others and in conjunction with Nature, forms that do approach the goal. I know that to the degree I come near a precise form, I want to create a different one. For example, water is pure (as an integrative value) when it is able to join with something it isn't. It can then become fertile and give birth to a form that did not exist and was not even predictable. Water is pure if it produces, together with light and minerals, an amoeba, a plant, etc., which has its own beauty. Integrative values are creative. We expect them to integrate heterogeneous elements in order to produce something new. In other words, they are historical, and evolve like human beings. It might be supposed that an integrative value is a kind of germinal and assembling motor that integrates concrete elements of existence to arrive at an invention that is valid for a given place and moment. If we approach this aspiration, we do not have the desire to reproduce it as it is, but to do something else. If I paint a magnificent picture, it is stimulating. And the more I succeed, the more desire I have to make another one that is different and yet just as beautiful. Integrative values are, then, cultural in the sense that in another culture they engender a result that is different and yet just as valid. Justice, for example, as an integrative value develops along with people and with nature. It will yield more or less satisfying results that are different each time. As an integrative value, justice doesn't serve so much to combat injustice as to integrate what is unjust (as a painter integrates sometimes dissonant colors) in order to produce a better justice. To forgive oneself is to integrate the past in such a way that the error serves to invent something else that is better.

A contemporary example - democracy, when it is taken as an exclusive value, serves to justify economic colonialism, exclude emerging democracies, and impose a form of democracy which does not truly come out of an historical synthesis. As an integrative value, it is an aspiration to take responsibility for the individual and collective freedom inherent in the human being. It is something to achieve together in an historical and cultural process. There are normally as many forms of democracy as there are democratic peoples.

For Henri Bergson, the tendency to establish and impose exclusive values is connected to the three great fears of human beings: the fear of death, of uncertainty and of insubordination. The use of force acts on two fronts: it responds to these three fears and it justifies them. In *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoevski expresses this idea in all its tragedy. In Chapter Five, the Grand Inquisitor condemns Jesus for wanting to propose open and integrative values. He criticizes Jesus for overestimating humans, who have a far greater need for the security provided by a system of closed values than for a space open to creation. This tragedy takes on full force with one of the greatest writers of the twentieth century. In *The Death of Virgil*, Hermann Broch has his hero say (in response to Caesar): "Understanding is incapable of creating its own hypothesis and so philosophy lacks the ability to do it; no one possesses a power of procreation such that he can make himself his own ancestor Love unceasingly breaks its own limit."

Love would be, then, the open and integrative value *par excellence* since it is capable of sabotaging its own forms in order to join with the other, the stranger, the misunderstood. If this is true ideally, on earth it is quite the contrary, especially in episodes of mass insanity like the one that swept away Hitler's Germany. In his *Logic*

of a World in Ruins, Broch analyses with a watchmaker's precision the mechanism which closes value systems in a society which is losing its backbone, that is to say, in a society which no longer has integrative values sufficient to keep a society open to others. Without an integrating nucleus, value systems separate from each other. Art begins to exist for art's sake, science for science, religion for religion, philosophers speak only to each other, and the economy generates its own explanations. The individual is torn into pieces. His consumer self, his producer self, his rational self, his emotional self, his artistic self, his spiritual self - everything is divided. Since nature abhors a vacuum, in the absence of an integrating motor a leader, a group or a movement starts to impose its closed system of values and the society joyfully becomes fundamentalist, totalitarian and conquering.

Humans are ethical beings to the extent that they feel that their existence is connected with the existence of the rest of the world. Without this link, they don't exist. Reciprocity is necessary for the existence of any being, but humans know this and so forget it, deny it or refuse it. Without the bonds of solar light, organic energy, cosmic gravity and so many other fields of energy and information, we would not exist. This knowledge, which we try hard to forget, transforms all our behavior into actions that have an effect, be it positive or negative, on our own existence. Ethics is the cord that links our actions to life and to death. What is an action? The putting on track of a value, a value which will impact positively or negatively on reality. A value is a loop of action and reaction between a person, a group and their environment, a loop which keeps existence in a state of risk. Therefore, each person bears a responsibility.

Ethical consciousness is tragic. We are walking on a frozen lake which can give way with each false step. In such a situation, it is better to sleep in a system of values which provides us with the conviction that we are doing good. Only a closed system of values provides us with this conviction. We can tell that people are living in a closed system when they believe that they are doing good. As for ethical persons, they doubt whether they are doing good.

My psychosocial self does what it thinks is good without asking any questions and it is no doubt because of this everything goes so badly in this world. Our nuclear self senses this. The will of the self is to appropriate the non-self, to appropriate what surrounds it. The tiny baby seeks to introduce the world into its mouth. For the child, to know is to introduce the world into himself. The child comes to know his mother, his father, his little sister by introducing them into himself in the form of representation. Even when his Mama isn't there, he can talk to her. At every moment he nourishes his need to know by making the world enter into him. The small child is thus of necessity open to foreign values. Progressively, however, he is himself swallowed up in the system of values he has assimilated. To introduce a value into oneself is, in fact, not be introduced into a system of values. For example, to appropriate a little red car, a symbol of freedom, is to be assimilated by a whole system of values that honors and justifies the individual automobile. My ingestion, assimilation, and predation of the world surrounding me is what, in essence, causes me to be swallowed up by the social environment.

In a society that has lost its integrating motor, each value system sees itself and preserves itself as a self-sufficient totality. For example, psychology pretends it doesn't need literature, physics, religion, etc., to understand the human being. The physicist doesn't believe it is necessary to understand himself to understand physics. Religion doesn't think that science is necessary, and the opposite Each value system functions like a private and self-sufficient domain that has no need of others for fulfillment. Because of this, insidiously, one system is preparing to prevail over all the others by its power of closure. At present, the rationality termed "economic" (which

has nothing economic about it) is intending to impose itself as a complete and sufficient justifying system. It is the all-encompassing closed system, the benchmark closed system. By it, good and evil are defined - to our even greater misfortune.

Once a people has been swallowed by the value system they themselves have swallowed, they are no longer responsible for anything except this one thing: the loss of their sense of responsibility. This is the world of "sleep-walkers," men and women teleguided by a closed system of values.

Fortunately, even the most closed value systems always end up by crashing against reality. When we attempt to exclude the real in order to preserve the integrity of the value system (the market), we hit some real and increasingly serious consequences. If we keep on refusing to learn through reciprocal openness, we will enter a learning process of catastrophes and shocks.

In summary, authority is gained through opening the value system. Force is only possible through closing the value system. Force imposes the "good" with all the strength of its convictions. Force is always in a "state of maximum truth." Force is a sort of blinding by self-reference. The authority of conscience and dialogue can only emerge at the end of an age, at the moment when a closed system of values brings about increasingly awesome catastrophes.

2. Authority and force are always more or less blended.

Force is essentially bound to a closed value system and because of this, it progressively excludes authority. This is why it is so pernicious. It does not maintain equilibrium; it destroys it. The reverse is not true, however. Authority does not exclude force, but masters it and keeps it within uncompromising limits.

Authority alone, without the use of any force, is utopian. When a cell opens too far, it dies; when it closes too far, it also dies. Life is a constructive paradox. All who have exercised some authority over their children, a class of students, or any human organization know that a minimum of force (dissuasion, retribution, manipulation) is necessary. But we know too that an injustice in the use of force undermines authority. When authority is weak, there is a great temptation to rely on force and that launches a vicious circle which destroys authority by creating a great deal of unhappiness. The tyrant uses force. Sophocles relies on authority. In reality, these two characters are blended in proportions that run from the extreme of force to the extreme of authority. The extreme of force is commonly called tyranny, and the extreme of authority, wisdom. Socrates the wise man dies because the one in power abuses force. Yet Socrates' authority endures and even today inspires numerous people. Why? Because Socrates proposed a philosophy of openness and dialogue, and made his death a prophetic tragedy.

In any human society, power is complex. Authority is rarely direct, and is often delegated (example: the authority of teachers is personal, professional and delegated). Force is assigned to authorities by customs or laws, and everything becomes very complicated. This work will not try to analyze it all. We wish simply to demonstrate how the structure of power is a pathology of the social bond, and a certain kind of wisdom, the necessary solution.

3. Reliance on force most often creates a tragic reversal.

Tragic emotion comes to us not just from the imprisonment of conscience caused by the strategies the tyrant employs to manipulate information. If there is a ladder of shame, the final, darkest and most loathsome rung, one which no observer of the

human tragedy would ever want to share, is that of the tyrant himself when he becomes aware of the damage his tyranny has caused (which is very rare). One can imagine the Alexander the Greats, the Napoleons, the Hitlers, suddenly awakening on their battlefields, inspecting the corpses, the wounded, the disemboweled children, flying over the refugee camps, the starving, the slaughtered women, crossing over to the future and taking inventory of the ecological disasters, the destruction, seeing, in sum, the horrible scar of their passage through the world ... Few have felt this tragic emotion, for conscience knows multiple methods for gassing itself, for drugging itself, for driving away all light. Power blinds ...

Yet whoever contemplates the tragic horror remains dumbfounded. Except for a few exceptions, the tyrants of this world, the heads of empires, the bosses of small factories or bloated bureaucracies do not seek evil, but good. How can they have destroyed what they loved and created what they hated? Why this reversal? Doesn't this alone lead us to astonishment? It is rare that an executioner sees the blood of his victim. The hands the executioners present to us are white, and they tend their little gardens with the greatest peace of mind. We recognize them by their belief, their certainty even, that what they did was right.

The question could be formulated thus: why does the man who so much wants justice, peace and harmony produce the exact opposite? Why does the good we want produce the misery we don't want?

Many have answered that lies are a necessity in politics. One of the essential functions of political life consists of disguising those collective intentions which are only effective when they are, in fact, disguised. For example, one nation cannot announce its intention to pillage the resources of another. This would scandalize its own population and undermine every military strategy. Ruse, bluff and deception -- all are fair in war. Confronted with the enemy and with oneself, camouflage is a necessity essential for effectiveness.

We may add to this lie another form of deception. It consists of making what was said, not what was done, be seen. It is composed of disinformation and diseducation. Disinformation consists of "covering" a news item in such a way that the facts (conveniently arranged) confirm the speech. Diseducation works further upstream, conditioning the interpreting organ itself. News items then organize themselves "of their own accord" in forms that corroborate what "needs" to be seen. Let's imagine some sort of extra-terrestrial who arrives here, in our world. What does it see? Among other things, people who fight each other to get a better place, people who exploit or are exploited, people who run themselves ragged for fear of ending up as miserable beggars, people who use up material and ecological resources. Diseducation is the process by which all this becomes "logical." All this "is explained" when, in fact, one ceases being an extra-terrestrial. The diseducated person, encultured into a society centered on power, no longer sees facts, but explanations; no longer sees corpses, but "collateral damage;" he no longer sees desperate men and women blowing themselves up, but evil terrorists; he no longer sees oil spills and enormous garbage dumps polluting the coasts, but future technologies sucking up the damage In brief, a child not yet diseducated stands a better chance of seeing the peril than does a learned university professor. The nature of a closed value system is to "educate" observation and judgment to see good even in death.

But lies and self-centeredness aren't sufficient to explain the tragic reversal. We need to add another effect, the effect of exclusive values inasmuch as they are exclusive values; goodness, justice, freedom, democracy, etc., are social idols to strive for and attain. The idol asserts itself as an indisputable truth that attracts everything to itself. To gain some idea of the idols of a society, we need only examine what, at the

moment, is the envy of all the media. All we have to do is turn on the television. There is a form of beauty, a form of wealth, a form of verbal facility that make up our society's idols. The closer an individual approaches this idol the more success he or she enjoys. Some of them are so close to it that people mistake them for the idol itself. Most often, a person's popularity is the measure of his or her proximity to an idol.

The idol serves, in essence, to exclude persons and ideas. Exclude, that is to say, eject from the sphere of the "Good conscience." The idol of feminine beauty is a form that serves to give a feeling of guilt to women outside the norm. The idol of "intelligence" makes it possible to select the "brains" who have good market value. The other forms of intelligence are relegated to the margin. It is never asked whether or not defining intelligence this way is intelligent. These values are safely stored in an ideological heaven. The primary objective of the idol of beauty: to identify ugly women and men. The primary objective of the idol of justice: to identify the persons who menace the tyrant's power. The primary objective of the idol of freedom: to ensure that the spirit is servile and dependent. The idol aims, then, to identify the guilty and accuse them of their guilt.

Exclusive values elevated to the status of an idol permit the development of a totalitarianism that the mind quickly finds intolerable (inasmuch as it stays alert). Let's imagine Bach's *Saint Matthew Passion* sung by the finest choir and accompanied by the finest orchestra ... It is delightful. But then someone barricades the doors and forces the audience to hear the Passion over and over ad infinitum It's a nightmare! Hell is nothing other than the eternal repetition of a perfection that is defined, that is to say complete and sufficient. Why? Because this vision of perfection (exclusive value) expels thought from all points where it dreams of breaking the repetition, the recitation, the automatic obedience. The exclusive value inhibits consciousness, intelligence, and judgement because it does not invite us to collective creation. This kills the human in each of us. Even the most desirable idols, once they perpetuate themselves through conformity, engender just the opposite of what they aim for. The music of Bach, as long as one can escape it, enriches the real or virtual musician within us, but if it is transformed into an idol, if it serves to exclude music different from it, if it pretends to be the perfect norm, it does no more than sterilize musical creation.

The real world is not a blank page, human thought is not an empty pitcher, nature is not a hodgepodge of physical, biological, and sociological laws eternally the same. Reality is an ecological complex formed of human persons, of living beings and of relations which are not concrete sculptures or complicated mechanisms, but active creations. The very fact of considering the exterior world as an ensemble of amorphous things obeying perfectly uniform laws, and thus predictable things -- this fact alone sets into action a serious error regarding error. The idol leads us to understand that non-conformity is an attack on the social order. Now, it is exactly the opposite. Exclusive values fracture the social bond and thus create a disorder, a social disorganization. For example, if such or such a university department becomes for all practical purposes an ideological clique, a self-important value system, it creates an opposing clique alongside it, and war breaks out. The idol invariably creates a contrary idol, the conflict between the two idols never leads to dialogue, but simply to confrontation, and the society becomes violent and disorganized.

Only through the use of force can the idol remain identical to itself. In order for the *Saint Matthew Passion* to be imposed in perpetuity, force must be employed to imprison the people. The most beautiful thing, once it is established by force, expels the life force from a society. However "perfect" the idea of democracy may be, once it ceases being the cause and the result of a dialogue, it destroys democracy and creates its opposite. The creative idea of beauty is incompatible with the idol of beauty. The beauty of one work fertilizes another, quite different work. We must not

become attached to an idol, but to the creative source itself. And this is only possible if we allow beauty and the other values to defend themselves and evolve through the healthy confrontation of differences. In other words, as long as a value advances by its own authority without the use of force, it acts socially in favor of humanity and its future. As long as an idea remains connected to judgement, to thought, to other points of view and to things, it evolves.

All this has already been expressed in one way or another by philosophers. Yet none of this explains why, inevitably, force defeats authority in the exercise of power. Machiavelli has effectively demonstrated that, in the exercise of power, force necessarily ends up surpassing authority. Sooner or later, the best intentioned of princes will misuse his authority and be compelled to turn to force. Authority requires so much sincerity, exactitude, congruence, and wisdom that a fall appears inevitable. Authority requires the best in human beings, the constant exercise of their consciousness, their intelligence and their judgement. Force, for its part, demands only muscle and deceit. Horses aren't stupid, they overthrow the tyrant with no respect for the length of his mandate. But humans hesitate. They think in secret that a tyrant is better than anarchy, and believe that humans left to themselves are more dangerous than humans submitted to force.

The paradox is the following: as soon as a society relies on force, the surrounding societies defend themselves by force or die. The machine of power is, then, a disease of the social bond that spreads at lightning speed. Force forces force ... If you live in confidence, all goes well so long as force does not attack you. If it does attack you, you lose your bet. You say to yourself: "I was wrong. The world really is hostile." And you enter the hell of force to defend yourself and survive.

CHAPTER 2: THE FEELING OF HOSTILITY

Are weapons powerful? They will be destroyed. Is a tree powerful? It will be broken. What is soft, what is weak, these are the friends of life. What is rigid, what is violent, these are the friends of death. -Lao Tan

From the previous chapter, we can draw a very simple lesson: when force defeats authority, it drives out consciousness, thought and judgement. Guidance of self, of others, of populations great or small then drift rapidly toward programmed action. Programmed action goes automatically to unsuitable action, and unsuitable action races at top speed to disaster. I call the power that relies on force the "machine of power." I call its structure the "structure of power." "Machine" because it drives intelligence away and thus mechanizes action. "Structure" because that mechanism inevitably structures itself according to an identifiable framework. I call "man of power," the leader who happens to be at the tiller of the unfortunate ship which, in fact, no longer has a rudder.

Sophocles provides us with the most obvious clue for identifying the tyrant, the man of power: he claims to follow, in their pitiless fatality, the supposed laws of existence. He perceives the environment as hostile. He must surely dominate, lest he be dominated. When two boys fight and you ask one of them at random to explain why, he will inevitably say that the other started it. This is the principle of "preemptive war." The hostility appears to come from outside. But what did the first child do? Perhaps he simply said that he didn't like the color of the other one's shirt! The tyrant easily proves the hostility he perceives, for he is the one who provoked it. To dominate is to produce more of oneself around oneself, without opposition, up to the point of the purest isolation, with the result that the tyrant himself produces the hostility he supposes.

In this chapter, we will cast a first, general glance at the "machine" before studying its mechanism gear by gear. It is a first, and necessarily schematic, turn around the track. The chapters that follow will make explicit the ideas presented here without argument.

Domination and abuse of power outrage us. It is the task of the philosopher to pass from revolt to understanding. To arrive at this, one approach is to examine ancient and modern myths. Myths are sorts of visions of the relation between human beings and the "all," and this is very important, for the one who strikes first does not do so to attack, but to defend himself. The injustice that is done is first of all an injustice that is seen, and for the tyrant, the first injustice of all is "feminine." Nature, Mother Nature - it is she who is unjust, and he, the tyrant, does nothing more than struggle against this unjust nature. We may blame him for war, for poverty, and for every ecological disaster, but without him, we would all be, like primitives, at the mercy of the elements, of famines, disease and wild animals. He truly believes it. He really does think that it is through him that evolution inevitably passes and that there is no other route. This obsession has ruined his imagination, and he cannot see force as anything other than a necessity. Nature, first of all, justifies force since it is, in his view, a collection of forces.

1. The rupture of reciprocity may be due to the feeling of hostility

There may have existed, before the tyrant, a confident woman and man. This is the myth of Eden.

As long as nature is viewed positively, humans count on her, and seek a balance between her and the other components of life. Invention remains at the service of an end: to arrange, along with Mother Nature, an improvement of life while respecting a patently obvious interdependence (acclimation). In this "Eden," relative, to be sure, the reciprocity characteristic of nature still constituted the integrating motor of the values of a society. But suddenly, Mother Nature came to appear fundamentally hostile. Humans expelled themselves from "Eden." In the face of this hostility, humans no longer conduct a dialogue with nature; they defend themselves against an enemy.

The first step would consist, then, of a rupture of reciprocity. What faces me is no longer a subject I can get along with, but a force to defend myself against. The dialogue is finished, and the action becomes unilateral. Reality then splits into two components of a radically different nature: mind-body, thought-matter, subject-object, etc. The first component (mind, thought, subject) is active, intelligent, and free; the second (body, matter, object) is passive, mechanical, and predetermined. Since the second component is judged to be passive and receptive like a screen, the first component is projected on matter, nature, the body, the object. It then becomes logical, inevitable, desirable, and unavoidable, that the mind will seek to dominate matter, nature, the body, the object. Having left Eden behind, Adam and Eve are duty-bound to dominate nature.

Let us leap ahead several millennia and come to the popular medieval image of a "mystic" struggling against the "temptations" of his nature and of his body. As long as he believes that his body's health is a precondition for his peace of mind, he can still maintain a convivial and fulfilling relationship with his body and with matter. But how can this balance be preserved if the body and the gravity of matter have become things to dominate (and not interlocutors to dialogue with?) Sooner or later, the mystic will view his body as hostile to the elevation of his mind when he perceives all its resistances as affronts. Grace against gravity! He will treat his body as an enemy (something to subdue). Now, no enemy is good unless dead or reduced to the purest obedience. This "mystic's" first error was to separate reality into two components that are totally dissymmetrical and thus unsuited to reciprocity. The mind's other is not a valid interlocutor, but a thing to control. The second error follows: the passive component, the body, becomes like a receptive screen. It begins to reflect hostility and it is the body which becomes Satan. And you must defend yourself against Satan.

This "mystical" excess appears quite naïve to us today, yet it is, however, the perfect image of our relationship with nature. The human is the mind, nature is the body, and the dialogue is broken off since nature is not in fact like us, mind. Nature resists us; it doesn't bend to our will. In this respect, it is hostile. So let us dominate its mechanism.

How is it that humanity has come to this dissymmetry vis-à-vis what Sophocles calls the "earth goddess?" As much as we laugh at the obvious masochism of a mystic like John of the Cross or Marie de l'Incarnation, just as much do we treat our "commonbody," nature, like a thing to subject to the service of our ideals (the most materialistic and commercial.) Collectively, we are masochistic mystics. Didn't Hamlet, whose mother was wicked, say: "It appears to me that my misfortune only illustrates more vividly the common lot, an aspect of every man's condition. For don't we all have a bad mother, who is unnatural Nature."

Little is needed to break humans' confidence in nature; all that is required is a change in perception. There have always been storms, volcanoes, and predators. But faced with the disproportion between humans and their Mother - Nature, so-called primitive humans logically chose prudence. Faced with the earth's immensity, they naturally

gave the benefit of a doubt to she who preceded and surrounded them. Humans sought to understand nature's "resistances." They gradually developed tools for comprehension (what we call a primitive and pantheistic religion.) It would be a long wait yet for the strange knot of consciousness, the astonishing distortion of thought that - once formed - would enable those little, in reality, those miniscule humans, to begin to judge their giant and all-enveloping mother, to regard her as fundamentally matter, that is as resistance to their intentions.

In modern societies, the most obvious sign of the rupture of reciprocity vis-à-vis nature appears in the word "object." (*Dictionnaire Robert*: What is given by experience, (and) exists independently of the mind. Object by opposition to (a) subject which thinks). When whatever was exterior to the human being became "object," non-reciprocity was ratified. Since that time unilaterality forms the logical basis of our value system. We no longer give it a thought. The exterior world, nature, anything other than me, other than my mind, became in the fourteenth century, for purely methodological reasons (under the influence of William of Ockham), an "object," and this was no simple play on words, but the establishment of a lasting change. Since that time, we suppose that the objects in this world are unlike us, that they are fundamentally different, that they are incapable of thinking while we, on the other hand, do think. Before this, humans naturally believed that what was exterior to them was similar to them (natural hypothesis). They imagined the world to be greater than themselves, intelligent, more or less free, passionate, and full of good or bad intentions. It was necessary to negotiate with nature, enter into dialogue with her, beg her to spare us, etc. For "moderns," this anthropomorphism is only projection of man onto nature. To free ourselves of that projection, it would be enough, according to them, to reverse it, to accept the minimal hypothesis (Ockham's razor) and suppose that what is exterior to us does not think.

Granted, for William of Ockham, this hypothesis was meant to be methodological. He believed, correctly, that our action on nature would be more effective were we to suppose that nature is only an object reducible to mathematical regularities. Prayer and negotiation had done little to relieve humanity from nature's harshness. They had to stop being at its mercy. This hypothesis became an ideology, however. In order not to be dominated by nature, we have ended up by wanting to dominate her.

Science needs to begin by excluding the intelligence of its object. As long as its hypothesis is methodological, we are clearly in the rational world of science. If, however, this becomes an assertion which influences all our relations with nature and results in a spirit of domination, then we are no longer dealing with science, but with scientism, with ideology. Recall what Socrates thought of the man without wisdom: he believes that he has understood the world, that the world is his thing and that this gives him the right to do with it what he wants. To paraphrase Goethe, the tyrant is easily recognized by the fact that "the world is his world." Scientism is not science, but an ideology in the service of domination just as religions most often serve domination to the great detriment of their founders.

2. Misogyny is perhaps more intimately linked to domination than we believe it to be.

The fate allotted to women is not independent, perhaps, of the fate assigned to the goddess Mother Nature, become an object of exploitation. We are nature's children. We are first of all, then, ourselves a projection of Mother Nature, and we are, in microcosm, Nature herself (how could it be otherwise?). But perhaps Nature does not seek to dominate us! Yes, she does resist us, however. Thus it becomes easy to lapse into hostility and imagine our Mother-Origin as a cruel stepmother. If someone succumbs to the sentiment, his confidence immediately turns to distrust and a powerful

feeling of hostility takes hold between himself and nature. The easiest thing to do, then, is to reverse this perspective, make nature the object of our projections and reduce it to the state of a mechanism that can be mastered.

What frightens us is the creativity inherent in maternity, perhaps. Who can know what will come out of a cosmic womb or a woman's imagination! From antiquity to modern times, and in the Middle Ages in between, this fear of feminine creativity is omnipresent. As for men, it is on the predictable that they seem to rely. Like Descartes, they seek to remove creative intelligence from space and time, in order to reduce space-time to the state of a machine. Yet Mother Nature remains forever unpredictable and for the tyrant, the unpredictable is fundamentally the enemy of his power (since power is precisely the ability to determine a future that is to our liking).

It must be said that nature's unpredictability is worrisome. Nature is so much more immense than we. This worries us but fascinates us also. We oscillate between fear and rapture. A friend recently related to me his love of hurricanes: "I was in Florida. A hurricane was predicted, forecast, and it was recommended that we evacuate. I decided to stay in spite of all this. The wind rapidly grew furious. I looked out through a crack in the panelling. My heart swung between sublime respect and overwhelming terror. I felt minuscule, and I felt invulnerable. For a moment, I was confident, though I imagined that the storm would sweep me away. I surrendered to the wind. The emotion was mellow, as if I were going to participate in something grand, as if I were going to stop being little because I would be absorbed by something great. The next moment, fear left me rooted to the spot. I saw my body as a twig that any little thing could pulverize. I wanted to go outside, even if it meant being swept off by the wind. I wanted to hide in a concrete bunker even if it meant being imprisoned there forever."

All of the ethical question is there: to open up to mystery or imprison oneself in a closed value system. The boundary between these two conditions is so thin and so delicate, its importance is so great, that it is jealously guarded by any human being who wishes to cultivate his or her consciousness and his or her powers of thought. Such a person loves to frequent that confusing border. All great literature plays around it.

A confident attitude permits dialogue. Confidence is an integrative, not an exclusive value. It allows reciprocity. Attracted by nature emotionally, I want to make her acquaintance. Here science is possible. I accept the rules of science's methodological hypothesis because, on another level, I feel the desire to know what surpasses me. Nature enchants me and it is for that reason that I want to uncover it step by step. I have always found that attitude among the great scientists.

It is doubtless the loss of this basic confidence that has created the idea of scientism, which maintains that now it is up to us and us alone to take the lead and the only thing nature need do is watch out. The compulsion toward force results, I believe, from a shrivelling of the mind around a defensive, almost military purpose: to protect oneself against a primordial enemy: Mother Nature. The man of power may be the result of a shift from a greater reason (Nature) to a smaller (self). No longer am I measured by the great, it is I who measure the great. "Me, I possess the whole world," a man of power exclaims in Balzac's works. And the other answers: "Me, I devoured it!"

Confidence and distrust are not equal attitudes: confidence is necessary for experience, and it opens on the real; distrust tends to close values in on themselves, to isolate the mind in its own dynamic. A confident child projects, dangerously no doubt, his or her own goodness on the other, but this leads him or her to enough openness to ascertain whether he or she was wrong or right. A distrustful child projects his or her hostility on the other and if this hostility is too strong, he or she can

no longer experience the other. In brief, confidence may be at the origin of open and integrating values, values conducive to authority, while distrust may lead to closure. Confidence in the feminine, in the creative force, presents itself as a door that opens to enchantment and discovery. Distrust of the feminine, and thus of our origin, imprisons us.

Yet, the man of power would not exist, were he not in some way seductive. The future he has in mind, and that he proposes to us, is very seductive, and he thinks he can produce it by some kind of coup d'etat against Mother Nature. Balzac said of the man of power:

I saw a great shadow. Standing, with a passionate air, this soul devoured the spaces with his gaze, the feet remaining bound by power... I recognized a man ... Through each particle of time, he seemed to feel, without making a single step, the fatigue of crossing the infinity which separated him from the heaven he gazed at without ceasing.

The man of power sees the world he wants and not, any longer, the world he tramples underfoot. The difficult thing for the ordinary man is not to refuse to be trampled on, but to refuse his "heaven."

For the moment we don't know whether it is humanity or nature that will get out of it alive! And in spite of all our criticism, if the man of power is there, it is no error, but an "epoch," a sort of adolescent crisis which, alas!, drags on because it is involved in a repetitive vicious cycle. What is worrisome is the fixation. As in all the epochs which persist despite the worst contradictions, we must assess the fixedness of our obsession.

Once it is enclosed in the value system, the man of power's perceived and projected hostility amplifies itself to the point of paranoia. It follows what is basically an amplifying process, a process whose characteristic is neither to "regulate" itself or be "regulated." Any force opposing it starts it up again. It is essentially a process of "racing out of control," of intensification. This process begins with the very small step that Socrates calls the "loss of first wisdom," the loss of "learned ignorance," the illusion that what we know is reliable and sufficient to judge nature and other civilizations. "The wisest among you," Plato tells us, is he who, like Socrates, acknowledges that his wisdom is nothing."

The man of power is obviously right. He proves it himself. Once he has created misfortune, the process appears irreversible. Once the empire (*imperium* signifies supreme power) has covered a great battlefield with blood, burned the harvests, raped the women and disemboweled the children, who can say that nature is good?

3. It is not a question of dominating nature in fact, but of enjoying the illusion of domination.

For civilizations based on force, it is not important that nature be actually dominated. The idea would be ridiculous: how can a human being conquer a universe whose energies extend over a diameter of fifteen billion light-years? How could a mother that colossal be conquered? The important thing is to be in a self-centered state of admiring our power for its own sake, and not for its effects. Domination does not aim to master nature; it aims above all to enjoy its power. As for a drug addict, the important thing is not to make reality conform to our will, but to believe that we have succeeded, to create and maintain the illusion of effectiveness. The best means of accomplishing this consists in making the real inaccessible, so that no reality can challenge our illusion of power. May everyone see what I want to see! Such is the only goal. The world may fry in the sun or be swept away by a thousand hurricanes,

and I will still see the splendor of my techniques. I will have poisoned the air, packed millions of people together in a suffocating city, created ultra-resistant diseases, destroyed thousands of animal species, produced floods and numerous catastrophes, allowed billions of human beings to die of hunger, set into motion an irreversible warming of the planet, and I will still be convinced of the wonders of my power over the world.

This is why all the techniques which ought to meet our needs are oriented, as soon as they are manipulated by the man of power, to create an illusion of victory and of superpower, and not to satisfy needs that are the slightest bit real. The best thing is to arrange it so that our needs match our techniques. All of a sudden, I need to drive a car with three hundred horsepower and not just get around, suddenly I need a prestigious house and not just a place to stay, suddenly I need fat, sugar, alcohol and drugs, and not just to eat and drink, and if my tastes are incompatible with ecology, social justice, and even my own health, that is just too bad.

The idea is not to conquer, but to keep the emotion of victory alive. No matter what the facts and the true needs are, what counts is to create the illusion of victory. After Hiroshima, they still spoke of a victory. Just as we hoisted a new terror over our heads, we celebrated the end of the Japanese empire! The more a man is rich and comfortable, safe in his ranch, his big car, and behind his Home Box-office, the less he is in contact with what might belie this vision of victory. What need does he have to know the consequences of his acts? The one who lives with his idols, at their level, truly doesn't need the real any longer. He is sufficient unto himself. Those who dominate in this world are no longer of this world; they live on top of skyscrapers, on luxurious islands, behind laptops and columns of figures, there where the world can touch them no longer. They serve their idols, and that is enough for them. And those who see and touch suffering - their words have lost all power long ago.

No sooner has empire entered the world than it becomes all - religion, myth, science and art. Everything justifies it. To be sure, outside its view, small groups are quietly building the civilization that will follow ours. But let's not speak of that now. Let us tighten our analysis instead.

CHAPTER 3: THE STRUCTURE OF POWER

Will burns us and power destroys us. A system is an immense being, almost like God. It has its providence, its views, its intimate thoughts, its destiny which it unceasingly obeys. Men enter its moral world ... Balzac

This chapter makes up the theoretical core of this book. The other chapters will put this core into practice and will, above all, go deeper into the dynamics of the structure.

1. The driving force of the structure of power rests principally in the refusal of responsible freedom.

When we speak of the structure of power, we are not talking about an individual, one person who commands, or who has been appointed or elected, or who has accumulated substantial capital. We are not thinking of individual "masters of the world." No! Those who have acquired force, that is to say the means of imposing their interests through dissuasion, rewards, and manipulation, have followed precise procedures. They occupy definite positions. They are seated somewhere on a carousel much vaster than they, and that they don't know how to control. In that machine there are servants, soldiers, counselors, flatterers, auditors, victims, consumers, investigators, bureaucrats, technicians, scientists, priests, bishops, ambassadors, hangers-on ... It is no use paying more attention to those who think they command than to those who think they obey, for they are at the same level of unconsciousness, just as "irresponsible" as the others. Perhaps even more irresponsible!"

It appears to us to be just as simplistic to focus only on the dialectic between master and slave. This is only a part of the great wheel. A moralistic attitude toward the "rich" and the "powerful" is actually part of the process that works in power's favor. He or she who complains about "masters of the world" is in the process of proving to him or herself that they really are "masters of the world." They are justified by the complaint. There is no retreat. The "machine" of power is a system, a structure, and this structure enlists even its "enemies," the "adversaries," the "terrorists." They, too, contribute to this mechanism. Nothing is more useful to the "machine" than those who blow themselves up out of hatred, vengeance or despair. They legitimize repression.

The structure appears invulnerable, without a brain, without a soul, and - above all - without a leader. No one leads it, but everyone serves it. There are, certainly, some changes in role sometimes: some who are powerless become powerful, and some who are powerful become powerless; the left turns right, the right turns left; the executioners change into victims and the victims into executioners, but this only reinforces the machine. Rotations and revolution make up part of its movement, of its mechanism. Within it, everything turns and turns over wonderfully well. And it is certainly not a plot. On the contrary, it is fed by all the plotters in the world, as much by those who plot for it as by those who plot against it. The only thing that curbs it, and then only locally and for a very short time, is the rise - so rare, alas! - of a just human being. When this happens, yes!, it coughs, quavers and grows pale, but then recovers, massacres the careless one, devours his name, hijacks his values, transforms him into an idol and continues its rotation.

To be sure, as our conscience awakens, we must fight with every means at our disposal to bring down that "beast" which feeds on human beings and their brains, pollutes the earth and kills by the millions. Yet all these battles will be more or less co-

opted. For each person, the important thing is to stay afloat, raise one's consciousness and learn to tremble with indignation without losing it in revolt. The machine can only grow bigger. This is its weak point. The expansion of the machine comes from its having lost control of its own movement. It can only bolt like a horse, conquer, swell up, colonize, put on a weight that its legs cannot carry and finally, collapse under its own poundage while causing enormous damage.

The structure lives and develops thanks to a simple principle: individual indignation is not transformed into collective indignation, the wisdom of an individual does not immediately produce the wisdom of the whole. Between the two is the enormous delay of the collective, a delay that is so essential for the practice of personal freedoms. If the rising of one automatically brought about the rising of the others, we could rightly suspect that freedom was no more than a social movement, a gregarious reflex. Wisdom would then be a force similar to the others. We would obey wisdom as we would a force. There would be a contradiction in terms (since, in fact, the essential quality of wisdom is to be born, to live, and to create with the minimum of fame and the maximum of authority, that is to say, with the core self's free consent). This is not the case. Personal freedom is free of collective freedom, and vice versa. Whether we like it or not, our collective freedom will be born from a very high level of personal consciousness. Collective freedom will emerge from consciousnesses that have attained the height necessary to recognize that my dignity is reciprocally attached to the dignity of the poorest. In brief, the responsible individual needs to raise him or herself far above dependence on others before collective responsibility can see the light of day. Between our so-fragile personal freedom and our future collective freedom the "structure of power" reigns.

2. In spite of everything, structure results from the work of consciousness on the unconsciousness of our acts.

Since time immemorial, the Chinese, the Egyptians, the Hebrews, the Greeks, the Amerindians, the Ethiopians, the Australian aborigines, the saints and the sages of every continent have tried to take hold of the work of consciousness as the sole antidote to brute force. They sought to understand what consciousness does to awaken itself to the point where it can master force. Consciousness against force - they believed in this. Individually, this mastery of force is called wisdom, collectively it has no name because it doesn't yet exist. Certain sages have spoken of the "Kingdom of God," others of "Fraternity," still others of "Noosphere," but this was only a vague aspiration, a future to be created that is impossible to proclaim before the time.

The great traditions seek to describe the work through which consciousness is prepared within the collective unconscious. Unconsciousness is what force is, the direct reign of cause over effect; consciousness tries to create authority out of freedom. Force can only act when it is hidden from consciousness. As soon as it is brought to light, force loses its power. Machiavelli, in shedding light upon the Prince, denounced him and ruined his capacity for direct action. He forced the Prince to render his strategies more complex. A little like water is structured by the river bed, the authority of consciousness obliges force to contort itself in order to attain a degree of effectiveness. Without the authority of consciousness, force would go straight as an arrow to its target. If personal consciousness did not exist, force would have no stratagems; it would feel no need to hide itself, it would be brutal. But, as we shall see, force, faced with consciousness, is very weak. That is why it makes its lies and stratagems complex. It ends up by structuring itself in a very precise way, in a way that is as homogeneous as it is incompatible with true intelligence; all it has at its disposal is the intelligence of means. In brief, it is light that organizes darkness. Thus, rereading the great traditions is the best way to rediscover the general outline of how force is worked through by consciousness.

Power consists in using energy and information with a view to attaining predefined goals, targets. A goal or a target is nothing other than an explicit intention. Suddenly, one priority takes precedence over the whole. The vision of the world focuses around objectives within reach. Peripheral vision of the entirety of things becomes blurred, but the goal becomes clear. This is the starting point for power.

All this seems so natural to us that we don't see its impact. We must make a small detour here by way of an analogy. I borrow it once again from the world of horses. When we approach a horse, the most difficult thing is to make him understand that we are not a predator. Now, our body shows by several characteristics whether or not we are a predator. I will take only one detail: we have eyes in front of our head and we can focus on a precise target. The predator does not, like the herbivore, have his feet in his food. In order to survive, it must detect a target, concentrate all its attention on it, and mobilise its energies to obtain it. The risk is the loss of peripheral vision. On the other hand, a horse possesses a very great peripheral vision, nearly 360 degrees (except for two small blind spots). This peripheral vision develops at the price of a loss of focus. It doesn't need it; all it needs to do to eat is to bend over. Its survival depends not on the ability to establish a target, but on the quality of his attention to the whole range of movements surrounding it. It must detect these movements and evaluate their danger. Its thought is called "lateral" while ours is called "targeted." The force of our concentration creates a weakness: we are deficient in attention to the whole. We can easily achieve precise results, but it is very difficult for us to evaluate the sum of the impacts of our action on the totality of the environment. We readily create unforeseen consequences that it takes us time to recognize. This is the characteristic of the predator.

Power is a mobilization of the senses, of thought and of physical energies toward a goal which is perceived as if it were a prey. To describe goals and results, one uses the verbs *have* and *possess* as if it were a matter of "obtaining" a definite future, to act in such a way that our image of the future, the future we wish for, truly subjugates the unpredictable future of the world. Our vision acts like a mold and all the future should, according to us, be molded by it. To the degree that power relies on force, it increasingly resembles a predatory act: it has to do with seizing an object, digesting it, making it ours, transforming it into what we want. Exclusive values resemble varieties of stomachs. Whatever enters an exclusive value "con-forms," is molded, becomes like the model. Whatever resists or stays outside is perceived as a prey or nothing at all.

A predator doesn't give up easily. We know that a tiger, for example, exhausts so much of its strength in pursuing a target that it can only fail four or five times. After that, it no longer has the energy to hunt successfully. That is why a tiger applies all its strength, starting with its first try. Its concentration is total, and its peripheral vision reduced to almost nothing. Likewise, when power relies on force, its peripheral vision is inversely proportional to the clearness of its target. Power tends to perceive everything as a means toward an end. Other men and other women are only partners in the hunt, and if they are not, they are targets.

Nevertheless, the consciousness that targets a goal (the intentional consciousness) is worked upon by another consciousness that surrounds it. The target-bound intentional consciousness is so to speak unconscious (impulsive, Freud would say). By itself, it cannot call itself into question. But man is not a predator like the others. He is inhabited by a clearer consciousness. To view oneself as a predator is a human characteristic. To view oneself as a predator is to see oneself as in danger as soon as we place the other in danger. In reality, the hunter does endanger the prey he is pursuing; however, if he loses his peripheral vision (encompassing consciousness), he

stops seeing the potential dangers in the environment (a cliff, a ferocious animal, his own exhaustion, etc.). It is then that this increase in the danger originally caused by endangering the prey awakens his peripheral consciousness, his encompassing consciousness. Because of this, the encompassing consciousness, that of Sophocles, begins to create a tragedy with multiple characters, a tragedy intended to make me see the danger of putting the world in danger.

In this chapter, we will restrict ourselves to one of many descriptions of a process leading to the structure of power. The processes leading to the structure of power are historical and thus innumerable. We will be content for the moment with a rough description. The reader will no doubt find this description very dense and a little abstract. The chapters that follow will add more practical and contemporary examples. It seemed to us essential to make a preliminary rough outline of the origin of the structure of power so as to bring out an overall, 360 degree vision we will return to later in greater depth and with applications.

3. The structure of power: a tragedy with six characters that becomes a ritual by repetition.

Predation, that transformation of the world into an object of appetite, creates a complex play of relations that warps social connections and distorts the social bond. The master-servant relationship is only one of the deformities of the social bond resulting from this process. The structure of power takes the form of intersecting antagonisms such as that between the ruler (master) and the producer (slave), the idol and the pariah, and the priest and the warrior.

One structure seemed to me to stand out. For a long time I have observed it in families, institutions, and organizations large and small. I believe I can catch sight of it in the mega-empire unfolding under our eyes, the one that many wrongly term the "American empire" (its roots are global). Here is the general outline:

The priest	The idol
The servile producer	The dominating ruler
The pariah	The warrior

Anthropology speaks of three functional categories characteristic of Indo-European cultures: production, priesthood, and war. Production has to do with crafts, agriculture, livestock-breeding, services, commerce, technology - in sum, everything which concerns the market economy (monetary or through barter) but production also includes the non-market economy such as childcare, home maintenance, etc. The producers are those who make something. Almost everyone is a producer. The priesthood administers the rituals, the sacred, and morality. The priests are the mediators of the invisible and the mediators of the idols (exclusive values). War channels the excess of force and violence toward the exterior. The warriors kill and pillage to avoid internal wars. Within and between these functional anthropological categories dynamics develop out of which emerge the dominating ruler (the masters of production), the idol (the most concrete possible blend of the diverse exclusive values guaranteed by the priest) and the pariah (all those individuals designated to suffer the sacrificial rituals so necessary for the exercise of power).

It is not easy to describe the genesis of this structure. We have to simplify, cheat a bit and hypothesize the existence of a doubtless somewhat mythical "primitive" man (a

kind of aboriginal who presumably existed before the machine of power's arrival). Starting from this "primitive" man, we can imagine what led the organizations of power to take on the structure of dominating ruler - servile producer, idol-pariah, priest-warrior. This is, of course, an act of the imagination. We have never been present at the birth of a society. It is always a construction. The important thing is precisely to "construct" a tool to understand power as it is now exercised. Once the structure is established, we can attempt to better comprehend its dynamic and, by this very fact, the means of freeing ourselves from it.

"Primitives" respond to their primary needs. These are imperatives. For them, work and difficulty result from a resistance on the part of nature. This resistance is not interpreted as cruelty or ill-will; the whole of life is lived in a mode of acceptance (and not of submission). This acceptance is not an explicit choice. It appears to be, rather, an impulse of life similar to that of the baby who accepts its mother. It is not, however, an individual impulse, but a collective one, an integration into the movement of others. The person contributes to the common activity; if not, he (or she) is dead. Trust is a necessity for survival.

Gradually, consciousness comes to see what is happening. I see myself in action with the others. I see "us" work. Just as I see the tool in the stone, I can see the organization in the group. The intelligence perceives organization itself. The consent to its efficiency is tacit, but real. Eating is essential, after all. It seems efficient to project our different ways of working on one or two persons. We expect that person to synthesize them spontaneously. This reduces discussions to a minimum and increases communication through action to the maximum. One person will create unity better than three or four could. The number of chiefs will tend toward one for a given activity (for example, the hunt). The ways of working and the goals will remain heterogeneous, however. The chief of any given area of activity has the role of integrating diversity in the coordinated actions (and not in the homogeneous thoughts). Here we are in a collaborative mode and the chief is an authority. His authority is based on diverse personal qualities such as the importance he has for the group, sincerity, congruence and many others. His authority is above all based on each person's judgment and mainly on the quality of the social bond that unites the group. The chief is the one who perceives this bond and adjusts to it. Power is not yet an autonomous machine; on the contrary, it results from the channeling of intelligence.

All this reinforces the social bond. As long as each one has a status that respects his or her dignity, the group's solidarity (the ship's hull) holds fast. And as long as the group's solidarity is sufficient, wars are rare. But if the social "unevenness," the gap between the dignity of some and the dignity of others becomes too great, solidarity breaks and the structure of power is transformed into a machine that is hazardous because it is blind.

For dignity to survive, each one must retain his or her thoughts and judgement, and ceaselessly verify whether or not the chief is correct in his syntheses. Consciousness, thought, and judgement are obviously part of the value of being. All those who have being have the right to think and to decide. Alas! as soon as there is a break in reciprocity within the structure of power, some will lose their dignity. Reciprocity allows everyone to resist, to participate, and to exercise their minds and their freedom. Yet, if one has the right to decide and not the other, if the chief's decision is no longer the synthesis of everyone's decisions but "his" decision to the detriment of others who no longer have the right to speak, then this rupture of reciprocity propels the structure of power toward serious imbalance. Solidarity splits apart.

4. Multiple processes transform the authority of the chief into the domination of the tyrant.

Let us examine how this occurs. The first step probably comes from a weakness in relations. Sooner or later someone is confronted with a serious weakness of authority because he sees himself as socially fragile, but denies this fragility. This person decides to rely on force to compensate for this weakness. The others tolerate this and, to buy peace, more or less shut their eyes to this first distortion of the social bond. The structure of power that had been built on authority veers away from its base and begins to be erected on the principle of force and thus on a principle of non-reciprocity and non-solidarity. This first step very likely stems from a lack of social vigilance, a carelessness in the face of force.

Many processes may lead to the structure of power. Let us follow a rather common example: a socially fragile individual relies on force, harassing a group. One of several effective means of attempting to reintegrate him is to appoint him as chief of a given domain, a puppet chief, to be sure (but he must not be told this). In this way we deflect his aggressiveness toward a goal. The individual attacks others less, becomes useful, and his status is improved. He is able to recover his social equilibrium and the trick appears to have worked. Alas, this puppet chief may also end up taking his role seriously. He puts all his energy toward reaching the target. He wants to win. He has, moreover, everything to gain and nothing to lose. So he applies a lot of energy toward attaining a result that the group wants. It is an obsession for him. In regard to the amount of energy, the group appears to be the winner, for this man dedicates himself to the goal relentlessly, but in regard to intelligence, everyone loses, for his aggressiveness inhibits the others' creativity. If this sham chief wins out over the true chief (the one who assumes authority), the structure of power goes off the rails, passing from authority to force, and, because reciprocity is broken, solidarity is also.

In the violent families I have examined as a social worker, this first misstep appeared commonplace, almost habitual. The one who was most fragile psychologically ends up as the family dominator. In a number of tribes, the fragile members are, at first, highly praised in group meetings where everyone recalls the past successes of these troubled tribesmen. They are excluded, however, if the ritual doesn't work. Some survive this exclusion, in which case they are reintegrated into the tribe as shamans or something else. If this former outcast has gotten hold of himself, if he has survived by mastering his fears, he becomes an authority and the group is that much better off. But if he returns full of resentment, and has survived solely through the compulsion of fear, stubbornness, and fierce determination, then he places the group in danger. Force has allowed him to survive, so he risks relying on force to make a social place for himself rather than relying on collaborations with the group.

The chief is not only the maker of synthesis, but the object of projections also. He is a symbol. Each person projects on him the image he or she has of the group. If the group sees itself as weak, and thus constrained to use force, the group will choose the most aggressive as chief. Power veers off in the direction of force. The group chooses such a chief because he represents its unavowed deficiency. The chief makes a fine family portrait, but it is a negative portrait. Everyone recognizes in him the deformity of the social bond. In brief, he has the advantage of the negative. It is his weaknesses which attract. We love him because he is not superior to us. He is the smallest group portrait. If he is a figurehead chief and if his election remains at a ritual level (as in the case of the orgies of antiquity), the group can see and resolve the problem of its social bond. But if the figurehead chief assassinates authority (potentially or otherwise), we are in the first act of a tragedy. A tyrant has just been born. This type of power emerges from the symbolic or real murder of authority. Authority is killed by force. A number of myths recount this parricide.

Everyone appears to do exactly as the figurehead chief desires, because they know

that he is able to mobilize the group's aggressiveness (but this is at the expense of the group's intelligence). Everyone wants to profit from his aggressiveness, but no one wants to be subjected to it. The chief is assigned the task of integrating individual feelings. The figurehead chief integrates the repressed hurt, suffering, and aggressiveness, but into all this he will gradually inject his personal intentions. When the goals he sets forward are no longer a reading of the group's needs, his own dynamic contaminates the synthesis. If the figurehead chief does no more than assume the role assigned him in the ritualization of the negative, he contributes to the social bond's survival. Otherwise, the group turns toward the weakest side, in other words, the side of force.

To this another distorting factor can be added. As the organization of work begins to allow a little free time, the producers project on to the ruler what they would like to be, their desire to at least partially escape from the necessities of existence, to enjoy life more. The chief has as his second goal to integrate within himself an idea of happiness, an idea of enjoyment of life. Consequently, he is expected to take the lion's share. He disposes of the best cuts of meat, and the others rejoice with him in this. This is the other occasion for collaboration. The ruler will be tempted at this point to desire the advantages of his role without assuming all its responsibilities.

Finally, a third agent of distortion can be added. The ruler is the recipient of all the projections. Because of this, the group will project on him its image of the relationship it maintains with nature. If it perceives nature as hostile, it will look for this hostility in the chief, and will recognize it in the form of his aggressiveness. The hostility the chief receives from the group stimulates his aggressiveness. This aggressiveness corresponds to what the group feels in regard to nature. The people say, nature is like that, our chief is like that; he is in its image, capable of fighting against it. In the end, the most cruel chief may well be admired and desired. He is in the image of the image man makes of nature. If nature is cruel, we had better oppose it with the cruelest among us.

The chief, we said, is the one the group designates to be the bearer of happiness. He is assigned to "happiness" on the others' behalf. He is installed in a little heaven of sorts. He is served and pampered; people do for him what we would like done for ourselves. He is obviously in danger of abusing his powers. If he is fragile and consequently oriented toward force, he avoids self-doubt and denies his weakness. With all his strength, he denies his anxiety and his doubts about himself. This leads him to appropriate what has only been attributed to him. Intelligence is projected on him, and he imagines that he is intelligent. Happiness is projected on him, and he wants more of it. Like an alcoholic, he becomes an abyss that nothing can fill. For the producers, it is no longer a question of working for the collective good, but of serving an insatiable man. We will see later on why a family, a group, a nation, or an entire planet allows itself to be taken in by this game to the point of believing that power rests in the tyrant (and not in the group).

The more the difference between the ruler and producer in status, privilege, and aggressiveness is accentuated, the more hostility develops. The more this hostility develops, the more it contaminates the relationship with the world. The ruler is abusive, but it is nature that is viewed as hostile. A vicious circle is set in motion. We must understand that the producer-servant and the ruler-tyrant are born at the same time. Before, there were only confident collaborators working with authorities who were usually diverse.

The producer and the ruler define each other by antagonism. Because of this, the producer begins to accumulate frustrations against the ruler. He projects these frustrations on the ruler. The ruler splits in two: himself and the projected image. Certainly he does "assume" happiness, that is his mission, but the risk is that he may

also represent failure and misfortune. When all goes well, he takes credit for the result: "I have succeeded," he says to himself. In the case of failure, the risk is that the group may say: "You have failed." If needs are not satisfied, if the duel with nature grows harder, if the goals are not reached, the ruler is pointed out as the cause and he is threatened. The more he appropriates happiness and effectiveness, the more he is chosen to be identified with the cause of misfortune. He wants very much to take credit for the successes, but he would also like to avoid responsibility for the failures. An activity that producers take great comfort in is complaining about their hardships and blaming the ruler for them. As a result, it becomes imperative for the ruler to transfer this negative projection on something else and why not on someone! This will be the pariah's function.

5. The pariah and the idol: sacrifice and ideology are necessary for power.

Obviously, the ruler appropriates the responsibility for results only if the producer disappropriates him or herself of this responsibility. As Plotinus said: "If the evil rule, it is through the cowardice of their subjects." The servile producers are glad to get rid of their negative responsibilities by placing them on the ruler. They accept his command. They refuse to take the initiative so as to better free themselves from unhappiness by placing it on him. Each side understands the other; they are accomplices. The antagonistic poles are strengthened by opposition. In this way, the polarization happiness-unhappiness can only be accentuated. The antagonism of servile producer-dominating ruler cannot exist without creating the pariah. The triangle of servile producer-dominating ruler-pariah is inevitable. The pariah arrives to unburden the ruler of his negative dimension.

But the chief cannot discharge the negative on the pariah without projecting, in some way at least, the positive on something else. To continue carrying it alone would condemn him. What chief could long remain at the level of what was expected of him! He must reproject elsewhere the ideal expected of him. This is the function of the idol (reservoir of exclusive values.) The ruler will seek to project on an idol the ideal he cannot bear. It is preferable to lift the idol to the Heavens. The idol lifted up to Heaven can still be controlled (it is preferable to have an abstract rival). On the other hand, it is advantageous to cast the negative on concrete human beings. A flesh-and-blood pariah can drain off toward himself the excessive negative energy.

The idol rapidly assumes its autonomy. This is the birth of religions (in the negative sense of manipulators of exclusive values). It is necessary, certainly, to construct a compensation for this hostile world, a place of hopes and explanations, a place which brings happiness, which "previews" it, which "shows it in advance." This Heaven will resemble the attics where the defined forms are stored, the exclusive values: beauty, goodness, justice, truth, law, etc., inasmuch as they are exclusive values.

In this way, the ruler is relieved of this weight. He, too, will project himself on the idol, and receive himself back from it again. From now on, the idol commands him. He "receives" from on high the words of direction. He is obedient and submissive to the demands of the ideals. Yet, as Machiavelli says, he is not bound by these ideals. He is not obligated to conform to them. The idol is a utilitarian "transcendent" which allows the ruler to escape from the exclusive values, in other words, to disobey the moral laws. His politics become "amoral."

Conversely, the pariah, the being out of Hell, is designated to bear the shame, the sorrow, the negative, everything that would necessarily reflect on the ruler. He is chosen from among the producers. In many cases, he is chosen because he appears strange. He is not interested in the chief's goals, nor in the ideals of the idol. It is very much to the producers' advantage to participate in the designation of the pariah. They

are easily made accomplices. The pariah gathers up a part of the unhappiness that it would otherwise be up to the producers to assume. The pariah relieves the producer of his offenses. If someone is not enthusiastic about producing, if he or she is gifted with a peripheral vision and an "oblique" intelligence, he or she is a good candidate. Pariahs have little market value. This is one of their characteristics. They have all the less market value because they hesitate to enter into production and the service of the chief. Sometimes their only value is their existence ... they are handicapped physically, psychologically or socially. They are those who do not correspond to exclusive values.

When the ruler appropriates the good (which he retransfers to the idol) and defends himself against evil (which he funnels on to the pariah), he induces in this way a definite polarization between the idol (good) and the pariah (evil). The good becomes increasingly clear and distinct. It serves to separate good and evil persons. It is the totality of all exclusive values. The idol even becomes so exclusive that soon no one can escape from "sin." Who can perfectly follow the Law of the idol? Who, in the Pharisaic Church or in the Catholic Church, in the Calvinist Church or the Lutheran, can be without sin? Who, in the Church of the media beauty of the stars, can compare with Madonna or with Brad Pitt? It is the essence of the idol to be above men and women and thus the idol generates guilt (if not, the ruler would lose face, he who must be equal to the good). Guilt adds to hostility. It reinforces duty to the idol. The more scorn directed against the self increases, the more it is necessary to initiate sacrificial rituals that it is the pariah's place to assume.

As hatred of the pariah increases, so does a hostile vision of the world. All during the ritual sacrifice, the producer is face to face with his own hatred, his own hostility, his own fear, his own guilt, his own anxiety (under a form projected on the pariah). The pariah is nothing other than the mirror of the worst in each and every one. He shows each person his or her own image, an unmasked image, raw and crude. For at bottom, each in his or her own way is a victim of the tyrant. The less a person wants to appropriate his or her negative feelings, the more she or he projects and reprojects them on the pariah and, accordingly, the more these emotions appear in the pariah clearly, and in flesh and blood. The pariah accumulates the negative emotions of the group. He does it so well that he may end up by making the group see what it feels obscurely: it is itself entirely the pariah, it is itself the shame, the scorn, the stain entirely. The pariah is the group's truth, in any case, the negative truth that the group does not want to see at any price.

6. The priest directs the sacrifices. Nonetheless, war quickly becomes an indispensable outlet.

The sacrifice of the pariah must be mastered and ritualised, for if not, there is internal warfare. To maintain the group's unity (social bond) despite the ever-increasing tension between the idol and pariah is no small affair. Each individual must restrain the energy flung at the pariah at least a little, for if not, this energy might fall back on his face and his consciousness (for we all know that we can become pariahs at any moment.) For the persecutors, the important thing is to free themselves from the guilt of persecution. The guilt of sacrificing the pariah must be assumed. This will be the function of the priest. It is necessary to designate a particular type of individual to assume the task of becoming familiar with the idol, nourishing it, defining it, serving it and organizing the sacrificial rituals. This master of the invisible will assume the chore of transferring good on to the idol and evil, on the pariah. This strange master of paradox and the invisible is the priest. He must isolate the idol, establish the theory surrounding it, and experience it psychologically as well. The priest must keep good and evil separate and polarized. He will work on their internal coherence by opposing one to the other in the most radical way possible. He transforms values into the

essential tools of exclusion. Once the excluded one is named and the pariah designated, the hatred of the group must be ritualized in order to avoid a fracture of the social bond. The priest is not necessarily religious in the traditional sense of the word. Numerous perfectly secular priests today use the media to preach beauty, wealth, and happiness, to designate pariahs and publicize the sacrificial rituals. For example, certain sexologists preach the orgasm and the obligation to have an orgasm. They create guilt among those who don't attain or don't believe they attain a satisfactory performance in the matter of sexual pleasure. In this world, the men and women who have opted for chastity are ridiculed and called perverted, according to those particular rituals that place them in the stocks. Each idol brings with it a contrary idol. When a society like our own demolishes an idol, it is because it is raising up another. Secular or religious, idols travel the world designating the guilty, the abnormal and the perverted, the pariahs, in other words.

The sacerdotal triangle (ruler-priest-pariah) makes it possible to direct internal hatred. This hatred is reprojected on the idol and in this way the god of anger is born. And as we know, the god of anger demands sacrifice. The guilt attached to sacrifice is for this very reason transferred to Heaven. Now, it is in the nature of Heaven to be guilty of nothing. This is the privilege of its "transcendence." And the "transcendence" of the gods serves the "transcendence" of the ruler, his ability to have clean hands at all times.

But pay attention, if you multiply the number of pariahs, the group can break apart. To transfer a part of that energy on a symbolic lamb or ram hardly allays the latent guilt. Fortunately it is the priest who has the lamb's blood on his hands, but how does he justify himself? One of these days, a part of this guilt has to be turned outward. At one time or another, the priest must receive a "divine" order to combat an enemy. Someone outside the group will have had to begin the hostilities! Let's search for an enemy, we'll find one!

Something in every individual sees that it is cruel to make a martyr of the pariah. The producer as well as the ruler is caught in an upheaval. The more they project on the pariah, the more what they project becomes large and visible. Consciousness risks awakening. Publicized by the pariah, hostility enters the infernal circle of guilt and sacrifice. Now, guilt requires sacrifice, but sacrifice creates guilt. What is to be done? It then becomes necessary, in order to avoid the awakening of consciousness, to discharge the surplus of this hostility toward the exterior. This is the function of war.

Clausewitz defined war unsparingly thus: an act of violence intended to constrain the adversary. In war, the usual means of dissuasion, rewards and manipulation lose all moderation, for they are commanded by hostility, and not by admitted goals (which in fact aim at concealing the accumulated hostility and aggression). War has as its characteristic to eliminate the notion of "moderation." It is a form of crisis (crisis = loss of control so as to retake control). War is the feeling of hostility and the intention of hostility projected on an enemy. Once launched, it creates its own imperatives. The enemy knows that the secret intention of the attacker is his annihilation. To survive, he must destroy the assailant. Each one becomes the other's law. The two protagonists are enslaved by a single master: war. War brings with it its own autonomy, its gears turn inexorably from hatred to hatred, from vengeance to vengeance. War is an autonomous movement. It is out of control or rapidly becomes so in any case. We begin a war when we want it, we end it when we can.

War adds to the feeling of hostility. War is a diversion of aggressiveness. Hostility is projected on nature, on the environment and especially on the enemy (besides, he is always the one who started it). This hostility can tear the social bond apart if it is not projected and concentrated on the warrior. The pariah bears everyone's shame, and

the warrior bears violence in everyone's name. He submits himself to the enemy as a target so as to concentrate the enemy's violence on himself. He submits himself to his group to mobilise the violence of the group. Warriors are at the same time the bearers of the group's aggression and the targets designated to receive the enemy's aggression. They will have the task of exporting the violence of the group and of absorbing the enemy's violence. This specialization is necessary for the group's survival. Consequently, the warrior's place is to accumulate the hatred of the group, but he also represents sacrificial love at its maximum (he sacrifices himself for the group). He is a being polarized to the limit: the most negative, for it is in him that the most unmentionable passions the group is capable of accumulate; the most positive, because he dies for the values of the idol. The functional triangle of war (priest-ruler-warrior) makes it possible to export a hatred which might burst the social bond. Cohesion is assured. But the price is high. The priest will attempt to ritualize war so as to reduce its price. But it's not a simple thing ...

The following chapters will allow us to better understand this structure of power. Bear in mind for a moment that it is the expression of a disease of the social bond which destroys authority and banishes the intelligence of the group. The social bond does survive more or less, but it is mechanized. The main social binder is fear. The group is like a live wire, electrified. The machine of power can take off at any moment and drag the group into the sacrifice of pariahs and wars where it will lose all its energy.

Doubtless there are other possible structures. Moreover, in practice this structure can become infinitely complex. For example, a ruler-tyrant disguises himself as a pariah in order to use the power of self-sacrifice ("I sacrificed myself for you, so you owe me..."). The priest, the ruler and the warrior sometimes merge into one as they did in ancient Egypt, Rome or in Hitler's Germany. Nothing limits the complexity. It is, on the contrary, an advantage!

The more complicated the structure becomes, the more it thinks it can mislead consciousness. Yet the essential thing is that there be a breaking of reciprocity, a rupture of solidarity. This signifies that certain people have been degraded to the point of losing all dignity. The value of being has been abandoned along the way and functional value (the role in the structure) and market value (the value accorded this role) are the only measures sufficient to guarantee life. As for those who have no dignity, if they die of hunger, thirst, sickness or misery, so much the better!

CHAPTER 4 - THE RUPTURE OF THE BOND OF SOLIDARITY

Thanks to our techniques of communication, we will not escape globalization! Art, science, philosophy, and spiritualities circulate over the world like migratory birds. But our political, social, and economic diseases travel around the world also. The tendency toward domination, power centered on force, appears to be a global disease.

If we desire a summary of what has been said up to now, we must return to the idea that from our culture two great roots descend through history: authority and force or, put differently, wisdom and power. For centuries we have thought, and still think, that it is through fate that force directs public and political life. Wisdom reserves for itself, with plenty of effort, moreover, minuscule plots of existence in personal life. I believe that this division is no longer tenable. The military, industrial and media weapons that we have in our hands obligate us to bring wisdom into public life. I think that our possibilities for violence are so powerful that we can no longer allow ourselves to leave power in the hands of dominators who are, to a greater or lesser degree, obsessive. Wisdom is no longer a moral luxury, but a necessity for collective survival. We must pass from personal freedom to collective freedom. Ethics must become public.

1. Let us return to the idea of force and its link with the exclusive values (idols) so necessary to the sacrifice of pariahs.

Force is bending something or someone so that it (or he or she) matches a precise model. Force makes no sense if there is no model defined in advance. Exclusive values offer a model. An idol is the synthesis of exclusive values. The idol allows us to identify pariahs, beings who no longer have human dignity (read: who no longer have value on the market of production) and that it is our moral duty to sacrifice. Society is thus divided between those who are worth being fed and those who are better abandoned to poverty (poverty is the great place of sacrifice).

Pariahs are often defined by their weak market value on the market of production. Market value is an exclusive value which allows us to separate those who, it is thought, can contribute to wealth from those who cannot contribute to it. For example, the market value of a diploma comes from the demand for employment and from salaries. I am worth something to the extent that I am in demand and can lay claim to a good salary. An educational system generally aims to raise the market value of those young people who can be integrated into the production "machine." Strangely, market value is only weakly related to functional value. A farmer possesses a very great functional value. He produces the indispensable. But the structure of power can reduce this functional value to a very weak market value.

In a society based on force and domination, only "market value" has any value. The value of being is excluded to the full degree possible. Society excludes above all those who have nothing but their value of being. For example, if we were to sell at auction everything contained in a residential center for senior citizens, it's a sure bet that an orthopedic bed would sell for more than a senile old man! Why? A poor senile old man has only his value of being. However, what would we think of a fireman who, risking his life, entered a residential center in flames and, after having thrown a pleading old man on the floor, came out with his orthopedic bed? Society is as ambivalent as this! If it no longer grants any value of being to persons, it collapses. It

must constantly ritualize and cover with justifications the sacrifice of pariahs. For example, we can crowd the poorest of the poor into inflammable housing with unsafe wiring. We wait for the fire to start. Then we send firemen to save one or two. All this is shown on television entirely the wrong way around. Society is under the impression that it is sacrificing its firemen and its money ... and rids itself in this way of any guilt for the death of all those unfortunate poor people who were burnt alive.

A society centered on force excludes those who have nothing more than a value of being. These persons do have a great importance in social life, however. For example, an old man is on the point of dying after a long illness. In principle, he has no market value. He gathers his children and grandchildren. In their presence, he smiles and hopes in spite of his agony. He is transmitting to his children a confidence and a zest for life, the very energy of social life. Without this energy, social life is no longer possible, and even economic life subsides. In sacrificing the value of being, a society centered on power ends up by paralyzing even the energy of the economy.

A society centered on force excludes the value of being and this engenders two great anxieties. First of all this means that if one day I no longer have any market value, I will be rejected. Secondly, this implies something still more painful which touches on desire. We desire what has value for us. I desire a car because it has value for me. But, as it happens, certain persons are never desired, because all they have is their value of being (seriously handicapped persons, people with serious problems of mental or social health, the elderly, etc.) Imagine their suffering for a moment! Thus, if I no longer have any market value, I no longer desire myself. Every one of us knows this and feels it. A society which breaks social solidarity by excluding the value of being creates these two anxieties. To be rejected and to reject oneself, this is the pariah's lot. It is a serious blow to the social bond of solidarity because it robs certain persons of their dignity. These persons thus become pariahs. For this very reason, the whole society begins to fear losing its dignity. At any moment, a stroke, a disease, or anything at all can rob me of my market value and I will have nothing left at all any more. Living in such a society forces everyone to fight to the end to keep their market value. There emanates from this fear a survival energy (for one's own market value), and this is the petroleum of the structure of power. The producer produces to the point of losing his health because he is terrified, and rightly so, by the idea of losing his market value and being designated as a pariah.

The structure of power can only survive by sacrificing pariahs and enemies, those who within as well as without do not conform to their exclusive values.

2. But where have the sages gone?

Who is the sage, the opposite of the ruler who relies on force? It is a man or woman who has freed him or herself from force, a man or woman who keeps his or her consciousness awake. Their lamp is lit. Sages often gain authority by allowing themselves to be convinced only by what their thought and consciousness find authoritative. They haven't given in. They propose integrative values, values which, accordingly, are constructed in the interior dialogue, in dialogue with others and in concrete experience. For the sage, value of being always takes precedence over market value. Sages are thus builders of solidarity. Dissuasive force is based on fear, remunerative force is based on dependence, manipulative force is based on ignorance. The sage has freed him or herself from fear, from dependence and from ignorance. We free ourselves from fear through love, from dependence through inner and economic autonomy, from ignorance through the rigorous exercise of thought.

Sages never forget their condition of vulnerability. This leads them to reflect on the necessity of considering others and nature as worthy of care ... The first step of

wisdom is, then, empathy and compassion. The "yous" become "I" and the "I's" become "you." The "theys" then become a "we" and if this "we" succeeds in becoming universal, in other words, in curbing exclusion, humanity will awaken to the desire to look after itself. In short, sages long for solidarity more than for their personal salvation. Better said, they know that their personal salvation rests upon brotherhood.

The sage is one who has freed him or herself from power, from the need to dominate. They are thus the only ones able to master the instruments of power. They are the only ones who have power over power. As for the dominator, he is subjugated to power and is the slave of his passion.

Wisdom is a necessity today because it frees men and women, gives them integrative values and a value of being. It reestablishes solidarity. It allows us to master power. It is this alone that can get us out of our ecological, economic and diplomatic problems.

But if wisdom is so necessary, why is the sage destroyed by force every time? Why does the wise one's authority lose when confronted with the man of power's force? Why does the idea of dominating globalize faster than the idea of wisdom? The following paradox needs to be raised: as soon as a society relies on force, the other societies either defend themselves by force or die. Force is thus a disease of the social bond that spreads at lightning speed. Force requires others to use force Unless a universal consciousness is born But let's not go too quickly. Let us continue our analysis of the structure of power.

3. The predation of the world

The game of domination is played out essentially on the perceptual plane. It is first and above all a distortion of vision. The one who relies on force loses his peripheral vision, becomes blind to beings, human and otherwise, to the point of driving his ship - which is also that of others - to destruction. What is the source of this blindness? To answer this question, I will employ the following diagram:



Looking results from the application of the eye upon an object. This eye belongs to a body so complex and mysterious that it surpasses our knowledge in large part. So, too, the object belongs to the world which also is so complex and mysterious that it almost completely escapes our science. Socrates and Sophocles warned us that the first act of domination consists of thinking that the object I see amounts to nothing more than the object I know. The object is what I know about a "thing," a mystery. It is the reduction of being into this thing that I know, manipulate, and use. This is precisely the tendency of the predator: what he sees is what he can eat, incorporate, add to his knowledge, assimilate into his plans. Intellectual predation is an act of reduction: what I see is what I can contain within my thinking, as if it were a stomach. The rest does not exist. Such is the first act of domination: an intellectual predation. For Socrates, this is the loss of the first wisdom: I no longer see my ignorance, I have lost my vision as regards my ignorance, I have lost my "learned ignorance." For Sophocles, this is the first blinding of the tyrant: "what conscience sees does not exist because I do not see it."

In spite of the inevitable reduction of every act of knowledge and perception, reality, the reality of the body, the reality of the world is always there and its diversity and complexity are such that this reality escapes me almost entirely, but I don't escape this reality. This reality continues to surround me, it continues to surpass me and to define the broad lines of my fate as much as the broad lines of the fate of the world.

The sage perceives that if the eye forms the object, it is the world (the reality surrounding it) that forms the eye. Biology reminds us that, over millions of years, the eye was formed in an environment through a process at once genetic and adaptive (eco-evolutionary process). Through evolution, the bodies of animals were organized with a view to being, on the one hand, attractive to whatever is desirable and, on the other, repellent to predators. A lizard, a zebra, a fish, etc., have developed a shape, colors, and odors which constitute an optimum between attractiveness to their peers (especially potential sexual partners) and repulsiveness to predators. The body corresponds to a double dynamic: desired-desirer, predator-prey. My body has been formed by the eyes of others (friends or predators) and my body has formed my eye (and all my senses) as a function of the satisfaction of needs in a given environment. The predator's eyes were constructed for predation (focussed perception), and the herbivore's eyes were constructed for detecting danger (lateral perception)

For the reader unfamiliar with phenomenology, let us take a simple analogy to understand the six poles of the diagram: you are seated in the middle of a large concert hall. An automatic piano sits on the stage. Nothing else. Suddenly, music comes out of the piano and the whole space vibrates. From that point on, two things become obvious: music (more generally an "object" of perception) and space (more generally the "world," global nature). The "world" surrounds the "object," and the "object" develops a meaning. As Victor Hugo said: *"Dans la plaine/Naît un bruit/C'est l'haleine/de la nuit..."* (In the plain/ a sound is born/ It is the breath/ of the night). The world is global; it is composed of an infinity of possibilities. All music is possible within it. But the "world" and the "object" are not sufficient. For there to be music, meaning, in other words, a listener is necessary. Without an ear ("eye" in the diagram), there is no music. But the ear by itself does not hear music; it needs nerves, a brain, an intelligence, a consciousness, all of a human being. The ear is only one component of a whole that we call, for a maximum of simplicity, the "body." The body surrounds the ear ("eye"). But to listen to music supposes also a mental action in the body. Simplified to the extreme, mental activity joins any given heterogeneity (if there were only one note of music, there would be no music at all) to any given unity, an interpretation, an "integration." We know to what point this activity of integrating the heterogeneous (an activity requiring all the body as memory, consciousness, intelligence and action) influences perception. I perceive as a function of expectations, mood, relative capacity of musical comprehension, etc. We also know to what point the perception of music influences even the sensitivity of the "body." All three poles are, then, in constant reciprocal relationship.

In sum, the mind knows that if perception constructs the world, the world constructs the body and the eye. One of the man of power's symptoms is the loss of learned ignorance. He assimilates the other to the knowable and assimilates knowledge to utility. This leads to a confusion between the desire to know another subject and the urge to swallow a prey.

Desire is a reciprocal relation between subjects. Consequently, desire struggles with all its strength against the predator's appetites. Desire aims at emphasizing presence and banishing indifference. To be desired makes us "come into the world" (be born, in effect), brings us out of the indifferent world thanks to a look of desire. The other's desire makes me become singular. But desire requires an accurate reading of the body; it thus requires the work of the wise consciousness that Socrates speaks of.

Contrary to desire, the craving for prey aims to ingest the other, make it disappear, incorporate it into oneself. The other thus becomes a target: he, the predator, identifies with the goal of which he is the means. In the act of predation, the intentional consciousness can function and wishes to function alone, expelling the encompassing consciousness, that is, the consciousness which perceives that the whole is greater than the knowable (learned ignorance).

In the desire for a partner, interdependence and reciprocity take the form of "me *and* you:" the more you are, the more I am. The increase of your pleasure leads to the increase in my pleasure. The more creative you are, the more this brings out my creativity. The more you succeed, the more I succeed. In the craving for a prey (predation), interdependence and reciprocity disappear in the form of "me *or* you:" the more I am, the less you are. This is what the cat feels when it looks at a mouse: if you disappear into my stomach, you are nothing from now on and I am a little bit bigger. Desire has no predefined object nor even a precise goal. Desire vibrates and takes its form in the interaction of two subjects. The craving for a prey, on the contrary, puts in action a subject and an object.

The confusion between these two forms of interaction is not without consequences. This confusion constitutes a key moment in the formation of the machine of power. In the man oriented toward force, there is no desire; everything is craving for prey. The man of power assimilates what he is not, the not-me, and he mechanizes every interaction in the hope of dissolving the subjects (himself included).

Nonetheless, the encompassing consciousness is still at work (in the dark, if necessary) and it creates inversions and reversals: I am in someone else's eye what someone else is in my eye. If Jeanne is a tool for me, I am a tool for her. This inversion, this reversal gives birth to a double "I" and a double "you:" "I see myself, I see you" "you see yourself, you see me." We are, in consequence, in the world of "I see and I am seen," the world of images. As I develop the awareness that I see and am seen, there also develops an intention to appear in a certain way, in a way that is either flattering or forbidding depending on what I believe to be my interest. The innocence of the little child is then lost. I am in the world of strategies. I have strategies in regard to the exterior world and the exterior world is strategic in regard to me. In this game, the "I" and the "you" are always to some extent objects. In this space accessible to observation, human beings see themselves as vulnerable, and that is why they arrange things so as to appear either attractive or repulsive.

While this is going on, the body knows and feels in the real world, a world which far surpasses what I see or can see, a world which surpasses images. The body is in the world and, in this world, it is a small, fragile and dependent being. "Things and events happen to it," Marivaux said. In the world which surrounds me, human beings see themselves as vulnerable not only to each other, but also, and much more so to the world, to nature. I depend on the "measureless" world that surrounds me, I depend "measurelessly" on the too-great world around me and I do not discern its "intentions." I don't even know if it has intentions.

In a diffuse way, the man who has, in a state of hostility, gone off the rails toward force believes that the world is advancing toward death. He believes that the world gives birth to beings the better to do away with them. He does not feel that he is the world's partner, but its prey. For him, the world is the ultimate predator. "The earth will devour me," he says to himself. If an emancipation from the machine of power does exist, it would consist of reversing this impression of hostility, of re-establishing confidence by the most direct possible experience of interior reality and exterior reality.

It is no easy thing. If I perceive the world as a collection of prey, I cannot perceive

myself as other than a prey for the world. In the face of a predator like the world, flight is impossible. The only safety consists of turning toward the predator and trying to decode his "laws" so as to use them for my own ends. The man oriented toward force is the prisoner of this vicious circle of predation. If he sees God or the world as merciless, he becomes merciless. But it is perhaps because he is merciless himself that he conceives of God or the world as merciless. Impossible to see which comes first unless we return to the encompassing consciousness Socrates speaks of: learned ignorance, the knowledge of my ignorance, the feeling of being included in what I cannot include.

It is impossible by science alone to decide between the pessimistic vision of a world turned toward death (the hostile world) and the optimistic vision of a world turned toward life. The only way to obtain any clues is to experience the primordial feeling of a human heart plunged into the infinite. This is what Pascal expressed when he said: "The eternal silence of the infinite spaces frightens me." Sages stand firm in this experience, they endure the time, they allow consciousness to quietly do its work and they arrive at a certain trust. This is not the necessary trust of the child, but the mature confidence of experience.

The life of perception (eye-object, body-world) is inexorably entangled with the life of thought (the vertical axis of diversification-integration). The life of thought within the life of perception leads to the movement of integration, but also that of diversification. In the direction of diversification, thought seeks to diversify its tools in order to diversify its experiences and know the world more widely. Each tool gives access to a part of the world.

But thought engaged in the reductive action of knowledge also wishes to free itself, to emancipate itself from knowledge. I do not want to be knowable. I want to be greater than what you know about me and what I know about myself. The Greeks' "Know thyself" is an appeal to this experience: I escape from myself. Thought knows that it is already conquered by the world and by the too-great mystery of its own inner being. What envelops me is greater than what I encompass - this is wisdom's first step. I will, in consequence of this, grant primary authority to this encompassing consciousness - such is wisdom's second step. It is because sages grant primary authority to their encompassing inner consciousness that they become natural authorities for any groups that are not sick with power. When I see myself in the world, I know that the world contains me and will do with me what it wills. I depend on it for better and for worse. Awareness of belonging to a destiny (which escapes me but which I cannot escape) leads me to try to make an effort to obtain freedom. If I attain that freedom, I become, at the least, an authority for myself.

As we said at the beginning, two routes open up:

- The route of force, an attempt at predation: The predator wants to reverse the game he sees, the game he imagines. He says to himself: The world dominates me, so I will dominate the world. It's not the world that sees me, it's I who see the world. It's not the world that controls me, it's I who control the world. And I am going to crush and repress all feelings of humility. Now, the more I think I am dominating the world, the more - in the depths of me that cannot be disclosed - I feel that I am dominated by the world. It is a simple game of projection and reverse projection. By this route I become all the more a predator because I imagine that the world is turned toward death.
- The route of wisdom is nothing other than an attempt at collaboration: I accept being a vulnerable human in a world that surpasses me. I endure this feeling; I consciously experience it. What I choose, then, is a game where I collaborate.

Relations become reciprocal and ecology comes spontaneously into my mind.

3. The dimensions of consciousness

These reflections of ours are based entirely on consciousness. It is time to introduce a few more points. The *Grand Robert* tells us that consciousness is the faculty humans have of knowing their own reality and judging it. A human being is conscious because he or she can see themselves thinking and this "seeing" is always inhabited by an ethical judgement. Humans possess a sort of light and distance that allows them to evaluate themselves. There are then, certain values buried within humans by which they judge the values they have learned. They are incapable of doing anything that is not ethical.

Those philosophers (ancient or contemporary phenomenologists) who have over the centuries delved deeply into consciousness have detected within it four dimensions:

- Intentional consciousness is directed and focussed by the person's admitted or undisclosed intentions. I construct the "objects" of my perception. I reduce real things to objects. I project my intentions in the form of a future image that I want to realize. This dimension of consciousness mobilizes the intelligence of means in order to reach a goal. This is the one that is most often called upon in the exercise of power. In cinematic terms, it is the camera that looks through the eye of the lead character, the eye that sees with that character's intentions.
- The encompassing or "tensional" consciousness allows us to see the intentional consciousness. In cinema, the camera is what surrounds and envelops the relations the actor has with himself, the others and the landscape. It is the eye of the director on the characters. While the intentional consciousness constructs and advances toward an object, the encompassing consciousness sees it act. It can describe how the intentional consciousness has constructed its object and how it has reduced the thing to the state of an object. It is a sort of peripheral vision. Consequently, it is capable of inversion and reciprocity. It is capable of empathy. Above all it is capable of perceiving the difference between the real being and the representation that the intentional consciousness has constructed. Thus it is capable of learned ignorance, of evaluating the huge disproportion between the representation (my knowledge) and the mystery of reality. This is why it is sometimes called Socratic consciousness (Socrates never stopped repeating that learned ignorance forms wisdom's foundation.) It is also called tensional because it appears as a kind of bodily condition, as if the body were becoming a field of differentiated tensions on which the intuition of the encompassing consciousness forms.
- The adherent consciousness brings about adhesion to the values engulfed within the nucleus of the self. This is the consciousness that judges, that exercises judgement (not according to learned values, since it can, in fact, dismiss learned values, but only according to experienced values). It perceives the relative agreement between a representation, a thought, an action, a social value and the basic aspirations of the nucleus of the self, aspirations which are always open and integrative values. Thus, it is this consciousness that is able to denounce idols. In the cinema, it is the eye of the spectator exercising critical judgement.
- Transcendental consciousness espouses the perspective of totality. It gives the impression of being anchored in intemporality because it provides us with the feeling of time. Without it, we would be so immersed in time that it would be impossible for us to be conscious of time. It grasps the equality of beings, and does not grant any preference to "I" in relation to "you." It is immersed in a kind of

tranquility that acts in such a way that I can see myself suffer, endure anger, or something else like that, and smile at it. In the cinema, it is the camera making the overhead shot that places or replaces the characters in a vast serene totality.

Something extremely powerful becomes apparent through these dimensions: consciousness is organized in such a way as to never be able to escape absolutely, I mean completely, the truth which inhabits it and works in the core of its self. Moreover, a bit like light, which reaches its full speed in the pure darkness of space, consciousness only has life and pleasure when it casts itself into what it is not, into the opposite. If the trees, the mountains, the birds, or the female neighbor were nothing but consciousness, consciousness would not see them. It sees what surrounds it, what it is not. It sees in the trees, the mountains, the birds whatever is in them that is not consciousness. This is its intentional dimension. But it cannot escape its truth, so consciousness also knows that what it does not see in the other is itself. Reciprocity inhabits it. It knows that it cannot see itself and that it does see everything else. This truth about itself forces it to realize that the other is inhabited by a consciousness that it does not see but which sees it. This is the encompassing dimension of consciousness, the empathic dimension, which seeks another point of view so as to be seen.

But this is not all. Consciousness is inhabited by a truth that it feels but does not see. For example, it feels justice, because it perceives injustices. Yet nowhere does it ever see justice, not even in the world of ideas. If as intelligence, its own or that of another person should ever propose an idea of justice, it would inevitably say: It's not at all that. It is the same for the beautiful, the true, the good, etc. Consciousness cannot escape the truth that inhabits it, but it cannot attain it, seize it, or name it either. All values that are defined and thus closed are, for it, transitory forms. It senses that, one day, another form will be even closer to that truth that it can neither attain nor forget. And even when, in the presence of an artistic, scientific or social masterpiece, it tastes a full satisfaction, inevitably, one day or another, it will start off once again in search of another form of the truth.

In consequence, consciousness functions only by the correcting of misfortune, just as science only functions by successive approximations. Newton was close to being right, but Einstein discovered in what ways he was wrong and proposed a theory which integrated that of Newton and surpassed it. Through the value of integration which itself is the basis of science, Einstein made a breakthrough. Yet all his life, he felt that his theory was not finished. And he never could express the theory which satisfied the truth he felt but could not set forth. In daily life, consciousness, goes from rectification to rectification through integration, enveloping and surpassing.

Obviously, consciousness cannot be its own object and, because of this, it is ridiculous to think that it can prove its own existence. It is what makes science, art or politics; it is never their object, but always their subject.

Yet what happens if good will is lacking? What happens if a person does not want that truth which he or she can neither escape nor grasp? The only possible result of their flight is an amplification of the distance between that mysterious truth and the creations of the intelligence. What the intelligence accomplishes will be further and further from this truth. Even worse, it will have to make knots, folds, and coils in order to throw consciousness off its trail as much as possible. It is at this moment that the tragic becomes inevitable. The human being who no longer wants him/herself, who refuses his/her own elusive truth, becomes a kind of dangerous monster, I mean to say someone who diverges from the knife-edge of truth to the point of belonging to a mechanism of destruction.

Above all, we must not think that this truth of the core self is a sort of optional ideal, a moral luxury. Can we say that instinct in animals is a luxury? No, for without it, the animal disappears. It is the same for humanity. The type of truth I am speaking of here, and that obsessed Socrates, Meister Eckhart, Jan Patočka, Hermann Broch and many others, is a necessity for human personal life and for human social life. In brief, when divergences swing dramatically far from this strange truth, the most tragic of misfortunes happens, and man begins to torture man in order to delight in his suffering. This is what it is a question of in this book.

If misfortune measures perfectly the distance between humanity and its house, between behavior and the core self, it is because suffering is so much the opposite of consciousness that it is its best friend, sometimes its only friend. Like light in darkness, consciousness never travels as well as in misfortune! In other words, there will never be misfortune without a Socrates, a Jesus, a Gandhi, to denounce this misfortune so that truth can spring back and reform social issues.

CHAPTER 5: FAMILY DYNAMICS

Let us now enter the specific, exemplary and revealing domain of the family. As much as heaven and its idols reflect our ideas of power, the family reflects our power-games in practice; as much as mythologies display and justify the structure of power, the family concentrates and schematizes this structure; thus, myths are nearly always familial and families, nearly always mythical.

Even more concretely, the family gives a picture of society. The structures of power of families and society are similar. From the preceding chapters, we retain the following idea: as soon as power turns toward domination, it is necessarily violent and sacrificial. Reflecting on family violence, we immediately imagine Abraham leading his son to the top of a mountain to sacrifice him. Obviously, Abraham certainly did not want to slit his son's throat, but God had asked him to do it. And poor Abraham, who loved his son more than anything else in the world, but not more than God even so, was ready to obey. There is a difference between the worst violence and the ritual sacrifice of an innocent: the sacrifice is an array of blows and wounds in an idol's name, while murder is killing against the will of the idol. It is almost always in the name of an idol that a woman, a man, or a child is sacrificed. Murder is rare in the land of humans. Abraham and his son did not climb the mountain alone. Two servants accompanied them (servile producers). In his famous engraving "The sacrifice of Abraham" (1655), Rembrandt shows us these two hidden servants. Faces turned earthward, they stand resigned beside their donkey. Violence gains its impetus thanks to the laissez-faire promoted in the vicinity. And it is an angel that restrains Abraham's arm. Only an angel has the authority necessary for teaching the difference between the idol and God. Alas! Our social workers don't have that much authority...

The question of violence is the following: in the name of what idol is violence legitimized and perpetuated? And in the name of what idol do those who are witnesses hide their faces in their hats.?

1. Society and family reflect each other.

When we turn our attention to a family (microcosm *par excellence*), we must not confuse aggressiveness with power. Almost every family goes through some terrible times, some episodes that are difficult, and sometimes virulent. Most of the time, a brutal act is a suffering gone wrong. Fatigue, stress, a series of failures, repeated frustrations form lumps of potential aggressiveness. One error in the pipes, and the valve gives way. This is transitory and not necessarily structural. The structure of power is very different. The repetitive dynamics of violence are of a whole other order. In truly violent families, violence is not a consequence, a miscalculation in the management of aggressiveness -- violence is just one means among others toward one end: domination.

Domination is a sort of fixation on a goal and this transforms all else into means. If discussion, efforts at persuasion, and manipulation of information are not sufficient, the person who is trying to take control adds rewards (words of endearment, gifts, etc.). If rewards do not do the trick, he proceeds to curses and threats. Violence is part of the arsenal of domination. In a violent family, violence is always present, potentially at least. It is when it is least evident that it acts most effectively. By the time it appears explicitly, it is losing ground.

The family is a microcosm of society. The use of "force" by the family "tyrant" is a function of his hierarchical position in society. The more I occupy a "high" social position, the more people there are "beneath" me who are means and the fewer there are "above" me for whom I am a means. So it is better to live at the top. Dynamics of power and violence are found in every social level. The style of violence can vary, however. The lower your position in the hierarchy, the fewer means you have for disguising violence and the more that violence is exposed, raw and in plain sight. For example: a low-paid employee of a local welding business is bombarded daily with orders, constraints, and rude reprimands. The affronts are neither smooth nor polished. It becomes normal for him to discharge his frustrations in the same tone.

Socially, aggressiveness naturally descends from one stratum to another and rises more rarely. The one on top has all the means of retaliating with a blow that, though completely legal, may have the gravest consequences. The one on the bottom will think twice before attacking a person of the "upper" class. So aggressiveness, like the water in a mill, descends. The big boss takes it out on the boss; he takes it out on the foreman, and the foreman, on the worker. And when the worker, returning from a hard day on the job, meets an unemployed person, he will throw him a look that speaks volumes about the scorn he feels. For the farther aggressiveness descends, the more shame it engenders. It is always the last and lowest who, forced to take it without retaliating, accumulate shame, with the result that that shame is found on the bottom, with the bearers of shame, the excluded, the reservoir out of which most of the pariahs are drawn. Since the extremely poor have little market value, it is the value of being that is trodden down to the lowest level. And as shame descends to the depths, an anxiety rises, for we all know that a simple traffic accident can take away our market value.

All domination "burns" its resources. We say this about an alcoholic, and we say it too about a violent person: he drives everyone away from him, he has burnt his friends. Violence maintains itself. To psychologically imprison the person you love is to make sure that you are not desired by her. Enclosed by fear, desire is not a good traveler. The violent man feels it: "My wife doesn't love me, she gives in, she's afraid." Even more insidiously, this hinders self-esteem. "I treat others as I hate to be treated. So I'm detestable." The climax arrives when a man, having become a father, inflicts on his son the same hateful treatment that he received from his father. To see ourselves as like the person who has mistreated us, to feel it in our body, to feel it possess us is unbearable. To hate ourselves in the other produces a suffering which puts us "beside ourselves." Violence always expropriates the subject of its own consciousness.

One day, a young man told me what had happened to him. "When my wife became pregnant," he said to me, "I started getting anxious. I put my ear on her belly and felt this fragile little being, infinitely dependent. For me, this little one was me, I felt that I was totally powerless because I was afraid that my wife would die with the baby. The child was born. When I watched my wife nurse the baby, I noticed that intense look that unites the mother and the child. I knew that she would never have a feeling like that for me. I'll never have the right to a desire as total as that." He took advantage of this to turn the game around. Noticing the wife's dependence on the baby, he said to himself: "I'll make the child's power my own." When he took the child in his arms, he felt that he had the ultimate weapon. He only needed to cast a slightly threatening glance on the child and the mother understood the danger. That woman was under house arrest.

Then the inevitable cycles of violence followed. In general, whenever there is a dynamic of violence, there is an "agreement" about disagreement. The couple tacitly "understands" that there is a critical threshold that must not be crossed. This can be

"You don't touch me, but I will accept insults," or "You don't touch the children, but I will take everything else," or perhaps: "You won't hit me in the face." Since the essence of violence is escalation, the threshold is approached, but not passed. And then come the tears, the regrets, the forgiveness and the game begins over again. In Jacques' marriage, it was forbidden to strike the child.

The mother stood in the eye of the hurricane and the father made do with implicit threats. One day I ventured to ask Jacques: "What would happen if your wife took the child and tried to leave the eye of the storm?" "She would break the agreement," he immediately answered, and that would be treason." A fire burned in his eyes. For him, you could feel, everything would then become possible: murder, suicide He had nothing to lose.

In the name of what idol could he sacrifice those he loved? The idol was his very identity, the identity he didn't have. He was haunted by exclusive values such as "the family," "the good Daddy," "the good Mommy." He was obviously not equal to his idols and, most significantly of all, it was in these idols that he placed his own value, his own identity: "If I'm not a good Daddy who makes a success of his family, I'm nothing."

2. Sexual predation.

When his family escapes him, the violent man experiences an immense emptiness. A long time ago he lost sight of himself as a vulnerable being. He has always denied his vulnerability. All of a sudden he becomes the "thing" of others. Others have complete power over him. With despair as backdrop, the dynamic of domination can sink deep into the intimacy of human beings. even to the point of impounding intimacy itself: I am speaking of incest, of the dynamics of ascendancy over the entire body of the other. "I will enter through every pore in your skin and I will swallow your childhood to feed off it."

I remember the following case: an eight-year-old girl is invited by her father to take a nap with him. He gets undressed and makes her feel his "desire." The child experiences a murky mix of fear, of curiosity, of tension and of anxiety. She doesn't succeed in integrating the experience. Nonetheless, from week to week, the contacts are more intense, insistent, and irritating No one is supposed to know. The child is locked in her secret. She cannot talk, express her questions, her worries, her desires, her fears. The father tightens his grip. The child has no place for her own privacy. The father enters the bathroom without warning. Individual spaces no longer exist. Everything lives and breathes in the father's space. He reads her mail, her personal diary, supervises her telephone conversations ... Like a mouse, the girl cannot escape the sway of the cat. She depends completely on her father's desires. She will say to me: "I felt he was like an octopus. He was absorbing me."

Many psychologists have emphasized (and sometimes exaggerated) the importance of sexuality in psychological development. Several facts argue in favor of this thesis. In sexual activity, a relation of body to body increases twofold the deliberate, intentional relationship. While words travel, bodies touch, embrace, and, within them, chemical transfers are achieved in purest secrecy. Something occurs in this body-to-body relation that eludes science and our ability to know. Sexual life encompasses everything: the known and the unknown, the knowable and the unknowable.

Whether it progresses at its own rhythm or is hastened by the sexual influence of an adult, sexuality generally becomes the archetype of our other relations. We are born of a sexual relation, the earliest care and the first caresses wander around the erogenous zones, we develop within more or less eroticized relations But the essential characteristic of sexual life is probably a constant swinging between the desired-desiring relation and the relation of predator and prey. The drama of incest occurs

when predation wins out. He who rapes a child devours not only his prey; he devours desire in the child, he nips it in the bud.

To return to the subject, the predatory relation aims at using the other for an end the latter does not share. It is a relation that is neither reciprocal nor reversible. I devour you so you will not devour me. I make you a part of myself so you will not make me a part of yourself. I digest what you are physically. I assimilate it to myself and you disappear. It's me or you, so it is preferable that it be me. "I take your body, your substance; your confidence, your naïvite, and your innocence. I need them like blood."

Since the beginning of time, predation has been linked with the seduction of the presumed dominant male because, for a female, it is advantageous to incorporate the genes of the best hunter and, for a male, it is advantageous to be genetically incorporated in the strongest female. It is a question of the survival of the species. And the female absorbs the sperm in her uterus and incorporates it down to the cellular level. It is a kind of predation. Apparently, sexual life is the assimilation of the male sperm to double the body of the female.

What surprised me about the incestuous father I spoke of above was the symbolic character of his anxieties. "In the cellular world," he told his adolescent daughter, "the spermatozooids are nearly all sacrificed. And the winning spermatozoid finally loses its identity in the ovum." He had, I believe, the impression that the "woman" (that he identified with the ovum) was nothing other than the "supreme predator."

Sexual life swings between two poles: the desire for complementarity (desired-desirer) and the urge for assimilation (predator-prey). On the predation side, the relation is dominated by non-reciprocity and possession: assimilation to self. I possess you, you are mine, you are me, like my arm, like my pleasure. The mother possesses the fetus; he is in her as a part of her. The child possesses the mother, he assimilates her milk and all her affection. He needs her to live. So the best thing for the father is to make the mother his thing. He brings her permanently into his home. It is his home, all of it, even the child's bedroom. He, in his turn, is the ovum in which all the family will be gradually digested. The father makes himself the all-encompassing uterus.

"The mother possesses the child and the child possesses the motherSo if I possess the child, I have the whole family to myself. I encircle by means of the house; I insinuate myself through the child." The temptation to "short-circuit" the mother, to possess the child directly, is the basic game of the predatory male. Yet he is "obviously" not the one who began it all. No, for him, everything began with the predatory ovum, with the woman. Worst yet, the supreme predatory ovum is the world, the hostile world. This is the way that the incestuous father I am speaking of saw things. Both the man and the woman are inside an ovum very much greater than they are. The world contains us. Who can escape it? And this ovum digests us, year after year until death. The world is the universal predator. I can do no more than imitate this great universal uterus (while forgetting that a uterus is creative and not destructive) and this renders my actions legitimate.

This incestuous man was not uneducated. He occupied a scientific research position in a recognized institution. For him, intellectual knowledge amounted to assimilating the world, digesting it, and making it enter himself. Knowledge was nothing but a possession. He wanted, in fact, to become the ovum of the world. For him, this was the avenging mission of science, which he identified with scientism. And he justified himself: hadn't they forced religion on him, force-fed it into him, before he even desired it! Rape is the very nature of society.

When we think about it, we all feel it: we are plunged into society as if into a field of

forces that defy and threaten each other. As in an ocean, everything looks turbulent and traversed by waves. Thoughts, emotions, images, and anxieties penetrate and devour each other. If a man goes mad, like Hitler for example, it is almost ordinary, but if his madness is a projection of society and if society enters into his madness, then there really is a catastrophe. We are buried in a collective psychological milieu where each one can be the cause of a collective mania because each one can at a given moment precipitate the latent madness of all. And the closer a person is to the idol, the more he can catalyse this madness.

Perhaps this fear is the mother of power. I think that the incestuous man I met symbolized perfectly the "machine of power." He was very close to one of society's idols, an idol of control that seeks to eliminate privacy, the inner life, the resistance to society necessary for the exercise of freedom by the core self. We have the impression, sometimes, that in modern society, the urge to possess (possess and be possessed) is replacing the desire to relate to others.

A relationship of desire is totally, radically different. Its aim is to make me, and the other, stand out from the social context. Suddenly, this particular person emerges from the mass of people and this causes me to emerge from the mass. With one look we each become an end for the other. We both leave society's anonymous shadow. Both of us are born as we leave the collective cloud. My desire activates yours, and your desire activates mine. We are co-liberators, each for the other.

The pleasure of predation is assimilation to the self. I don't have to pay attention to the other's pleasure. She or he is simply matter -- my matter. Better yet, her (or his) suffering feeds my pleasure. In the relation of desire, pleasure, on the contrary, frees the two subjects. As Bernanos said: "And in the vibration of the body, frail and already withered beneath its radiant shroud of flesh, in the unconscious rhythm of hands open and closed again, in the restrained thrust of tireless hips and shoulders breathed something of the majesty of beasts."

Predation kills. Desire engenders. Desire has no object. It is a co-birth of two subjects. The poets are right - eroticism is the generation of self in the world and of the world in self. Predation is not erotic, but digestive. To rediscover true eroticism - this is the challenge set out by Socrates, and we are still infinitely far from it. If there is an eroticism of justice, it is that the other and I are "co-birthered," one by the other as a source of freedom and creativity.

The question becomes insistent: is predation the projection of the world in us, or is it the reverse? Are we predators because the world was a predator before us, or, on the contrary, do we see the world as a predator simply because we are predators? Or yet again, are we predators because we have left the path of Eros and are like the incestuous father, incapable of the least intimacy with our own anxieties?

As long as we remain focused on intention (the axis of perception which goes from the eye to the object), it is impossible to leave it. As in a street fight, the play of projection is such that no one can know who began it. The paranoiac is a prisoner of his mirror, and devours so as not to be devoured. He doesn't know if he is the mirror of the world or if the world is his mirror. He shuts himself up in the schizophrenic universe of his self. The world is projected in him and he in the world in such a way that he is incapable of leaving the vicious circle. This is the prison *par excellence*. The predator can no longer discriminate between the world that is in him (the representations) and the world he is in (the real world).

To arrive at the fact that the world was the beginning and that it did not begin with hostilities, the intentional consciousness must be surpassed, encompassed by the

Socratic consciousness, the encompassing consciousness. The Socratic consciousness knows that the world is always beginning and because of this, it is worthwhile to try to know it before condemning it. To arrive at Socratic consciousness, we must pay attention to just that thing we pay no attention to. If predation kills confidence in what is greater than ourselves, desire, for its part, arouses that confidence. Desire supposes a confidence sufficient to start a relation. The simple desire to know makes confidence necessary.

Let us return to our case. The little girl was led into her father's bed. She was abused and dominated. Her desire was not respected, nor was her pleasure. She has become the mistress of a "dominating ruler," his "servile producer" of pleasure, and soon his pariah. In incest, time's arrow goes into reverse. Normally it is up to the succeeding generation (the young) to ingest, digest and integrate the preceding generation (adults and the elderly.) In incest, it is the opposite. The older absorb the younger. This is not innocent. What is normally in front, the future, ends up behind. What is normally behind, the past, ends up in front. The past begins to determine the future of the girl. Her father is inside her and is still determining (she is now almost thirty) her future, her failed lover affairs, her one-night stands.

An inversion of time can ensue. This inversion marks, I believe, all civilizations based on domination. In these civilizations, death is in front. For the confident person, death is behind. It is in pursuit, but life always keeps ahead by a length. If we are here, it is just because life runs faster than death. In sexual desire, the future is a birth and not a death. With the predator, the future is inevitably death.

The little girl was swallowed by her father, absorbed by him. In her, desire was nipped in the bud, transformed into an urge, an urge for prey. Now it is she who devours her lovers: each day, the ritual of the praying mantis. The worst thing is to one day realize that we are subjecting others to what made us suffer so much.

But acts of incest are crimes against authority as well. The one who should represent authority has betrayed it. This treason strips in advance all authority from everything that could become an authority. Force alone is likely to survive an act of force. Free of her family, the rebellious girl, having become cynical in regard to all of society, scoffs at the law. Behind this is an undermined confidence in the world. For years, the father could, at any moment, suddenly appear at the door, burst in, and entrap her. The world is no longer a mother to have confidence in, but a jack-in-the-box without law, respect, or shame. Worse, the world's guardian has become the assailant. Because of this, the world is transmuted into a predator. The circle is closed. Growth is threatened. The young woman has never been able to integrate her childhood experiences, for they are too heterogeneous. Everything in her is always confused. Without integration, there is simply accumulation, capitalization, enlargement ... the man of power's characteristics. Identity doesn't succeed in forming. It's a fall down a well.

This case, I believe, has something of the archetypical. It is an image of the "machine of power." In *Le Christ à ciel ouvert (The Open-air Christ)*, Georges Haldas says: "Power is murder." And it's true: power, when it becomes domination, is total murder, the systematic rape of the core self, in other words.

CHAPTER 6: THE CYCLES OF POWER

In the culture of the man oriented toward force, our culture, the word "power" carries all the ambivalences that serve power. It signifies the ability to do something, the ability to resist something, the authority to act on others, the effective means of forcing physical or psychological matter into obedience, the autonomy and determination necessary to reject another's power (for example: she was able to leave her husband), etc. In this essay, we define power oriented toward force as an obsession with goals to the detriment of peripheral vision. It is commonplace to speak of "men of power" to designate those who direct a business or a nation with a kind of goal-obsession. It is not so much a question of isolated individuals but of a culture which favors and justifies a certain structure of power.

Power oriented toward force, power seen as domination, begins by expansion and acquisition (legal or illegal, legitimate or illegitimate, real, functional, or symbolic) of what is outside of us. It is precisely a question of acquiring power over a sphere that resists this power, a sphere that doesn't yield that easily to our will. It is not a matter of gaining power over ourselves, but over things, territories, persons other than ourselves. The man of power is the man who is expanding through acts of possession, the man turned toward the exterior. Power is not necessarily political, or economic, or military, or religious, but it is always social. Max Weber postulates that power means "every possibility of making one's own will triumph in a social relation, even against resistance. Power supposes the possibility of encountering persons ready to obey." Power is essentially a relation, a relationship, social in nature, which affects the social bond.

Force supposes the use of three orders of means that can be defined thus:

- manipulation, lies, hoaxes, the invention of myths, rhetorical skill and sophistry, manipulation of information of information, the fascination created by magic or scientific powers, etc.
- retribution through all sorts of rewards, emotional, psychological, monetary and social gratification, the distribution of salaries, privileges, here and in the beyond, etc.;
- dissuasion by threats or violence, imprisonment, torture, technological superiority, the withdrawal of investments, embargo, blockade, contamination of food, creating structures of economic dependence, the denial of aid, economic intimidation, etc..

As we have said, each one of these means derives from a weakness. Lies live off ignorance, retribution feeds on dependence, and dissuasion is based on fear. Power rests on weaknesses and maintains them. For power, communication, education, service, even love are strategic activities. Unless it disguises itself in a certain way, domination doesn't work because it scandalizes. Power is "inexplicable," as Alain put it. If it is unfolded and corrected, it is no longer itself but something else. Undisguised, it costs too much in violence. As it expands, however, it tends to run more and more risks. Sometimes it even becomes arrogant and triumphalist, a caricature of itself. It is then on the point of denouncing itself and being overthrown, as a consequence. The tyrant always ends up showing himself, even beneath the most intricate and confusing justifications.

Power is constantly seeking to spy without being spied upon, to control without being controlled, to compel the other to obedience without being compelled to obey. Power seeks to become autonomous in regard to human beings, to possess them. The essence of power is that we never possess it, but that it is it that possesses us.

1. When power possesses us, it leads us into hellish cycles.

The question is the following: how does domination create repetitive cycles that inevitably lead to crises of violence? Why doesn't it ever control itself enough? Why does it inevitably lose the sense of measure and proportions? Why does it go on to enlarge itself so grossly that it inevitably awakens the consciousness that will denounce it? Everything takes place as if the man of power were necessarily diminishing his own consciousness but awakening by this very fact the consciousness of others. Since the man of power lives and grows by unconsciousness and this unconsciousness ends by alerting the consciousness of others, one of these days he will be swept away by an eruption of consciousness, by a revolution.

In this chapter, we will limit ourselves to an impressionistic vision of the cyclical life of the human collectivities oriented toward force. It is a matter of facilitating a vision of the whole. Farther on, we will be more analytical.

We are learning beings. Any action whatsoever will be done in any direction whatever, but will always and inevitably follow a developmental process. I mean by this that there will be a confrontation with the real despite all the efforts of humans to seek refuge in what they conceive the world to be (and which is only their world). An action resolves problems by the means it deploys. Because of this, problems it can't solve by these means accumulate in front of it. If, for example, I place a high priority on mathematical strategies, my mathematical brain develops, but everything that can't be solved by mathematics accumulates in front of me. All that music, painting, physical sensation and wisdom require accumulate in front of me. One of these days I will fall on my face over them. This will be the end of a cycle. I will be forced to develop something else. This is part of the game of learning. We grow by types of solutions, one type of solution after another with transitions that often are dangerous.

Hitchcock said that in our society, only monsters are elevated to the rank of heroes. A monster is a big brain with little arms, or a big head and a little heart He or she is a specialized champion. Someone who has bet everything on a single faculty, on a single talent, or on a single series of muscles Someone who develops him or herself in one unique direction. They excel in one direction, and so are out of their depth in everything else. There comes a time when this "everything else" catches up with them. The movement is toward a crisis, fall and recovery.

The more skilled I am in one domain (because I am specialized), the more certain problems outside my specialization accumulate in front of me. This is true collectively also. For example, societies oriented toward force have developed, in a quite extraordinary way, their ability to adapt everything to themselves: trees, mountains, animals, petroleum reserves, everything, but they have lost the ability to adapt to nature (which they consider an object to be used). So, like a snowplow, they push ahead of them a great number of problems whose nature is to have a solution only through another way of thinking and acting. Today, this is no longer a pile of problems; it's a wall.

A cycle may appear as a series of steps suitable for learning: (1) development in one direction (2) accumulation of difficulties without solutions in that direction (3) crisis (4) fall and the beginning of another development. Time is not linear, however. All trees seek their balance, in spite of everything. If a monstrous branch develops on the left,

then a little bud is getting ready on the right. While a development is becoming reality and insoluble problems accumulating as a result, buds are gaining potential and are internalizing in other directions. Socrates and Sophocles were already working on the following cycle: they wanted to prepare the philosophy for what would replace tyranny. The bigger the man of power grows, the more the abilities he ignores gain in potential. On one side, the will to domination's enormous malformed branch; on the other, a bud that is an antidote to the man of power, one that escapes him, for he is always very unconscious of what he produces in the consciousness of others. Socrates, Jesus, Gandhi, etc., thought of themselves as antidotes to the societies of power such as they were in their time.

Beyond the mechanical conception of this process, there is a biological image. When an organism invades a vast territory, it is itself invaded by various microbes, insects and other colonizers. The organization takes possession of a territory, it colonizes; it is, as a result, itself taken as a territory, is colonized (by parasites, microbes, viruses, etc.) The organism conducts a battle. It deciphers the information necessary to detect the stranger it has "internalized." It develops antibodies, invents defenses etc. When it falls ill, its hidden aptitudes will be its salvation. For example, the genetic qualities of those resistant to the Black Death in the Middle Ages, and which are found in some of their descendants, protect these descendants against AIDS today. In the social order, we think of those imperialist countries who "internalize" in their culture the ethnic groups they conquered (politically or economically). These foreign bodies are, of course, more or less excluded, confined to ghettos, or grossly exploited. Even so, a few people do approach them and profit from the integrative values that develop in the intercultural dialogue. It is the movement that will cure the colonizing country in the end.

In brief, while a very visible expansion heads toward the end of a cycle, the embryo of the succeeding cycle is being formed in the greatest secrecy. When a disease invades the body, we see symptoms, tumors, rashes -- the ugliness expands and little by little takes possession of all the body. This is expansion, "globalization." Yet while the illness displays itself so visibly, the antibodies are intensifying in secret, and one day they will emerge.

Let us take a psychological example. I am simplifying in the extreme: a man thinks that alcohol will help him forget. For one reason or another, he is convinced that this is a need for him. This idea is obviously an abstraction, a non-experience. He plunges this inexperience into experience. One year, two years, five years -- alcohol dissolves his consciousness and fulfils its function of burning up energies. The man squanders his fortune, his health, his family, everything. He creates chaos within himself, and around himself. The man falls to pieces under the influence of alcohol. But while the alcohol is burning his body, his fortune, his family, and his friends, a new consciousness is intensifying in his misery. It is the new man. Invisibly, this new man grows in potential. One day, the alcoholic reaches the crisis-point. He is told he has cirrhosis of the liver. It was predictable. But if the man finally accepts the facts, he can allow the new man to emerge. A man steps out then from alcohol's control, a man molded and kneaded and sculpted by misfortune. This person knows something that the others do not know and he can help others to identify and prevent a similar sickness.

One of these days, we will have to rely not on our developed and visible faculties, but on our interiorized and secret potentialities. Something wells up in the heart of a civilization centered on domination, something that it doesn't know and that has been growing in potential all during the drama. In the shadow, under the ashes, a seed is awaiting its time. Certain pines need fire to reproduce. The fire opens the cone and the seed is finally liberated. It is the same for an empire: by dint of burning up its

energies, it liberates its opposite perhaps, it frees a spiritual and social potential that it doesn't know. The Roman Empire colonized. Consequently it was itself invaded by thousands of aliens it had subjected to slavery.

But in combination with the slaves, an antibody developed, the very notion of emancipation. In the beginning, this was no more than a miniscule idea, persecuted and confined in the catacombs of the empire. Then their idea spread and took full form to become Christian culture. This culture has, obviously, itself deviated from its trajectory to adopt the Roman Empire's values, but for a time an antibody did extend itself. This antibody of the empire still exists today in the lives of a few women and men and in a few small and unassuming groups.

Any development always moves toward its crisis. Nothing appears to stop it. The man becomes a caricature of himself. The man of power goes so far as to produce his own caricature. A caricature, in placing the accent on certain overdeveloped aspects, thus shows the underdeveloped aspects. The caricature prepares the way for consciousness. It is an enlargement of impasses that alerts consciousness. The more consciousness is observed, the more it reconstructs the caricature. The more pronounced the myopia, the more precise the features become, raised up as if they were braille, exaggerated, tragic, as if adapting to a growing blindness. Consciousness writes in pointed barbs what the collectivity refuses to understand. The crisis aims at striking consciousness when it is no longer able to see.

2. The crucial leap to escape repeating the cycles is an act of freedom.

The pivot of the mutation resides, however, in a strange thing: freedom. The essential quality of freedom is that it does not exist, and it must be created. Freedom is a potentiality that emerges only from an intensified consciousness. The crisis actually aims at this intensification of consciousness. The blind must burn their fingers in order to learn. Perhaps we will learn in a different way someday! For the moment, we haven't found any other ways. Here is the general outline of the man blinded by power: first, create unhappiness, a big beautiful unhappiness. Then, in this big beautiful unhappiness a new being intensifies. Finally, free the new being from its chains. In this way a free and conscious being is produced: the sustainable man, the man of the future, the emancipated one, the one who will be immunized against servility. Obviously, no one believes this. If they did believe it, he would begin to exist.

The blind are those who have lost the sense of proportions. In order to become aware of proportions, consciousness must go in two directions: it constructs the world and it sees that the world constructs it. To the degree that I succeed in passing from the world in me (my representations of the world), to me in the world (representation of representations), I grasp the proportions of my place in the world. I rediscover the sense of proportion that the ancients called "humility." I succeed in learning a developmental cycle before the end of the cycle, before the crisis or the catastrophe. This was the case for Socrates, for Sophocles and for many others. They are the secret seed of the future.

The world involves me. Human beings are in the world long before the world, such as they imagine it, is in them. As artists sculpt, they realize that the world sculpts them. As I write a novel, life writes my own novel. Consciousness sometimes manages to grasp the proportions between its work on the world and the work of the world on it. This is the poetic consciousness. While my consciousness plays with the world, the world plays with me.

I am in the mountains, walking carefully on a steep rock face I am able to master. Because I have this mastery, I have the leisure to contemplate the exterior landscape

and perhaps my inner landscape also. The landscape is obviously the fruit of my perception, of my vision, and it is seen as a function of my intentions. But suddenly, the slope becomes increasingly, fearfully steep and high, and I feel my feet approach the limits of their grip. Below, the village is minuscule. I know that a fall would be fatal. Fear is on the prowl. The possibility of a fall increases in probability. There is a threshold of risk beyond which everything can reverse itself. Suddenly, I slide, fall head over heels, and lose control. My body, which was "my" instrument, is now the plaything of the world. My body which I thought I possessed was in fact possessed by the world. The world can take back at any moment what it loans to our freedom. While I was climbing the mountain, the world, as I represented it, was in me. When I fall, I am in the world. I

made the world in my mind. But I made it because the world gave me permission to do so. My perception of the world was in fact an inversion. It is the world that allowed me to perceive this. With the fall, there was an inversion of this inversion. Things are now right side up, for as we all know: we may think we hold the world, but it is it that holds us.

Regarding the relationship between self and the world, we can make out four stages of evolution:

- 1. The mythological stage where the world makes me. Humans thus are prisoners of the world-body relation. They live in a mode of acceptance. We speak of them in terms such as "primitive man," "pre-rational man," "savage man," "naïve man..." The positive side of the Stone Age, of this age of acclimation (rather than transformation), is that it is a sort of primary confidence. We get the impression that there would need to be a thick layer of this confidence for humans to dare to revolt against the world, against their Mother Nature. This foundation remains in the form of a myth of childhood. "If you do not become like little children, you cannot enter into the Kingdom." This collective childhood appears to have lasted a very long time, until the invention of metal, until the augmentation of the power to kill. The negative side of this long period: passive acceptance. Sooner or later this stage had to be surpassed. Sooner or later humans had to realize their very great dependence on themselves.
- 2. The stage of domination, where I understand that I make the world. I am convinced of it to the point of losing sight of the opposite of this position; I no longer see that the world understands me. The positive: transformation of the world. The negative: the world is seen as hostile and there is a loss of the sense of proportion. Man then places the ecological balance and the social balance in danger. This is the stage that I am attempting to describe in this book.
- 3. The ecological stage where I understand that the world makes me as much as I make it. This is the consciousness of the reciprocity of all relations. It is very difficult to be precise about the subject of this possible future, for it doesn't actually exist -- it must be made to exist. It will be what we make it. We can hope that it will be a stage of improvement for

the world's ecology. But it cannot be a return to "primitive man." We cannot imagine creativity and let the world become once more what it was without humans. However, we can imagine that humanity might learn to be gardeners of its world. Since gardening is the most difficult art, because founded on the reciprocal relations between two creators (humanity and nature), this stage will doubtless be very long. Nevertheless, it is probable that one day consciousness will feel the need to pass beyond this type of relation with nature.

- 4. We can then imagine a poetic stage where humanity will grasp the harmony between the world and human consciousness. The relationship between the world and the human being will have become a relationship between two creators. The poet makes the garden, the garden makes the poet and finally, because they are connected, the human and the world are more and more beautiful. Not only do I create an exterior work in the world, but the world creates an interior work in me. More than that, this reciprocity brings with it a transcendence, a mutual participation in a mutual transcendence. The two creators want to come together more directly, soul to soul. Here we arrive at a stage well beyond our collective experience, a stage that, perhaps, a few sages and a few artists may already have foretold.

Our present challenge is to pass from the stage of "domination of nature" to the stage of "ecological collaboration."

CHAPTER 7: THE GENESIS OF THE MAN OF POWER

We think we have the right to exploit the whole world, we precisely who are existing now, without taking account of those who will come; we think we have the right to use and to abuse what the unremitting and unconscious work of suns and stars has accumulated over billions of years. We do not question this right, and neither do we ask for what end we are wasting all this. - Jan Patocka

The ruler who tends toward force makes himself visible. He likes to be seen, and appears on our television screens, proud of himself. We immediately think of certain presidents or prime ministers of nations, of magnates of finance or the press, of army generals, of radical religious leaders and above all of people who are all these at the same time, people who honor a certain vision of civilization and are honored by it. They are only the visible portion of a mechanism of which we are all more or less a part.

The dynamic of domination seems so universal today that it appears to us a pure and simple necessity, as if we could not escape a kind of instinct of domination. And yet the dynamic of domination is not the one and only way of adapting to ourselves, to others and to nature, it is in fact the sign of a maladjustment. Considering our instruments of power, domination puts us in danger at the present moment. We can, however, glimpse a hope. Even if the revolutions of the last few centuries have all failed (none of them created a real democracy), conditions may be better in the near future. In the cycle of life, the worst moment, the moment of crisis, is also the best moment, the moment of choices.

Obviously, for one who doesn't look very far in the past or the future, who is interested neither in "primitive" tribes nor in future societies, who scrutinizes neither the depths of the soul, nor the poetry of the centuries, our civilisations, our nations, our religions, our economy are the only ones possible. For such a person, domination is not a choice but a necessity. The hostility of the world and above all the hostility of our own human nature is not a "perception" but a fact, and the only one admissible (this is called "political realism"). It is the nature of domination to impose its logic. And it does really impose it. Who, faced with force, can survive, if he does not use force? Force is then the sole defense. Force breaks reciprocity, this is its ultimate objective (dominate without being dominated, to be the only one to choose to act as if nature were your thing). Force causes its necessity. But force conceals its Achilles' tendon.

For the man of power, there is indeed a state of laws, but behind it force, with its potential for violence, brings pressure to bear, and the people resign themselves to the fact that the strongest cheat. Everything takes place as if the players had agreed to submit to the rule of law. But even as they are playing, each one develops his muscles and his weapons. One day, one of the players is infinitely more muscular and better armed than the others. Then they continue, in appearance, to follow the rules. But if, all of a sudden, the strongest one is on the point of losing, it is expected that he will cheat, threaten, and reach for his gun. For the man of power it is this second logic that dominates, the logic of force. To justify the use of force, he insinuates an argument like this: "If I don't do it, he will." Force is the master of law. Only idealists believe the opposite. For the man of power, politics has always been thus and always will be thus: law is ruled by something that transcends the law and the name of it is force. It's a simple fact. It is easy for the weak to say: "Let us abandon force and accept the law." For the strong man, this is the game. This game is make-believe. In fact, he thinks, this game is subjected to a superior "reality": force.

This "Wild West" and "Cowboy" vision is based on an individual analogy: two poker players who keep their weapons in reserve. This vision is completely erroneous from the start, for the principle of force does not apply that simply to a collectivity. The analogy is unsound and vitiated for rhetorical purposes. What makes a population strong is not its muscles, or even its weapons, but its unity and its solidarity. How can you make a submarine, a bomber, or an F-18 function without a social bond among the individuals needed for their use? For a single F-18, fuel, bases, orders, bureaucracies, etc., are required. The social bond is the energy and information that unite all these people and make them act. This bond is extremely complex, but beyond its complexity, it can collapse or be radically transformed by a simple awakening of the collective consciousness. A state can be much better armed than the others, but if the social bond it depends on fragments, if its internal authority loses all legitimacy, if solidarity collapses, the state falls. There are many historical examples to prove it!

The problem is the following: a State that relies on force necessarily acts the same way within its borders as outside them. It cheats with its own population. If, suddenly, this cheating is revealed, there is civil war. And the disaster is all the greater because the State is armed. This is why the State that relies on force is required to be ambivalent; it believes in muscles and weapons, but submits to a certain condition of law and justice, or pretends to submit to it, in any case (if not, there would no longer be force because there would no longer be authority). In short, in reality, the state based on force knows that law and justice take precedence over force because consciousness is master of the solidarity essential for any collective success. The strong man is aware, then, of his extreme vulnerability in regard to consciousness. He will do everything to segment this consciousness, deceive it, drug it. He defends the idea of the strongest with the despair of one who knows very well that this idea is no more than a false idea. The strongest one will always be, among humans (social animals), the one who can best insure a strong collective solidarity, and this cannot be done without a minimum of collaboration on the part of consciousnesses and intelligences. It is justice and justice alone which makes solidarity and is capable of overthrowing any "cowboy" whatever, regardless of his weapons. The aspiration to justice (in consciousness) is stronger than the tyrant, because it resonates in the heart of every human being. The tyrant remains standing only if he expends all the energy necessary to deceive men and women, and the more he expends this energy, the bigger the lie grows, and it betrays itself.

A society which relies on force is obligated to come to terms with the following paradox: in order to reign, it must divide consciousness and inhibit intelligence, yet, in order to act, it needs a minimum of solidarity and unity. It is an extremely weak and fragile society. It resembles a wineglass inflated to unsafe dimensions. Any society which bases its authority on the free and sincere consent of citizens who are aware, informed, and sensitive to justice -- such a society will be able to prevail (with time and many sacrifices) over no matter what society based on force. If Cortez conquered the Aztecs, it was because the Aztecs formed an empire as fragile as the Spanish one, but not yet much adapted to its fragility. Whatever there is of justice among the Amerindians survives today and one day will prevail. If there is no society truly resistant to force today, it is because no society has true solidarity. Socrates, Jesus, and Gandhi did not succeed in creating such a society during their lifetimes, but they sowed the seed for it. Such a society can only exist after having suffered from force sufficiently, after having been vaccinated by force. This society exists only in the future, that is, in the present potential of just persons. Socrates, Jesus, and Gandhi called this potential: "love"... And they were mocked. Even so, their integrative values are there in the culture and, above all, in the depths of the core self. We will return to this in the second part of this book.

For the time being, we are living in societies oriented toward force. This omnipresence of one sole and uniform way of being in non-reciprocal relation with others and with nature becomes for many a pretext for giving up, and for others, a good justification. "There have always been empires (which is false), they say, so we may as well choose what empire to submit to. If there is only one empire, it may as well be that of the United States. American hegemony will be favorable to peace in the end. May the one with the greatest military power reign alone! So much the better!" This reasoning might hold up if history hadn't shown us that the concentration of powers around a few people always leads to the catastrophe of a tyrant (whether the tyrant is elected or not is of no importance.)

The clearest sign of tyranny is not only war, it is also and above all, perhaps, desertification from the abuse of resources to satisfy the false needs that wish to compensate for the enormous malaise created by submission. An empire survives only by consuming an enormous amount of energy allocated to frighten, bribe, distort, or pervert consciousnesses.

The state centered on force fragments consciousness, inhibits intelligence and distorts judgement so as to reign. This is very costly in energy and deprives it of an energy of solidarity and creativity that it may need very much.

Let us leave it at that for the moment. My aim here is not to rewrite the chronicle of empires against a backdrop of inevitability and with a whiff of hope. It has been written and well written. I want simply to understand from a philosophical point of view (and thus from the point of view of the fundamental principles involved) the general dynamic of power as a phenomenon of civilization. What interests me is not the specificity of empires, but the generality of mechanisms. I hope only to discover the rifts where consciousness can filter in and produce paths for the future. As Marx said in his theses on Feuerbach: "Philosophers up to now have only interpreted the world. The thing to do now is change it."

The structure of power in a civilization forms a mechanism too over-arching and too complex to be fully comprehended. Fortunately, civilization is reflected in individuals and principally in the ruler whose mission is precisely to reflect and crystallize power (sometimes even to the point of caricature). It is as if he were presenting himself as a spectacle to reveal to us, naïvely, a deformity, a disfiguration that affects all of the social bond.

In ordinary language, the "ruler" (for example, the head of a business) is confused with the whole of power (for example, the business). This confusion is obviously part of the process of overvaluation of the ruler, an overvaluation that is characteristic of the dynamic of power. There is truth in it, nonetheless. The ruler is power in miniature like television is the world in miniature, a certain world, anyway. If we bear in mind that television lies while telling the truth (that is, that its lies reveal exactly the trickery essential to power), we truly can understand the "world" through a television screen. It is the same for the dominating ruler, who reveals to us an unadmitted aspect of our civilization: that domination overwhelms authority.

In the chapters to come, we will attempt to grasp some of the folds and coils of the machine of power in the ruler. How can the most harmless kind of power be transformed and branch out to form a man of power who turns toward force? Through what process can the simple use of power (which is unavoidable for all living creatures) transform a person into a more or less despotic man of power?

1. The breaking of reciprocity.

Let us go and meet the first tyrant. I call him (or her): the baby. The newborn is thirsty. It screams and cries and gets an answer. Little by little, what expresses its lack (the sobs and screams) becomes a deterrent means of obtaining satisfaction. It smiles, and this makes others smile. Gradually, the expression of its pleasure (the smile) becomes a "rewarding" means of attaining its goal. As soon as it can say a word which pleases, it will manipulate.

There is nothing to deplore about the blossoming of this "little narcissistic and egocentric despot" (to the degree that the parents resist sufficiently). It is one precondition for subsequent psychological development. Egocentricity is only a cycle of psychological development normally leading to reciprocity. Without a well-formed ego, the child who has made its parents obey can never return the same to them by obeying. The child is a despot at first and only later does it discover the savor of reversing the game and giving the other power. The joy of reciprocity will cure the child of its despotism. Even on the plane of language, the pleasure of "no" precedes the joy of "yes." If the child succeeds in finding obedience enjoyable, it is because it first enjoyed being obeyed. Compelling and being compelled was the roof over the head of its development. If there is no violent abuse or breach of confidence, the child has a good start in life. It knows that the very web of existence rests on this reversible structure: from time to time I lead you, and from time to time you lead me, so let's not abuse each other!

On the other hand, if there is too much domination or submission, confidence can break down. This opens the doors to an excess. The important thing in a relationship of obedience is that there be an alternation of roles (which does not necessarily mean a perfect symmetry, for one role inevitably takes precedence over another). Since I know that the game reverses itself, I have respect for moderation. Reciprocity makes us prudent. If, however, the child sees that its mother or its father is seeking to break its will, it enters into hostile territory. It must defend itself and will go as far as it can. Similarly, if it sees that its father or its mother is completely submissive to it, it enters into hostile territory also. This time, the hostility is internalized: "Who can stop me?" Anxiety will push the child to check its limits. The fewer there are, the more anxious it will be, and the more it will test them.

We must emphasize reversibility. It is present in every game. It is inherent in consciousness, for consciousness knows how to reverse the subject-to-subject relationship. It is the origin of empathy (empathy, the transmutation of "objects" into "subjects"). In a while, I may be in your place, so I won't do to you what I wouldn't want you to do to me." But watch out, when I aim at a goal, I use all the means at my disposal to reach it. Obsessed by the goal, I no longer notice this reversibility. If it has not become a mental habit, I can lose empathy, the very basis of collaboration. The young of mammals enjoy little cruelties. Young dogs nip each other but don't go beyond the limit. If they do go beyond the limit, the playing ends, and domination begins. Domination is founded on a rupture of reciprocity.

We have said that among animals hierarchy comes from the fact that qualities are not equally distributed. But quality is not "force." Authority is spontaneously given to the one who appears to best ensure the continuation of the species. It is much more difficult to apply this to human beings, for humans quickly become prisoners of a world of representations. Since they no longer keep an eye on reality, they are particularly easy to manipulate. Often, they manipulate themselves, telling themselves stories in order to obtain from themselves a cancellation of their own objections. What leads them is never "force," but what they think is force.

Among the qualities which ensure the continuation of the human race, cooperation serves as cornerstone. And cooperation demands that domination's games be

regulated by the "reversing" consciousness, the empathetic consciousness. The perception of reciprocity constitutes, then, an unavoidable step toward immunizing the person against the abuse of power. Thanks to the empathetic consciousness, the producer and the ruler do not excessively polarize themselves. They do not become master and slave. It is a game, and in every game, the roles alternate at least in certain aspects. In one domain, you guide, and in another domain, I guide. In other words, as long as the goal (for example: to trap a game animal) prevails over hierarchization, cooperation remains effective. But if hierarchization (defining who is dominant) becomes simultaneously the goal and the method of the hunt, the pretext for action and its result, then there is distortion; the violence easily surpasses the threshold of tolerance appropriate for the game.

In humans, the paradox is the following: to have the character of a chief, one must be a collaborator (this is humans' principal asset); to want to be strongest is to bring weakness into the group. The goal then tends to "one-dimensionalize" consciousness by concentrating consciousness on the goal. The imitation of hierarchy based on an idea of force weakens the solidarity of the group which is, in fact, its greatest strength. If a group of climbers want to reach the summit of a very high mountain:

- these climbers should maintain their peripheral vision for fear of errors in judgment that might prove fatal. The goal must not absorb all of their intelligence;
- they must respect the laws of cooperation and not the symbolic elevation of one above the other.
- Beneath this double challenge lies success: a mutual confidence that allows us to add intelligences rather than subtract them. If the mountain is really high and the group, through an obsession with hierarchy, is transformed into a man of power, carnage is almost assured. For humans at a low level of technology, for whom survival itself is a very high mountain, such a blunder would not be permitted. Yet as technology advances, we lose sight of the fact that collaboration is necessary for survival.

3. The denial of vulnerability.

While consciousness is disappearing in the "machine of power," what is happening with the Socratic consciousness (encompassing consciousness?) The experience of childhood is the experience of vulnerability. In the earliest power-games, the parents seem to have all the advantages. Yet no power has power in itself. It is only on vulnerabilities that power has any hold. The child is vulnerable. But the parent is even more so, perhaps! He, or she, is attached to the child by a single bond. The parent knows that between her/his own death and that of the child, she/he ought to prefer her/his own death. This gives the child power. By its scream, its suffering (or imitations of suffering), it can obtain a lot. It profits from the vulnerability of the parents, it profits from the non-symmetry, from the non-reciprocity: "My mother prefers me to herself..." It is within this impression of superpower that the child develops a necessary egocentrism that will later on lead to collaboration.

When the parents grant the child undue power, the child, conscious of its vulnerability, is little by little overwhelmed with anxiety. In a diffuse manner, the child perceives that it is a danger to itself (because of its ignorance, its weakness, its impulsiveness, etc.) If, at each crisis, the parents yield, the child exaggerates the offensive behavior, for it wants to confirm the authority of its parents. "No wall!" it says to itself. A wall is already a measure. To be without borders, without measure, and lost in excess -- this is the anxiety of power or, better said, the anxiety of infinite possibilities (since nothing stops or limits me).

The more I exercise power, the more I am driven back to my vulnerability in the infinite absence of any hindrance. If the intentional consciousness is attentive to the utilization of the environment in view of an objective, the Socratic or encompassing consciousness understands all the vulnerabilities that are invoked in power, its own and that of others. Each class of instruments power uses rests on an infirmity, we might say: deterrence rests on fear; retribution, on dependence; manipulation, on ignorance. These are three vulnerabilities. The more power I have, the more I manipulate the weaknesses of others. But the more I manipulate others' weaknesses, the more I worry about myself, about how I am in my own hands, subject to my own caprices, my own weakness, and no one stops me. The encompassing consciousness always sees reality's two sides (subject and object).

If I am a man who is centered on force and domination, not only do I depend more on my decisions, but the others also depend upon them (unless they resist me). The anxiety characteristic of the encompassing consciousness becomes a regulator and drives me toward reciprocity. The producer regulates the ruler by his non-submission, by his critical power, by his resistance and his opposition. A breakdown of this regulation leads to a vicious circle of anxiety (going further and further in abuse so as to encounter a wall and be limited by the wall.)

Let us return to vulnerability, this innate knowledge of the body. Vulnerability appears in body consciousness. Diffuse fear creates anxiety, while specific fear inspires attack or flight. Fear is a "pre-vision" of the future, a vision of the possible, a conception of the body-world relation where the body knows that it depends on the world. If we reflect on the three great fears that Bergson speaks of, we discover six antagonistic fears in humans: the fear of dying and the fear of living; the fear of the unknown and the fear of knowledge; the fear of submission and the fear of freedom. These fears act like repulsive regulating poles. They are a part of body consciousness.

The tendency toward domination is based on the transmutation of fears into aggressiveness, so it tends to pervert fears, to transform them into the will to dominate. The man of power does not have the courage of his fears. He denies this body consciousness that senses his vulnerability. He transmutes his fear into aggressiveness. Fear of dying leads him to kill, fear of submission leads him to subjugate others, fear of knowledge leads him to manipulate. When reciprocity disappears and there is no longer any check on his domination, fear of self attains inordinate levels.

Let us return to the example of a mountaineering guide with a small group of tourists leaving for a climb. He or she, more than any other, perceives the limits of his or her skills (Socratic consciousness). Unless he or she has already been perverted by a hierarchical obsession (to prove his or her personal force), he or she will respect the limits of safety. He or she knows that he or she does not control everything. He or she knows that the mountain is in control (temperature above all). He or she commands the group because nature has not (yet) retaken command. To lose that Socratic consciousness is to become a man of power. In the mountains, this is fatal.

Yet nature is not only exterior. Nature is also in us. What is my nature? The child gradually feels that it is a danger for itself. It has been forbidden to climb the steps. Attracted by the stairs, it climbs to the second floor. It wants to enjoy an act of disobedience (affirm its self) .. But, while climbing, it tumbled down .. in pure obedience to gravity! From now on, it distrusts itself. Nonetheless, while tumbling down, it felt some relief perhaps: something other than itself is in command, gravity is stronger than humans. If it lost this knowledge, it would fall into the abyss of its omnipotence. Where would this lead it? This is a little like the feeling of the tyrant.

If childhood is absorbed by the games of power, it is because the child is highly vulnerable and its parents are vulnerable to its vulnerability. The child's vulnerability drives it to want to elevate one power over the others. If it tends toward wisdom, it will, in the end, elevate its consciousness to the status of primary authority. But the child can also choose submission or tyranny. In both cases, the Socratic consciousness will gradually be dissolved. In both cases, the child will depend on a tyrant: itself or the other. It is terrified by this. It will drive the machine of power to the limit in the hope that it will break. Each success of the child despot condemns it to itself. It desperately needs the resistance of others.

In the context of collaboration, power moderated by authority is a pleasant game. Yet, if someone wins too much, the pleasure is transformed into anxiety. All very well, but one point remains capital and overturns all wisdom: nature (exterior or interior) doesn't seem to obey the laws of moderation. For example: a truck driver is not paying attention, fails to make an obligatory stop, and kills four people. There is a disproportion between the error and the consequences. Another example: a man is jealous. He loses control. He kills. There is a disproportion between his passion and the result. A tidal wave, without the slightest discernment, drowns men, women, and children in the mud. If nature is "the ruler" of the cosmos, it doesn't respect the rule of the game: the cosmos is a tyrant that has lost the sense of moderation. This is the premise of civilizations based on domination. We must continually return to it.

Logically, either nature has its reasons that I don't understand, or it is cruel, if not impersonal (mechanistic). "Primitive" man, aware of his total dependence, will not choose among these three hypotheses. He trusts out of necessity. Those who are small have no choice but to trust one who is great. They will constantly seek to reverse their consciousness, to take nature's point of view. All primitive art seems to point to this inversion: to think from the standpoint of what is great, to think from nature's standpoint. If humans lose this reversal, this resetting of everything in its proper place, if they lose a sense of proportion, they begin to judge according to their own vision. Now, nature does not conform to our vision. So then, inevitably, hostility enters man: he becomes the tyrant he sees in nature. The vicious circle is started.

While the intentional consciousness practices power, the body consciousness weighs the vulnerabilities involved. What is the body? The synthesis of vulnerabilities, the thing which will inevitably decompose in nature. If there is no meaning in death and in suffering, nature is the absolute despot, and it justifies civilizations based on domination. We recognize civilizations by their gods (or by the inevitability of so-called natural laws.) If the gods or nature are cruel and insensitive, humans will be. If there is no reciprocity between nature and humans, between God and humans, why would there be any reciprocity between humans?

In this regard, the man of power can take two forms:

- Religious despotism makes itself the master of explanations. this is one way of placing ourselves above nature. We pass here from primitive faith to explanatory dogma. The master of dogma has every chance of finding himself in the role of ruler-priest. Because he is in command of "worldviews," because he realizes that it is he who calls the tune in his world, he sinks into the absolute anxiety of his own being. If he sees that he is the one who manufactures God, he is lost. He must, then, make sure he does not see. He makes his consciousness one-dimensional.
- Lay despotism makes itself master of scientific (not "scientific") explanations of nature. It is a matter of explaining the despotic domination of laws and

forces of nature which in themselves have no meaning. One who is capable of surviving the absurd, who is strong and cynical in the face of the world's insignificance, will have every chance of taking command. He has for allies the priests of the absurd. But perhaps he knows deep down that his vision of an absurd world is only a projection of the absurdity of his thought ...

It is a question here of two ways of perverting the experience of the world, two forms of the same anxiety which drives humans into the spiral of flight from self and flight from reality that is characteristic of the machine of power. The distrust and hostility projected on the world prevent the experience of the world. In this way, the hypothesis of the cruelty of the world is maintained over time. It is fundamentally dogmatic (self-referenced). Distrust prevents experience. Faith alone allows us to experience the world. But this is the task of the liberated, this is the task of Socrates, this is the task of true science and of true poetry, the task of all who plunge, without reservation, into the infinity around them.

CHAPTER 8: THE SPIRAL TOWARD DEATH

Six means:

One sits oppressed under a bare tree

And strays into a gloomy valley.

For three years one sees nothing. I CHING

Obsessed with domination, the man of power is absorbed by his goals. He has parted company with himself, devoted himself to his objectives to the point of self-forgetfulness. He hovers over his own darkness, always on the go. He projects this darkness towards the exterior, but he is isolated from the exterior world as well. All he receives from it, in general, are reports, statistics, and information in accordance with his goals (he is deprived of direct peripheral vision). As long as his arms (producers, priests, warriors, pariahs) keep their grip on reality and resist, their resistance prevents the machine of power from racing out of control. If the resistance slackens, if all join in mass hysteria, nothing stops the spiral any longer. The general anxiety increases and the search for death becomes the secret goal of those who flee forward, obsessed by power.

1. When nothing is left to resist desire, desire devours humans.

The child's will to live drives it to "convince" its entourage to respond to its needs. But to the degree that it is aware of its power, the child sees, however vaguely, the risk of being obeyed. To be obeyed makes one giddy. Fear rises to a stage of crisis. When consciousness can no longer retake control of the fear, it pushes action toward the wall. And if the wall retreats, it is necessary to go further, always further, up to the point where one's own life is at risk. The only fear that seems to surpass the fear of death is the fear of self, of one's own freedom, of the monstrous possibilities it contains.

The spoiled child and the tyrant have something in common: the people around them have loosened their grip and no longer resist. The first as well as the second have sensed that they can go very far in their freedom. Perhaps they have committed an act which has horrified even them. I am thinking of a child who threw a cat into boiling water. At first, he took pleasure in the cat's suffering. Then came horror. Vaguely, he realized that another might enjoy seeing him boil. Vaguely, he realizes that when reciprocity is broken, torture becomes possible. When reciprocity is broken, humans can go farther than death itself; they can plunge into horror. The spoiled child and the tyrant have glimpsed the potential monster resting within them, and know that this monster also exists in others. They become compulsive because they are terrorized by a monstrosity surpassing death.

Let us retrace our steps. Consciousness is always at work, and is never completely broken up. Consciousness and intelligence advise us to test action first in the virtual reality of our imagination in order to limit the damage. Reciprocity (empathy) is part of this fortunate process. I pass virtually from me to you, from you to me, and my conscience opens: "I am, because you see me. You are, because I see you. Without the inversion of "I" to "you" and from "you" to "I", the "I" loses the sense of proportion, and the "I" becomes all and the "you," nothing. When the "you" is nothing, torture becomes possible. Human development passes through the reciprocity of "you"- "I". This reciprocity leads to a relation of trust, an integrating "us": society itself and its necessary social bond. The obsession of power undermines this process and everything becomes "it" for an "I" that has become the

counterfeit of "us". For the tyrant, the people is me, it is "I" and this is extremely agonizing (for this frees the potential monster in each of us.)

When the Roman emperor Trajan triumphed over the Dacians, there was a great procession that can be observed on Trajan's Arch of Triumph. In first place come the standard-bearers holding the emblems of the army units that had fought. After this, priests carry a statue of Jupiter, recumbent, satisfied, and ready for the banquet. After that come the spoils of war exhibited on chariots. Then the fifes and drums arrive, accompanying the sacrificial bulls. In the shadow of these symbolic animals the prisoners emerge, those whose throats will be slit, and those to be killed in other ways. Hornblowers accentuate the scorn for the vanquished. Standing on a large tumbril drawn by four buffalos, the captive chiefs proudly resign themselves to decapitation. Behind them, other prisoners, in chains and guided by lictors, will increase the livestock of slaves. Finally the triumphant general arrives, and the senators and magistrates. The procession displays the whole of the structure of power (rulers, producers, idols, pariahs, priests, warriors, enemies). Trajan believes that he is integrating the entire world. He will say: "We, the universe, have decided." (This is the expression used by the ancient, medieval, and baroque emperors). He believes that he really does possess the right of life and death over all other humans, as if the idol above the man could give the right to kill.

The idol (Jupiter) sanctifies the conqueror's procession. Without the idol, such a procession would blend what is comic and tragic in humans. The vision would be unbearable. The small hiatus between the idol and the emperor allows us to hope for an escape. But without the idol's sacred presence, the emperor would seem to be at once the most cruel and the most ridiculous of men. His authority would fall to zero and he would return to the ranks of the criminally insane. Without any authority whatsoever, force would collapse on itself like a metal tower, rusty and corroded in the extreme. The idol makes it possible for the procession to honor Caesar rather than mock him. It keeps the public's gaze turned toward a certain justifying image and prevents it from seeing the facts. If someone came from another world, a world where this kind of madness is never idolized, that person would be flabbergasted by Caesar's absurdity and would try to save the victims.

The idol's function is to "unlock" our gaze from what is real. A bloody massacre which ought to expose Trajan's senseless cruelty becomes a mass to Caesar's glory (ruler, priest, and warrior). Through the idol's magic, the bloodbath is transformed into a symbolic abstraction. The concrete "I's" and "you's" disappear into tragic roles. They become symbolic characters. Everything seems to float above nature, suffering, and death. Caesar is magnified by an impression of immortality. It is with pride that men kill or let themselves be killed. The antagonists (victors and vanquished) are united in the Olympian game where bodies are no more than representations to be sacrificed with joy and honor. It gives the impression of a collective madness.

Among the tyrants most "unhooked" from reality, we all know of Caligula whom legend - if not reality - presents as a depraved and self-obsessed person, an accomplice to the poisoning of his own father. He succeeded Tiberius in 37 A.D. He thought he was Neptune and set himself over life and death. He made himself the judge of immortality, divination, and condemnation to Hell, where he dispatched his grandmother. Infatuated with his sister, he cut her belly open to kill the child she was carrying, his son, a potential rival ... He was finally assassinated in the year 41. The mystery is not about Caligula, for everyone knows very well what inevitably happens to a spoiled child, the mystery is the number of individuals who entered into his hallucinatory hysteria.

In the Middle Ages, the Vikings made sporadic incursions into the Russian lands.

When they had finished off a fortress or a town, they feasted on a great platform of logs under which the conquered chiefs were crushed. For this ritual to appear honorable, force would have had to pull off the feat of anesthetizing the slightest sense of reality.

It is not, however, just egocentric Caligulas or cruel barbarians who rise to the summit of madness. There are all those who feel called to a mission, these "I's" completely submissive to an idol. These "high priests" are all the more dangerous for being totally consecrated to their god-idols. For them, death is nothing. They are already dead to themselves, and what do they matter, the lives of those who do not prostrate themselves before the idol. Extreme egocentricity (Caligula) is akin to the extreme altruism of these "high priests." The most dangerous tyrant is the former disguised as the latter (imagine Caligula in the "high priest's" skin.) The twenty-first century is not safe from these "religious fanatics," far from it.

We can read this about Trajan: "The inhabitants of the city have erected this stone in honor of the emperor Caesar Augustus Nerva Trajan, son of deified Nerva, excellent prince, conqueror of Germans, Dacians, and Parthians, sovereign pontiff, invested with the XVIIIth tribunician power, acclaimed *imperator* seven times, six times consul and father of the country." In this list we can distinguish three powers:

1. The triple civil power of politics (in the title of "Caesar,") diplomacy (the "tribunician power" which confers immunity) and honor ("excellent prince" and "father of the country.")
2. The military power, for the "emperor" is commander-in-chief.
3. The religious power (son of a deified man, "sovereign pontiff" with a divine charisma.)

The three traditional functions (production, priesthood, war) of Indo-European cultures are here united in a single person, because of this highly dangerous. The man of power constantly seeks to concentrate the whole of these three powers (while the essence of democracy consists of decentralizing and separating them.) This concentration drives not just the tyrant "crazy" but the whole society that joins him in his madness. Why? Because the body (the producer of the first rank) disconnects from the head. It disconnects in two ways: it loses its grip on reality and it no longer resists domination.

2. The man of power tends to "disconnect" the producers from the real world.

The real is what resists. We know how much Trajan expressed his "respect" for the plebeians. He offered them a public place (the Forum, his basilica, his merchandise.) The plebeians who liked only "bread and circuses" were force-fed, so to speak, thanks to the new port of Ostia. The spoils of war diminished the fiscal levies (reduction of taxes.) the gladiatorial games in the Forum (tele-reality before the name) expressed on a smaller scale the dialectic of domination (to watch a few rebels being torn to pieces by wild beasts is not without its "mediatic" effect). In short, a large part of the producers entered directly and without resistance into the "machine of power's" bosom. This "doped" portion of the producers disconnected from the world and from the body. It entered into a collective frenzy of consumption. From now on, the empire coasted downhill.. (Fortunately, the barbarians increased the friction on the wheels of Roman power).

In short, the games transferred the people from the real world to a world of symbols and representations. This destroyed reciprocity. To sacrifice a symbol is not the same

thing as killing a man (even if in reality, a man truly is killed.) Once reciprocity is broken by disconnecting the symbolic from the real, every cruelty is justifiable since it becomes a question of being cruel toward symbolic abstractions such as "the enemy," "the Communist," "the terrorist," "the pariah," "the bastard," or "the heretic."

But another form of "disconnecting" exists: bureaucracy. I have had the good fortune or misfortune to observe in Quebec, directly or indirectly, different bureaucratic environments, among others the correctional system (prison), the child protection services, the detention centers for delinquents and the public education system. When a scandal erupts publicly in these environments (for example: a child under protection continues to be gravely abused for years), all those unacquainted with bureaucracy are dumbfounded by the incompetence of the system of intervention. How does it happen that no one saw this drama? When we know this kind of system a little better, we ask instead: how can it be that a young professional who had such good judgment before being hired by the institution, loses the sense of reality to the point of involuntarily participating in veritable social dramas only one year after entering this bureaucracy? The bureaucracy succeeds in preventing the eye of the observer from seeing anything other than what is supposed to be seen. It superimposes on each one's eyeglasses complex grids of explanations, ways of seeing, forms, statistics, generalizations, ideologies, laws, regulations, an entire language. Once this is assimilated, the service-producer sees only what she/he is supposed to see. She/he has entered a collective madness. In the educational system, for instance, certain teachers, certain principals and superintendents firmly believe that such-and-such a child knows how to write when it is glaringly obvious that that child can scarcely write his or her name. For each scandal and each individual problem, the bureaucracy will add norms, rules, and other means of producing blindness. No one will speak directly. If a girl arrives at school half-undressed, she won't be spoken to; instead, someone will add a regulation to the dress code. Bureaucracy augments the schizophrenia of those modern Caligulas convinced that they are rendering great services to society by adding to those norms that distract our attention from reality.

3. The supreme cowardice is to loosen one's grip in the face of reality.

But, whence come the Caligulas and the Trajans? How is the genesis of tyrants or tyrannical systems accomplished? We will have to examine both sides of the process: those who flee power (submissive producers) and those who rush towards it (more or less despotic rulers.) The two collaborate in the genesis of the "machine of power."

In principle, empathetic consciousness is a considerable advantage when it transforms the "you's" into "I's" and the "I's" into "you's." The "they's" then become a "we" and if this "we" succeeds in becoming universal, humanity's care for itself will come to birth. Ecological humanity is universal collaboration. Yet as long as this consciousness is not universal, it has its price. The price? Time to reflect, to feel, to redefine and enlarge goals, to take the necessary distance ... Reflective consciousness is an expansion of time. Consciousness that is not reflective is a contraction of time (to want the goal to arrive as soon as possible). Reflective consciousness is necessary to activate the empathetic and Socratic consciousness. This consciousness hesitates before power. It fears power, for it is aware of the responsibilities attached to it.

Conversely, the more the empathetic and Socratic consciousness is inhibited, the more one plunges immediately into action. The more "retarded" one is on the plane of consciousness, the quicker one is in the will to lead. The leader who is fleeing himself has no use for reflection. He gives the orders. While the sages continue their discussion, he has already broken down many doors.. For example, technology in the service of rulers advances by leaps and bounds, leaving it to the moralists and ecologists to bear the burden of proof.

The fast man (the "cowboy" of power) experiences, through the multiplicity of his needs, an imperative predatory desire, so imperative that it inhibits his fears and hesitations. He immediately transforms this predatory desire into a goal without even balancing this desire against all his other needs. He sacrifices his real needs to his desire. This is all the easier since his body consciousness remains crude. He does not need to authenticate his desire by an accurate perception of the needs of his body and his soul. His desire takes center stage and represses his deep wants. The man of power serves a single appetite: to dominate.

Why a predatory desire? The desire is already predatory as soon as the target, the good, can no longer be called into question. The target is so to speak already assimilated into the self. It is no use to place it in relation to the whole array of needs or the whole array of relations. It now absorbs the producers who must devote themselves to it. If the thing goes well, the producers will have no more time to relativize, to inspect, to evaluate, to reflect. The inversion of end and means is accomplished. The goals are the ends, and human beings are the means. The machine gets the better of the human and so the human forgets her/himself, forgets her/his vulnerability, her/his extreme fragility in the wider Nature as omnipresent as ever.

Conversely, a consciousness that is livelier and, even more importantly, broader never forgets its vulnerable condition. This causes it to reflect ... Inner complexity is perceived and this complexity does not readily "one-dimensionalize" around a single goal. This leads the sage to have doubts about goals. The time to feel, to reflect, to call into question.. And there he or she is, enlisted more or less unwittingly in someone else's plan, a plan in which he or she becomes a producer (or pariah). In brief, the one who runs ahead does not bear the weight of consciousness; the one who follows far behind does.

Let's try another road. With bees and ants, the individual readily sacrifices itself for the species (there is no better warrior, and no better producer than the bee.) But it is in the nature of humans to rebel against the species. It is their essence. Each human being, in his or her own way, feels that he or she alone is a species. This is the principle of individuation. Nonetheless, conscious human beings know that collaboration alone can ensure human survival, including their own. So they seek to come to terms with the others. Naturally they want to individualize themselves by establishing reciprocal relations, by mutual aid and not by competition. This takes time ... They end up by serving a man of power. In reality, since the man of power does move faster and does not as clearly see his vulnerability, he can act contrary to the rules necessary for collaboration. He will position himself as a superior species, above the human one (principle of castes or social classes). He doesn't collaborate, he dominates.

We should not deduce from this that the producers are "better" than the man of power. Perhaps they have better recognized their own vulnerability, but they have been overtaken and frightened, and they have given in. If they had not given in, they might have freed themselves. They would not then be servile producers. The man of power is not "better" either. He is simply more afraid. In a stampeding herd, the horse that runs in front of the herd is simply the most scared, the one in the greatest hurry to run toward death.

The forming of hierarchies in domination (and not in authority) reflects the differences of speed in action, and the differences of speed in action reflect the differences in engagement of consciousness. We should not yield the controls to those who want them. And those who don't want them should take their share. This is no doubt the meaning of Plato's advice: "Take as your chief the one who doesn't want to be one."

The empathetic and Socratic consciousness goes slowly; it needs to ripen. The goal-oriented consciousness, when it is unrestrained and unconnected with the other dimensions of consciousness, runs at full speed. The last two centuries perfectly demonstrate that galloping "disease" of a consciousness that is immature and disconnected even from the desire for maturity.

The more we live in a world where the speed of action is more important than its wisdom, the more the man of power risks being, as to his consciousness, a disabled person (a one-dimensional man). This is the case in time of war, and this is the case when goals are simplified to the extreme (this is why the man of power looks for war and pursues a single goal.) In the real world, however, everything is of an extraordinary complexity and collaboration is bound to win (in the long term.) The man of power is a man who wins in the short term, only to lose everything in the long term. The sage goes in the opposite direction.

While waiting for the arrival of the tortoise-sages, the hares of domination develop through the interaction of two kinds of cowardice: the cowardice of the man of power vis-à-vis himself, and the cowardice of the producer vis-à-vis power. The man of power is one who has renounced the inner struggle. The servile producer is one who has renounced the outer struggle.

Domination (subjugate or be subjugated) is not authority. When children choose obedience, they can do it not out of submission but out of wisdom. They say to themselves: "My parents are leading me to where, deep down, I really want to go: my development, my happiness. I see that they are better placed than I am to guide me in this plan which is also my own. I feel that I am being led, by them, from 'me' to 'we' They are introducing me to the social bond." It is a little like this when a healthy population recognizes a woman or a man as an authority. Delegation takes place. This supposes that I have confidence in the confidence I have in others.

Authority is won by confidence and this takes time. Domination is taken by acts of force. Domination is like a wave striking a rock -- the faster and higher it rises, the louder the noise it makes when it crashes. Gallienus, Florianus, Probus, and Carinus, were killed by their armies. Quintillus committed suicide. Numerienus was assassinated. Carus was struck by lightning! In fact, out of 115 Roman and Byzantine emperors there were 54 assassinations, 2 poisonings (proven), 6 expulsions, 5 suicides, and one was buried alive. As for authority, it is won slowly thanks to recognized qualities that are constantly watched and verified.

The man of power and the servile producer are both engaged in a process of erosion of consciousness: the first by the exaltation of self or the idol, the second by submission.

Their pernicious connection is at once the cause and the result of a loss of contact with the body and the world. The man of power asserts himself and is assertive. He presents his "I" or his idol to public view. The servile producer stands in the shadows. He rids himself of his guilt by projecting it on the ruler: "He's the one responsible." From this comes the obsession with assassinating physically or, more often, symbolically, those who lead us.

What is there in society that produces this surrendering of consciousness and responsibility? The servile producer tries to stand in the center of the cyclone, in the place of least violence. It is there that he finds maximum security. But the more safe he is, the guiltier he feels, for he pays for this security by failing to take responsibility. The guiltier he feels, the more he unloads the burden of decisions on the boss. He has

withdrawn from decision-making, and accepts only work. The action of the body on the world. Unless he is a bureaucrat, his real life takes place in confronting the world and nature. But his inner life is not engaged in the duty of decision-making. On the plane of decision-making, the servile man is not touching the ground, though he is in contact with reality on the plane of action.

The producer is connected by action to the real, concrete world, and because of this everything is always complicated for him. The concrete world unceasingly presents complex problems and his inner world, disengaged from all decisions, goes in every direction. His inner world is regulated only by consumption and the economic limits linked to consumption. He has a thousand reasons to hesitate in making decisions. From doubt, he passes to scepticism. We are reminded of the circle of Pliny the Younger (friend of Trajan), imbued with the "probabilism of the New Academy," who practiced a fashionable scepticism, even as he served the certainties of Caesar. Even today, how many sceptical men and women actually serve the dominant ideology. Many of our intellectuals are locked in this vicious circle.

The man of power has appropriated a goal, a target; he has disappropriated himself from his body's real needs and the real world's complex imperatives. The more active the man of power is, the less time he has to read his body and read the world. He projects his body's needs and, like all projections, they emerge completely distorted and perverted. The higher the man of power has hoisted himself in a hierarchy of domination, the more he has, of reality, only some more or less abstract reflections; and, of his body, only vague and strange reflections. The link is striking between the perversion of power that is domination and the perversions, sexual or otherwise, that it displays.

The producer has disappropriated himself from decision-making, but inasmuch as he is rather poor (hence less drugged by consumption), he remains connected to his body and to the world. Alas! This body and this world remain disengaged from the best part of consciousness: its power of decision. The body and the world are lost, then, in complexity. Confronted with this complexity, the producer gives up and becomes a creature of habit. Sometimes he manages to enjoy bureaucracy.

In short, on both sides of the antagonism ruler-producer, there is a loss of contact with reality.

As information ascends, it becomes more and more abstract, numerical, and symbolic. Those at the top live in abstractions. They lose contact with the world. They are a wheel that does not touch the ground. Everything begins to revolve, then, around the desires of the highest superior, the one closest to the idol. Everything turns and nothing stops what has become a collective madness. The idol becomes the hub of the wheel. It is a hub that is, by definition, disconnected from reality. When physicists wish to stabilize a photon, fix a grain of light, they fabricate a micro-mirror that is perfectly spherical. The photon, equally reflected on all sides, is fixed and freezes. The man of power who enters the center of the structure of power is no longer confronted with the turbulence of reality. He is in the heart of the mirror and no longer sees anything but himself. The others' adherence and their giving in freeze him in his own mirror. But the ruler is not a grain of light; he is inhabited by the anxiety, the solitude of a body that is misunderstood. What comes out of him is perversion.

The man of power lives in the fear of death (what he denies is his vulnerability.) Because of this, he is haunted by a desire for immortality. He attains it through fusion with the idol (either he identifies with the idol, like Caligula, or he makes it his own, like the High Priests.) He can devote to it every means available, and make of it the

supreme goal (think of the tombs of the Pharaohs or the Incas.)

Yet in all projections, there is a reverse side, a shadow. The more the ruler aims at immortality, the more death he creates. An insecure adolescent tries to shake up the powers-that-be and the authorities. The less they resist, the more violent he becomes, for the less they resist the more deeply the adolescent is immersed in his anxiety. It is the same thing with death. The more we fear it, the more we engender it. We defy it by riding a motorcycle at top speed or by scaling a cliff without any protective measures. Each time that death retreats, we feel as if we have conquered it a little. The men of power can do this by multiplying the dangers (example: like Alexander the Great, he goes to war himself), but he can also do it by sending others to death (warriors to the killing fields, producers to alienating work, pariahs to sacrifice.) To lead others to death is to feel that one is master of death, and almost immortal.

The less resistance there is to a goal, the more it turns toward death. When I don't find the answers to my needs and desires in the environment, my needs and desires evolve and become more complex. Through life's small frustrations, I am obliged to reexamine my body and my soul. For desires to mature, the worst thing is an immediate response to the first reading of my desires. Every parent knows this. If a child receives all the answers to the reading of its needs, it becomes a monster (it doesn't learn to reexamine its needs in relation to the real world.) The more effective power is and the more technology responds to the consumer's expectations, the more society is transformed into a monster. Such a society can kill many (especially if it kills at a distance through multiple interventions.)

The man of power also loses his footing vis-à-vis the world. He does this, among other ways, through appropriation. To appropriate something is to deprive someone else of that thing. An empire takes over a territory, taking it away from the people who were there before. An appropriated world is an abstract world, a sort of empty expanse on which I can project my dreams and my desires. My car is not a means of transportation, but a metaphor for my freedom. My business is my body. "Let me introduce you to my right-hand man." "Here's the brains of the business." "The State is me," Louis XIV asserted. And if he were eating well, he could not imagine that his subjects were starving to death and above all he could not imagine that they were starving to death because he was enjoying too much wealth.

The world appropriated by my act of possession isn't the world any longer, but my representation of the world, an object, a symbol. The man of power surrounds this world, and feels that he is bigger than it. He loses the sense of proportion. The emperor Liu Bong despised intellectuals. One day he expressed this disdain by urinating on a scholar's ceremonial hat. When he has reached the top, the man of power no longer needs anyone (he who depends on everyone thinks he doesn't depend on anyone.) The more he controls people, the less people control him, he thinks. He begins to be anxious, like a spoiled child. For now, he is completely dependent on the way his brain will react to the power he enjoys.

Violence is inherent in the process of domination. The more subjects yield to the tyrant, the more the tyrant knows he is not loved. We are reminded of the child who so much wants a little starling to alight on his head of its own free will. But he is impatient, and thanks to a trap, he captures it. The child shudders with pleasure. However, the pleasure of capturing the bird is bitter in comparison with the joy it deprives him of, that of seeing a creature freely come to him. What is gained by domination is lost because this creates a doubt about oneself: "What, little starling, am I worth nothing in your eyes!" This doubt leads to more violence, and this violence, to more doubt. It is the vicious circle of power. All this gets worse until it forms a great emptiness and a great desert around the self. In short, what desire wants is another subject. But domination

transforms everything into an object. The heart dies in its solitude. Human beings want to be loved for their own sakes, and not out of fear, desire for reward, or manipulation. The more I win, the more I lose; the more I possess, the more I lack. The emptiness grows, the solitude increases. Madness is inevitable.

The man of power feels a deep resentment for all those who do not resist him. It is by them that he is betrayed. Our submission is the worst of treasons. It is because of this submission that he destroys himself through his abuses of power.

The loss of the sense of proportion, projection and appropriation, possession and solitude, the megalomania of the spoiled child, the autism of the entrenched self, growing anxiety in the face of one's own monstrosity, this is a good enough definition of madness. Once the despot is at the height of his glory, he suffers the agony of our extremely painful "immortality:" the solitude of eternal isolation. The punishment of power is the infinite impotence felt in the face of oneself.

In *Crime and Punishment*, Dostoevski describes this idea well. Here is a passage from the dialogue between Raskolnikov and Svidrigailov, who is thoroughly immersed in the perversion of power:

- I don't believe in life after death, Raskolnikov said.
Svidrigailov remained pensive.

- And what if there were only spiders or something like that down there? he said suddenly.

- He's crazy, Raskolnikov thought.

- We always imagine eternity as an idea we can't understand, as something immense, immense! And why would it necessarily be immense? Instead of all that, don't you see, there would suddenly be a room, rather small, smoky, something like a steam bath in the country, with spiders in the corners; and behold, this is eternity for all of eternity. As for me, do you know, it's like this that I imagine it sometimes.

- But, but is it possible that you don't imagine anything any more consoling and just than that? cried Raskolnikov with a pathological emotion (until then, he hadn't wanted to talk with Svidrigailov.)

- More just? And what do you know about that? Perhaps that is what is just. And, you see, that's exactly how I would have done it, completely on purpose, Svidrigailov answered with an indefinable smile.

With that disgusting answer, a sort of cold passed through Raskolnikov.

Isolated in his own emptiness, the man of power has nothing left but his taste for death. What he likes is killing. To kill, he kills himself. The prime objective is his own death, his own deliverance from the monster he has become through "the cowardice of his subjects." His eternity is a steam bath (as global warming would have it) surrounded by the spiders of his spirit.

CHAPTER 9: THE DESCENT INTO HELL

If he could have conquered the entire world he would have searched for a new one to satisfy the avidity of his desires. -Corneille

Svidrigaïlov, the man of power, shut himself up in the little steam room with a multitude of spiders. Like a frozen grain of light, he is surrounded by nothing but his own reflections. This prison, this so pitifully small form of humanity, he calls "grandeur," the "grandeur" of Caesar. Why? Because once it leaves the ground, this madness takes on the greatest possible expansion.

1. Expansion is entropic, intensification is negatively entropic.

By expansion, I mean at least five things: colonization of territories, indoctrination of the past (historical accounts organized in its favor) and of the present (disinformation,) mortgaging the future (debts and ecological destruction,) squandering of energy and sterilization of creative forces. This expansion is not only a contamination of thought leading to ecological and social disequilibria, but also a tragic exaggeration of these losses of balance, a tragic exaggeration in the hope of awakening consciousness. Two opposing processes seem, then, to form the essence of the movement: the expansion of disequilibrium and the intensification of consciousness. The expansion is necessarily entropic; it is the concentration of information, intelligence and consciousness in a small number.

Entropy is only possible when there is complexity. It is impossible to plow downwards unless a certain height has been attained. It would be impossible to dissipate coal, oil and nature were these not composed of a high level of complexity. The essence of entropic movement is expansion. It starts from a hot and complex source, for example: a center of industrial transformation, a city, a center of decision-making, etc., and it broadens in space. As this takes place, the information deteriorates. Entropy is a movement of dissipation through expansion which has the effect of rendering whatever it dissipates less complex.

On the other hand, the essence of negative entropic movement is intensification and integration. It starts from a wide and lukewarm horizon, for example, every kind of material dispersed over a wide space - ore underground, a population around a city, colonies around an empire, etc. - and tends to add organization to these. It is a matter of gathering materials, brains, and potentials so that intensity and communication create complexity (a useful complexity, if possible). Products, services, processes, and intellectual and creative works will come out of this. This is the function of production. The function of the warrior is entropic. He blows up structures and persons, dramatically reducing complexity. The function of producers is negatively entropic inasmuch as they produce complexity that is useful, pleasant, or inspiring (products and works).

From the point of view of entropy and negative entropy, what is social life? A degradation of biological, cerebral, geological and other energy with a view to producing a social organization (industries, cities, etc.) that "negatively entropizes" products that are disseminated and finally degraded. Such is the general meaning of production. The purpose of social and cultural life is to keep the balance (between negatively entropic production and its entropic cost) positive. We can measure the

quality of a society by the fact that it produces more complexity than it degrades, and that it creates more complexity than it destroys. In brief, that it creates more economic and artistic wealth than it pollutes or burdens the future.

Just as biological life unifies cells so as to attain more complexity, social life unifies individuals to increase creative effectiveness. Complexity is not complication. Complexity is not a tangle of concrete and metal. An automobile is complicated but much less complex than a horse. A machine can only reproduce a movement. A horse has a creative capacity. A bureaucracy is similar to a machine. A bureaucracy is very complicated, but far less complex than a small studio of painters. A group of artists working on a fresco devise a new figure. The only result of bureaucracy is to cause intelligence to go round in circles that are increasingly out of contact with reality.

Social complexity can rise to great heights, but effectiveness is measured by its ability to invent many things while destroying very few. A living creature capable of creating is very complex. The parts of an automobile don't think, and the individuals confined in a bureaucracy don't either. A group of organically connected persons can make a machine, but the machine can do no more than duplicate processes. A school that is truly a school, capable of making children's creative abilities grow without destroying the ecology, carries a very high negative entropic balance (the creative complexity resulting from it is high in comparison with the degradation of energies necessary to achieve the education.)

2. Power complicates, but makes less complex.

Seen from this angle, what is the man of power? One who complicates the world by destroying its creative complexity to the greatest possible extent. He transforms the organic world into a mechanical world. This is an enormous loss. The man of power increases entropy (energy expenditure) and reduces negative entropy (diminution of creativity in nature and in humans). Therefore, he resolutely leads us toward death which is, for the living, the maximum entropy. The sage, as a person who collaborates, on the contrary makes the world more complex and goes in life's direction. He, or she is centered on education, for education represents the negative entropic maximum for a social organization since this consists of creating whatever augments creative abilities.

How does the man of power manage, in the end, to maximize entropy, squander energies and mechanize the organic? In nature, animals appear more temperate than men. They tend toward equilibrium. They are hungry or thirsty, and they eat or drink according to their needs. They naturally respect the entropic balance. Ecology keeps them in a certain range of equilibrium. It is the nature of humans to be able to leave, at their own risk and peril, their ecological niche. They can create powerful imbalances.

Balance is not one of the great strengths of human beings; for example, the mechanism in their brains that regulates satiety doesn't function as well as in free-ranging animals. Humans like to break limits, even if this leads in the long term to all sorts of pain and unhappiness. In us, desire seems bottomless. So a brake is necessary. Every culture has been wary of the terrible tendency of humans to collectively run out of control. What is a culture? Whatever tends to give back to desires moderation and a sense of proportion. It is a question of deflecting the appetites for infinity toward the invisible so that the natural appetites content themselves with their fair share. When this doesn't work, humans burn and devour all the energies around them. If the culture is misshapen by the structure of power, not only does it no longer play its role in regard to the entropic balance, but it also becomes one of the tools of power and participates in the whole society's slide toward death. In substance, the mission of culture is to resist the abuse of power, not to

participate in it. Without a culture worthy of the name, humans become their own predators.

To give way to auto-phagia (self-devouring) is the essence of the mythical Gehenna. Hell is sterile effort (the maximum of entropy, burning lots of fuel, creating lots of heat, for results that are often negative.) The Danaïds pour water into casks with holes. Ochnos eats the rope coming out of his anus. Tytios' perpetually growing liver is eternally devoured by vultures. Ixion whirls in the fiery wheel of his unextinguishable passion. Sisyphus pushes up his stone that always comes back down ... At the bottom of the hells Indian Buddhism places a monster with an enormous belly and forever famished ... Hell is the devouring desire that sterilizes humanity and makes the world a desert. Hell is not in the afterlife. Hell, the ultimate danger, is nothing other than hunger that is perverted, disproportionate, and unrestrained. It is the desire for the infinite become a predator.

Why does the man of power feel so much "pleasure" in racing toward his misfortune? A violent man destroys his family even as he preaches "family values." The thief, the rapist, and the pedophile sully and pillage until the very moment they are caught in the act. A conquering president pushes the expansion of his business (or his nation) to the point of its downfall. Why do they want to succeed to the point of failing?

In humans, pleasure requires a discipline (Epicurus built his ethics on this principle.) Why? Perhaps because humans are illiterate about their bodies, very poor readers of their bodies. Said differently, it is perhaps because humans think (interpret their bodies) that they are so deficient in regard to their bodies' needs. Thought (as Bergson so well demonstrated) is not an organ that facilitates the perception of reality. In this area, animals are superior to us. Thought is an organ for invention and a tool for the apprehension of reality. We must insist on this observation. Thought produces representations and suddenly, the human is no longer so much in contact with the world as with his or her representations of the world. This is the original Fall, the loss of the "earthly Paradise," that is, the appropriation of nature by culture. There is an irreversible passage from instinct to desire. "They saw their nakedness and were ashamed." In animals, the perversion of needs arrives with captivity. When it is condemned to an environment invented by humans, artificial and thus "humanized," the animal becomes gluttonous and sexually perverse. Man is the animal that builds his own cage. Humans settle down in a world that is increasingly in conformity with invented needs. They distance themselves from direct contact with their bodies and with nature. They mediatize the relation between the body and nature. This is their strength, and this is their weakness. It is their strength, for they can raise the world to a higher negative entropic balance (pass from nature to a magnificent, productive, and ecological garden.) It is their weakness, for it can accelerate entropy (pass from nature to a desert.) In sum, humans either garden ecologically, or they create a desert. Either we raise the negative entropic balance, or we accelerate entropy. We are gardeners or we are destroyers.

If humans do not perceive reality very well, they do, on the other hand, see very well what doesn't exist or even what cannot exist (a mathematically perfect circle, for example.) Thought is not an organ for the perception of facts, but an organ for the perception of possibles and impossibles. It sees in a stick (or another human) a tool. It sees a ghost in the darkness. In humans, the invisible (the possible and the impossible) contaminates the visible. Humans have for their principal friend and their principal enemy their own inventions. A child is afraid of the dark precisely because the dark makes us glimpse the possible. In broad daylight, many fewer things are possible. Thought multiplies fear. It adds infinite subjects of fear to the finite objects. It displaces fear toward anxiety. More than that, thought projects the inner world upon the outer world. A flag flying in the wind hides the nation and its people. Thought is a

radiation of invention; the "world" becomes a movie screen and humans live in their own cinema.

One day, a woman told me this dream that is so symbolic of the human situation: "I saw through a tangle of things a terrified little girl who was crying because no one was taking care of her. The little girl saw me and recognized me. I am her mother. She threw herself spontaneously on my chest. She disappeared into me and I into her as I embraced her and she embraced me." If this woman's dream came true, whatever is outside her will perfectly conform to her desires, the world will disappear into her and she, into the world. Luckily, in a person in contact with reality, this desire is curbed by the fact that the other demands her own existence. But the person who wants to dominate or be dominated doesn't have this break. The elimination of the real by the fusion of the outer and the inner -- this is the man of power's unbridled goal. "Let the outer world conform to my desires," such is the slogan of civilizations founded on domination. The man of power applies all his techniques to this.

The man of power works to make the outer world conform to his inner world, but he does not know his inner world. Everyone works to satisfy their desires without taking the trouble to seriously examine these desires. They know neither their meaning, nor their consequences. Such is the general condition of human beings. The problem of the present time is that humanity is about to succeed in satisfying imaginary desires that leave it dead of hunger. In this success is the essence of the dream! The whole world seems mobilized to realize this dream. No one resists. Why should we resist our desires? Why resist what we think are our desires? The servile man is like a parent who kills her child through trying to satisfy it. From this comes the tyrant's resentment of the servile man.

There are two methods of putting our desires into action: enter into contact with reality or break off this contact so as to enjoy our purest representations of reality. In the first method, desire evolves within experience through rubbing against a resisting reality (maturation.) In the second method (the easier, that of artificial and virtual paradises), desire is transformed into obsession and creates the entropic collapse, desertification. The man of power is the second method. Example: if an industry wished to truly respond to the body's needs, it would study these needs, it would examine concretely everything the industry produced: the product, its distribution, the pollution created, the energy balance, the social effects of the salarial equity or non-equity, etc. It would examine all its positive and negative effects as a function of their repercussions on the body and on the world. But it could care less about the needs of human bodies. The man of power is the diversion of intelligence away from desire and toward the means of satisfying immature desires. Poor eating habits are symbolic in this respect. They destroy the body through a bad reading of its needs.

3. The holiday of death.

Let's go further. The opposite of satiety is orgy. Satiety is pleasure for life's sake, orgy is pleasure for death. Orgy is an act against the grain, a ritual of prophetic inversion that aims at alerting consciousness. The Greek feasts of Kronia like those of the Roman Saturnalia carried out a reversal of the "ruler-producer" relation. The servant became master for a day. Babylon also annually had recourse to a king of mockery at the time of the feast of Saceas. A slave held the role of king, issued commands, slept with the imperial concubines, abandoned himself to the orgy and finally was hung. The orgy is the holiday before the fall, above all it is the excess which leads to the fall. The man of power goes there at a good clip.

So, whence comes the self-disgust that leads him to the orgy, whence comes this lust to burn the most energy possible for a great holiday of death? Empire, *imperialism*,

absolute domination is maximal expansion; to dominate until a wall is met, generally another empire. Let's give another definition: the empire is a society that devours more energy than its territory can furnish. It consumes more than its territory produces. Because of this, the empire lays its territory waste, which forces it to seek resources beyond its territory. All empires expand under the pressure of the disequilibrium they produce within themselves. This disequilibrium does not even out because the producers lose contact with the world and with the body. They stop resisting.

So the empire burns as much energy as possible. Everything takes place as if the brains, that maximum of complexity, wanted to create the maximum of entropy. To burn is to fragment, divide, add to the disorders, literally reduce the planet to an entropic furnace. A medieval text by the sufi Rumi relates: "You yourselves are the logs of the fire that consumes you; extinguish that flame and you will see that you are Light."

The empire believes it is possible to set goals arbitrarily without taking account of the totality of the body and the world, without taking the trouble to read the body-world relation. Like a child-king, the empire cries: I want this. All energies and techniques then are concentrated around this intention. If, however, the man of power wins wars, dominates the economy, effectively responds to what he thinks are his needs, it is because he sees absolutely everything as an object, a possession, a prey. This perception can only turn against him. Soon he feels that he is perceived as an object, a possession, a prey. The emperor feels that he himself is a prey in exact proportion to his acts of predation. He becomes all the more paranoid if he expands through conquest, that is, through murder.

The predator sees himself as strong and the other as weak. But all that he has done against the other accumulates like a memory in his own body. No consciousness can totally escape empathetic consciousness. What the violent men cannot endure, empathy, works in the depth of his being like a solitary worm. When all is said and done, it is not the victim who gathers the greatest resentment but the executioner. Each victory in war (military war, economic war, environmental war) creates a self-directed shame such that, were it not immediately turned against other enemies, the empire would crumble. Let us not forget that, in general, a victory signifies having killed more people than the adversary, having more murders to one's credit. In brief, to win is to be worse than the enemy. The empire worsens itself.

All empires need enemies. They hurl their warriors at them in an attempt to expand a surplus of internal energy, a surplus of internal entropy that poses a threat. Most often, this assumes that the number of pariahs has become such that the risk of civil war or revolution reaches the highest pitch. It becomes a question of exporting this death. War is nothing but an entropic detonation, destroying in just a few years what it would otherwise take centuries to destroy.

All the aggressors, the murderers, the rapists, the exploiters know that what they have done, they have done against someone like themselves. The darker and less allowable this is, the more it is inscribed directly in the body. Consequently, they project on others the monsters that they are. They see enemies everywhere. The more genocides a people has to its credit, the more it is psychologically fragile, paranoiac, and convinced that the whole world holds something against it. Consequently, it arms itself to the teeth. And if the warriors did not go to war in distant lands, they would be an internal threat. So it is necessary to multiply the provocations for war. Someone somewhere will attack or seem to attack, and this will furnish the pretext.

It is sometimes thought that a victory in war brings a sort of national pride, and this is how it appears. But all this has its insidious side, which comes from the fact that all the victims are now interiorized. The shame is spread throughout the body of society. There is a need for more and more pariahs, more and more poor and miserable people to bear this shame. This is why the more a nation grows rich through war, the more the poor of that nation grow poorer, for there is a lot of shame to carry, a lot of people to punish. The number of extremely poor people is the number of people who must be punished to free the good conscience of the rich. The poor carry, in place of the rich, the shame of a whole society sick from war. One example among many others: the Americas began their history with the genocide of forty to sixty million Amerindians from every tribe and every culture -- Where are these dead, this blood, this suffering? They are in the guts of the Americas. Each Indian hated is a human hated, and Americans are human, so they hate themselves. They hate themselves so much that they multiply the number of pariahs, poor, and destitute within their borders and the number of enemies outside them.

Numerous are the nations founded on the murder of Cain. Empires rise on a world suppressed. The emperor Alexander the Great looked down from the top of a mountain at his "victory" (a performance). nevertheless, what did he see before his eyes? In front of him was nothing but a confused tangle of corpses and wounded. The "victory" went to his head like wine, but his eye made the horrible image of mangled bodies penetrate his body. He loved himself, he hated himself. His love of self held firm for as long as ideology blinded him. But his hate stayed engraved in his bones and has crossed over borders and epochs. When it returns to its country, such a hate needs to see numerous unfortunates living in total poverty.

Madame de Pompadour, Louis XV's mistress, thought that no other nation existed "...that so well possessed the art of making itself hated as the English." After the conquest of Acadia, Quebec and Montreal, and while he was winning on every front, the General Amherst, by dint of arrogance, scorn, and injustice achieved the tour de force of uniting all the Amerindians against him. Their chief was Pontiac. Amherst nearly lost his new kingdom. The conqueror cannot stop. Like the famous frog made drunk by the smoke he was breathing, he grew bigger and bigger until he died. In absorbing Canada, the British Empire took on such an expansion that it could only burst. Choiseul, the negotiator for France, said to his entourage at the signing of the Treaty of Paris (which ceded Canada to England): "Only the Revolution of America[...] will put England in the state of weakness where it will no longer need be feared in Europe." An English merchant named James Murray had already warned England: "If we were to take Canada, we would soon find America too powerful and too populous to be governable..." Today England is the vassal of America, its child that is stuffed to the gills from the same instinct for expansion...

Shame about oneself creates expansion, a flight toward the exterior. The empire destroys; consequently it is anxious about being destroyed. And the more it feels threatened by death, the more death it creates. Shame about himself leads the man of power to desert himself. Deserting himself, he is even less skillful in reading his body. He projects himself and sinks without resistance into the death spiral.

Can we honestly speak of collective insanity? Foreclosure is a psychological mechanism (discovered by Lacan) by which unbearable mental representations are rejected even before being integrated into the subject's unconscious (unlike repression). Repression is neurotic. Foreclosure is psychotic. Many of those who became "tyrants" of great empires seem to me to have been deep in foreclosure. They saw what they were afraid of. More than that, they produced it. When the paranoiac has arrived at the psychotic stage, he acts in such a way as to provoke what he is afraid of. He is afraid of being hated, and he provokes hate. He is afraid of being

killed, and, after a time, everyone wants to kill him. Tiberius passed the last eleven years of his life at Capri, scandalizing the Romans with his debauchery and terrorizing them, while leaving the government in the hands of a powerful and unscrupulous lieutenant named Seianus. "The people were so happy when they learned of his death," Suetonius relates, "that some began to run from all directions, crying: 'Tiberius in the Tiber,' while others begged Mother Earth to not award him any other place except among the damned."

The modern man of power camouflages his perversions better. But he is not any less sinister -- especially since technology is at his service. In large part, contemporary tyrannical systems are equipped with ultra-powerful instruments of war, industry, commerce, and media. The modern man of power utilizes an overabundance of means to satisfy what he thinks are his needs, needs that are most of the time as harmful to the body as they are to the planet. For these false needs, he burns every possible fuel, including the children of China, India, or Africa. Everything happens as if he were inhabited by an urgent appetite for death.

In the long term, domination is incompatible with commerce. Commerce demands a minimum of confidence. The erstwhile trading partner ends up loath to buy the dominator's products. Then the man of power tries to impose himself, cheating in respect to the trade laws. The more he cheats, the more his economy suffers. No one wants to deal with him any longer. Obviously there are many who wager that he will take care of his friends. But it is his nature to make his friends his vassals. He cannot even imagine a reciprocal relationship. He is incapable of commerce. He never stops risking economic implosion and continues his unilaterality in action nonetheless.

When it comes to identity, the tyrant is unable to arrive at a conception of himself that is at all accurate. The image he projects is the one he refuses to see in himself. He always shows his monstrous side in the end. And the more triumphant and self-assured he is, the more pronounced and grotesque this monstrous image becomes. For lack of an identity, he falls back on his position in a hierarchy of domination. His obsession is to be as high as possible on a ladder of domination. Equality makes him anxious, so he diverts cooperation toward competition and competition toward confrontation. Confrontation pushes him to murder, murder feeds shame, and shame leads to paranoia and foreclosure. The man of power is disconnected from the real, obsessed, paranoid to the point of hallucination. An hallucination that he brings to thousands of movie screens today. He fancies himself the TERMINATOR, and he is. If the economy consists of drawing the maximum of profit for the minimum of energy expenditure (the most negative entropy for the least entropy), the man of power is anti-economic.

In *Les Liaisons dangereuses*, Laclos described the process of conquest very well indeed. First, the detachment from self prerequisite for obsession with the goal:

...Never, since his earliest youth, had he taken a step or said a word without having a plan, and he had never had a plan that was not dishonest or criminal ... His conduct was the result of his principles. He knew how to calculate all the horrors a man can indulge in without compromising himself.

Then comes the transformation of the conquered one into a thing entirely possessed, a desert, that is, a place from which all personal creativity and fertility has been eliminated:

It's not enough for me to possess her, I want her to surrender. Now, for this I must not only penetrate to her, but achieve this by her own confession [...] My plan...

is that she feel, that she feel very well the value and the extent of each of the sacrifices she will make to me; not to lead her so quickly, that remorse cannot follow her; to make her virtue expire in a slow agony; to unceasingly fix her gaze on this distressing spectacle; and to not award her the happiness of having me in her arms, until after having forced her to no longer dissimulate the desire for it.

Such is the essence of the dream pursued by the conqueror: the murder of the subject and especially, perhaps, the murder of the feminine subject. Yet the more he kills the conquered person, the more he kills himself. For once the other has become a thing, he himself becomes a thing: "Ah! the time will come only too soon, when, degraded by her fall, she will no longer be anything more for me than an ordinary woman." The vicious circle is under way: "I will tolerate my fate only when I have hers at my disposal."

CHAPTER 10: THE DULLING OF THE MIND

The nature of the man of power is made up of more than just a homicidal madness. His aim is also to numb, disorient, and sterilize the human mind so as to destroy its freedom and creativity to the maximum degree possible. Three principal strategies are employed.

- Production -- thought, which naturally seeks the meaning of action and reflection on its ends, is diverted, enlisted, and absorbed in the service of means;
- Consumption -- the intelligence that evaluates our needs is saturated by a supply of products that are attractive but poorly adapted to the needs of the human soul, heart, and body. We will see in the final chapter that, with all its strength, art attempts to escape the role of servant of power.
- Competition is part of the process. Contrary to common belief, competition as it is practiced and encouraged in the structure of power does not favor the emergence of the best in the human mind.

1. In competition, there is something tautological that reduces diversity.

Competition is supposed to reveal the best. The winner is supposed to be the best. Is it that certain? First of all, what does it mean, "to win?" For a culture directed toward force, "to win" is to expand. When one person, one association, one organization, one idea, one ideology eclipses the others in many minds, spheres, and places, they win. To win is to eclipse the others over a wide area. The same character, the same idea, the same power take up a very large place. There is less space left for the others, those who are different. Expansion consists of homogenizing, and it is by nature entropic. "This people has conquered vast territories." "This singer has many fans all over the world." "This idea has spread like wildfire." "Everybody is singing this hit song." "Everyone is talking about it." *

Through tautology, the best are those whose actions affect large numbers (of persons, of territories, of epochs.) Their images, their ideas, their laws, their customs, their politics, etc., occupy vast spaces, and the numbers are fabulous. To increase the "surface" of influence proves success. Expansion proves value. Whatever has little value shrinks and disappears ... This demonstrates merit, it is thought. All ethical or esthetic discussion on the subject is nothing more than pure sentimentality. The best is a huge fact that reduces the other facts to almost nothing, that's all there is to it.

Let's verify how it is. Let's take as an example a winning idea, and follow it. It is a winner because many people over a vast area have adhered to it. It has conquered minds, hearts, space, and time. Let's examine its success: the speed of propagation of an idea depends on factors such as its weak level of complexity, its ease of memorization, its ease of reception, immediacy of comprehension (the people are prepared to understand it), the compulsion to imitate it ... This is true in all or almost all domains. If, for example, for twenty years movies exemplify in every way the idea that there is no problem that can't be resolved with a good revolver, then a war will seem like a "winning" solution, and everyone will find this "obvious." What allows an idea to conquer the world is not its value of complexity (negative entropy), but its ease of transport and psychological reproduction, its ability to participate in entropy (dispersal

of information which deteriorates because of this.) It sometimes happens that a person, an idea, or a work of art rapidly gains authority because of its quality, but these cases are somewhat the exception. We will come to this in our chapter on art and transfiguration.

Certain images, symbols, songs and rhythms travel very quickly because they correspond to characteristics favorable to media dissemination. Advertising makes the most of this kind of information. Panic is the extreme example of a rapid expansion. The panic of a herd or of a crowd results from the propagation of an exceptionally simple item of information which commands an already preconditioned reflex. This information passes directly from the senses to the reptilian brain. It is exempt from reflection. All reflection slows information. If each person began to reflect, to verify, to assess the possible results, information would be greatly slowed down, indeed blocked. The best commercials are kinds of "panics" and are conveyed by a collective reflex of imitation. There is a rush to submit to information whose essence is to not reflect and even to be impervious to reflection.

The less an idea is complex and nuanced, the more quickly it is propagated. Fascism is one of those winning ideas, able to travel like a panic. As soon as we examine the idea in question, however, its apparent "evidence" disintegrates like sugar in boiling water. Conversely, a highly complex idea (negatively entropic) like the work of Bach or Shakespeare will lose the competition in the short term (it can only spread thanks to exceptional circumstances). Bergson observed that a masterpiece is propagated only with great difficulty because it is first necessary to create a taste which doesn't yet exist. (However, it is not because an idea remains unknown that it is good.)

Let us imagine that a woman or a man exists who is the best not in weightlifting, but in human equilibrium, who proposes ideas that are very nuanced and truly new, who proposes changes demanding a lot of effort. If this "best" were ever to exist in a society based on power he or she would, except in special circumstances, be the loser.

Imagine now an advanced planet, so advanced that its inhabitants visit us now (after a voyage of thousands of light-years.) The planet would surely have had to have succeeded in mastering very high technologies, for if not it would have destroyed itself by an inability to master its superpower. To do this, it would have had to develop a collective intelligence - above the obsession with individual powers. The ideas of these extraterrestrials would probably be strongly negatively entropic (uncomplicated but of an extreme complexity). If these sages from space visited our planet now, no one would know it because our culture is impervious to such a high level of information. These extraterrestrials would probably be as socially invisible as Jesus was invisible for the Roman Empire. If there has been a culture too advanced for its time, it has simply been reduced to dust by a culture centered on force, and today even its memory has disappeared. This was perhaps the case of the culture which developed under the Khazarian Kagan Bulan. The civilizations which were exterminated and eliminated even from the history books were not necessarily the most backward; they were, perhaps, previews of the future.

In civilizations, tolerance and an aptitude for commerce presuppose a very high level of social complexity that can only subsist thanks to the relative weakness of the "conquerors" in their environments. A civilization centered on wisdom will only advance if the surrounding civilizations get rid of force to a significant extent. The authority of Socrates must prevail over the tyrant, but for this to happen, it is necessary among other things to change the very idea we have of competition.

2. Creativity is expressed in complexity, complexity creates fragility, and fragility is the phobia of the man of power.

Let us clarify still more the notion of entropy (energy turned toward death). We have said that complexity is not complication. A tree is very complex but the degree of integration of that complexity is such that we perceive it as simple. The contents of a dump are very complicated but not very complex. Our societies are complicated but make everything less complex (every mechanism is less complex than a living being).

Entropy is a measure of disorder [negative entropy, a measure of order]. For instance, if your desk is a mountain of books and papers [...], it is a state of great disorder, of great entropy [complicated but not complex]. On the other hand, when you organize it methodically, with the articles classified in folders [...], then, your desk is in an ordered state or, equivalently, of weak entropy [complex but not complicated]. This example illustrates the essential idea, but physicists have formulated a complete quantitative definition of entropy. This allows us to describe a system's entropy with the aid of a precise numerical value: the larger the number is, the higher the entropy; the smaller it is, the weaker the entropy. ... This magnitude counts the number of possible rearrangements of the ingredients of a given physical system that leave its overall appearance intact. When your desk is in order and structured, almost any rearrangement [...] will disturb its organization. This reflects the fact that it has a weak entropy. On the contrary, when your desk resembles a battlefield, a great number of rearrangements of journals, articles, and outdated mail would leave it as disordered as before, without modifying its general appearance. This conveys the fact that it has a large entropy.

Negative entropy has as its essential characteristic a very great complexity whose unity breaks at the slightest disturbance. Not much noise is needed to destroy the pleasure of listening to Bach. Bach's music is very negatively entropic. An error in performance or interpretation immediately creates the impression that this is not Bach. Baudelaire's sentences are such that to change a single word tarnishes the idea or the feeling. Consequently, such works are not easy travelers, for a great fidelity is required and this fidelity is all the more difficult because the works contain a large number of heterogeneous elements. Works with weak negative entropy, noisy by definition, endure much more readily the inevitable distortions of transportation and rapid expansion.

Life takes a long time to produce a negatively entropic system (a fly, for example), because for such an organism to survive the entropic pressure of the environment, it must be endowed with a very great number of subsystems whose aim is to constantly repair its unity. Every being is immersed in the universal entropy. Every feeling, idea, or human work bathes in cultural entropy. The more the work follows this entropy, the farther it goes in the direction of erosion. The farther it goes in the direction of erosion, the faster it travels and the more it prevails over the competition. The peasant who plows downhill goes faster than the one who climbs back up the same slope.

The essence of the man of power is competition and not collaboration. This form of competition where victory is synonymous with expansion encourages not creativity but entropy. It selects a type of winner characterized by weakness of creativity. If the art of living were a sport, if the integral development of the person were a discipline, the competition would be so slow, to publicize it would be so difficult, that no one would finance it!

However, in spite of everything, in the long term, the competition that struggles against creativity works to its advantage, just as the blacksmith's hammer contributes to the quality of the metal. A civilization centered on force produces a massive entropy. Now, all entropy stimulates, in those who resist it, a negative entropy that bodes well for the future. We must not, however, mistake the dazzling sparks for the metal transformed in

the forge.

Consciousness, intelligence, and judgement work in the opposite direction from expansion. Expansion discourages creativity; consciousness, intelligence, and judgement favor it. In its negative dimension, critical consciousness acts like acid. It attacks all that is without value for the negatively entropic thrust of life. Consciousness is the constant. Sooner or later, every idea must pass through this acid. Highly creative ideas alone can survive it, for consciousness goes in the direction of life. Consciousness and competition (the type of competition characteristic of the man of power) are antagonistic. Competition favors the meretricious and rejects the intelligent (in the creative sense of the word), consciousness rejects the meretricious and favors the intelligent. Masterpieces are, in fact, very rare, and even rarer are the masterpieces that are recognized, but however few they are, they bite directly into the Achilles' heel of societies centered on force. The man of power could care less about this; he wants to win now.

But, you tell me, civilization centered on force has succeeded all the same in surviving for thousands of years. How can it have doped consciousness that much? Let's reformulate the question more precisely. The religions, political systems, and philosophies of such a civilization are reduced to a few easily-remembered formulas (idols) which travel rapidly but do not hold up for very long when confronted with consciousness. A bestseller which is only a fad will spread quickly but soon disappear. The man of power persists even as he holds consciousness at bay and rushes at full tilt into tragedy. How does he escape consciousness? How can it be that he doesn't collapse more rapidly when confronted with its denunciations?

3. Force undermines intelligence in every way.

Force is far from nothing. It disposes of enormous means in terms of energy but also in terms of power to manipulate. It makes use of extremely powerful subterfuges which spread so quickly that an individual can have the impression that he or she is dealing with a law, a norm, or a sort of transcendent truth. Let me explain. What are the tools of consciousness? When it has to do with "light", reason is the most immediately dangerous tool for a society based on force. This is why Classicism and the Enlightenment dreamed of an end to wars with the help of reason.

Yet we must not confuse reason and reasons. The easily-remembered formulas essential for the manipulation of minds may imitate reason, but do not give rise to experience. Ready-made thoughts like: "My God is the Almighty", "The world is ruled by chance", "The economy follows the law of the market", "The strongest wins" are propositions which can neither be verified nor put to the test. How can we dispute these tautological hypotheses? On the contrary, scientific ideas are very much open to dispute. A scientific hypothesis must espouse a language such that it is always possible to demonstrate its falsity

(Karl Popper's rule). Sooner or later someone will succeed in invalidating the hypotheses. Science is the only form of discourse certain to be in error (in the sense of an approximation that can always be improved upon). The more science surpasses its wholly relative "falsities", the more its knowledge evolves. Science is in the image of life. Here, the "competition" associates consciousness with intelligence and reason. It is a totally different form of competition that is actually not tautological. This is, moreover, one of the reasons that explain why science (and not scientism) is so far behind in spreading through society. The physics taught in the schools, the physics of the media and the general public is at least a century behind. The theories of relativity of 1905 and 1915 are still far from being part of the collective imagination.

In a civilization centered on domination, scientism suppresses science (scientism is the idea that science alone tells the truth). The adherent of scientism takes the law of the market for a fact, while the true scientist sees it as a theory. In brief, societies centered on force thwart reason and substitute for it an imitation, an illusion of reason which retains from it nothing more than a formalism easy to teach and disseminate.

Obviously, consciousness has ways of thinking other than science, ways of thinking more "turtle-like". These ways of thinking are more effective in the areas of esthetics, ethics, philosophy, spiritual experience, etc. Alas! They act gently and through slow maturation. For example: the mystical wisdom of Sufism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Christianity are very complex and experiential in essence. They evolve constantly, changing, adapting, and adjusting to the human soul. They present integrative values. These wisdoms which invite us to creativity lose across the board to the religious or secular idols of societies centered on power. Churches centered on force are to spiritual life what scientism is to the life of science; they aim to kill the mind.

In the man of power, competition and consciousness contradict each other. It follows that, confronted with consciousness, the one who wins will lose. As for science and wisdom, they position themselves in front of consciousness, in front of the core self. It is face to face with consciousness and not vis-à-vis expansion that healthy competition occurs. Science and wisdom are paths of liberation and have no chance of expanding in a civilization centered on domination.

Since the simplistic and the one-dimensional travel faster and quickly produce adherents, it follows that the population begins to think the same ideas, to react following the same reflexes, to detest the same things, to want the same objects. This homogenization produces scarcity (everyone wants the same things and flees the same fears). This scarcity exacerbates the violence innate in all competition. It is not the lack of gold that makes gold scarce, but the fact that many people desire gold without knowing why out of the simple reflex of imitation.

The man of power's expansion is not only spatial, but temporal. Societies centered on power write history according to their needs for justification, legitimation and indoctrination. The past is their thing, they conquered it, and they make it into a dogma that serves as an instrument of justification. Each society centered on power organizes the past so that the past justifies it, celebrates and glorifies it. Having done this, it borrows from the future. It removes from the future a good number of possibilities, if only by the reduction of genetic, linguistic, cultural and economic diversity, then it sets the future on a path which cannot be sustainable, a path that leads to death. It is the conqueror in time's two directions: past and future. Like Chronos, it digests its two children.

The man of power imprints his image everywhere. He makes the past in his image, the future in his image, space in his image, his enemies in his image... He calls himself multicultural, but this simply means that he has submerged all cultures. He makes cultures his thing. He takes hold around the earth (anti-missile shield), on the earth and in the earth. He "entropizes", simplifies, degrades and kills.

Let's go a little further still. The power inherent in empire resides in another infirmity: the inability to get past antagonisms. The man of power hurls contradictions one against the other. He acts as if the thumb and the index finger ought to fight to the death against each other. This is another way of destroying all the mind's efforts.

Let us take the following example: idealism and pragmatism. At first glance, these are two opposing visions. Idealism appears detached from reality (this is the vision the pragmatist has of idealism). By contrast, pragmatism seems to keep to the facts (this

is its ideal)! These two dimensions could then work like the thumb and index finger. But in a society centered on power, they fight each other. This conflict serves power. In struggling against each other they push each other toward the two extremes. In this way, the two sides make a mockery of philosophy, for empiricism alone is just as ridiculous as idealism by itself. The object is not that a victor wins, but that the two together kill philosophy. When two boxers are paid to fight, the goal is not the victory of one, but the victory of the boxing industry.

However, when two opponents organize and form a new unity, life and complexity show a marked and sudden rise. When cells stop competing with each other and associate to form a metazoan, life changes its level of complexity. It is the same in the social sphere. Competition prevents life from reaching the quality of collaboration necessary for change in level of complexity. Two wrestlers neutralize their strength. They keep each other on the same energy level. Let us suppose that these two wrestlers joined forces to produce a piece of work. Were they to do this, they would increase their effectiveness.

In a society centered on force, economic life is reduced to a state of struggle between producers and consumers, private investors and the public, competing currencies, etc. The economy, unable to attain a sufficient level of organic organization, remains easy for certain individuals to manipulate (in general, the holders of capital). By its internal dynamic, the society centered on power prevents the economy from organizing itself (pass from the mechanical state to the organic state). In order for the world economy to form into organizations which aim at responding to real human needs, humanity will have to pass from power mania to organized collaboration.

The economy is nothing other than the organization of solidarities and exchanges with the intention of meeting humans' real needs. Aristotle called the enrichment of some at the expense of others "chrematistics," and remarked that nothing is any less economical than "chrematistics." As we have said, if a business really wanted to meet human needs it should check to see if all these "externalities" (all the consequences of industry including the products) meet the needs of human beings in the short and long term. A friend who is an economist told me: "Business ought to internalize everything it is externalizing."

In sum, when force is the highest of our values, it produces a rationale to legitimize it, a competition that undermines collaboration, ready-made thoughts that simulate reason, and complications that substitute for complexity, with the result that it hinders the mind's ascent toward its fulfilment.

CHAPTER 11: THE ASCENT OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Our first reflex when confronted with the man of power is to think about a strategy, a technique of defense, of overthrowing, of reversing energies with a view to attenuating his destructive force. Many have opened up interesting paths in this domain. I am thinking of numerous antiglobalization movements for a sustainable humanity and nature. The emergence of a real universal democracy will no doubt be the integrating ascent par excellence, joining at the summit all these paths. Yet the foundation, the profoundest depths of this movement, rests in consciousness itself.

To dream of a world without power is not the question. Reality is history. Humanity is possible only within a certain inhumanity, not in a heaven where all would be brothers and sisters. The only way for a tree to look at the light above the forest is for it to sink its roots even deeper into the darkness. The sage never arises in any other way than by confronting the worst in humans. Socrates did not run away. He willingly drank the hemlock that the State handed him. Jesus went to Jerusalem to attack the Pharisees. Gandhi resisted violence until his assassination. None of these took refuge in the solitude of the mountains (except for a brief time). None of these believed that they were done with an "enemy", or even hoped this. This is the most radical enigma of the ascent. We are never done with the man of power. We must return a hundred times to Jerusalem to shake the columns of the temple and have the roof fall on our heads.

1. The descent into the Hells of entropy stimulates the realization needed for the climb back out.

The integrating rise of consciousness does not seem to follow a logic that consists of setting a goal and taking the means to attain it. It does not transform time into a trajectory. The ascent is not achieved by putting time aside. It takes life with its knots. When consciousness slides its hand over a knot, it doesn't untie it. It builds an intelligence around it that is able to grasp it. It is always much easier to climb on a rope full of knots than on a beautiful cable of smooth, sharp silk.

It is never appropriate to detach and exclude from each other the man who descends (entropy) and the man who climbs (negative entropy). In a well, the pail of water is lifted by the stone that descends, and, in large part, consciousness rises from observing power's madness. Humanity is pulled up on the sufferings that inhumanity produces. The pulley is strong, and the one who descends to the bottom of the well helps another climb back out. Women or men who come back up can only fulfil and consolidate themselves in a world that denies them. Maurice de Guérin said this, speaking of the seeds of trees:

An innumerable generation is presently suspended in the branches of all trees, in the fiber of the humblest grasses, like infants at the maternal breast ... The future forests sway unseen on the living forests.

In this world, nothing is content with being, everything subtracts and everything adds, and the tragic events of today intensify consciousness for a better tomorrow. All the man of power's "reason" is nothing more than intelligence inhibited by force, intelligence abducted, non-thought, and this provokes flashes of consciousness in others. If the man of power is made of subtracted intelligence, he is also made of subtracted power. Paradoxically, to the degree that the man of power develops gargantuan means of meeting his perverse needs, he loses the power to satisfy them.

Why? This question can guide us toward change.

In humans, desires are the result of interactions between thought, the core self, the body and the environment. The heart is said to be the site of these interactions. Desires are functions of the broadening and maturation of the heart. And so, the more directly I arrive at the goal, the less satisfied I feel. Between the start and the finish, there aren't enough obstacles and time, so life has nothing it can do. Animals perfectly adapted to their environment do not evolve. Thought does not develop in bondage. "Time is the only reality," Joubert wrote. Time is resistance. If, between the intelligence and reality, knowledge were immediate, there would be no time. If, between the need and what can satisfy it, the response were immediate, there would be no time. And without time, life could not taste itself. Going straight to the goal eliminates enjoyment. The body likes to be open before being filled. And desire always comes to make our needs more complex, to open them to new ways of meeting them. If, for example, estheticism didn't come to coexist with the need for food, there would be no culinary arts. If ethics didn't work its way into hunger, there would be no meals, and the act of eating would have no social function. But ethics and esthetics are always rendering our needs more complex (negative entropy). Needs become desires. Needs are met directly in the natural environment, but desires are not directly met. Play, variety, beauty and social life make life more complex and their greater complexity is part of satisfaction. In brief, the lack of immediate satisfaction makes a deeper, more esthetic, more ethical, and more delightful satisfaction possible.

The man of power resembles a man so alone that he sends postcards to himself. He sends so many postcards that tell him so much of what he wants to hear that he never has time to examine the landscapes and the people who surround him. He dies in front of his private mirror of all that can bring the human heart enjoyment. What the heart loves is strange.

The man of power has neither the power to stop nor straighten up. In the Koran there is this aphorism attributed to Jesus: "He who wants to become rich is like a man who drinks salt water: the more he drinks, the more his thirst increases; he will not stop drinking until he perishes."

The man of power wants so much to satisfy his needs as they first appear that he produces the opposite of what he wants. The man of power wants to build a glorious world, yet the younger generation is ashamed of him. He wants to provide a heritage, yet he destroys the future. He wants peace, but creates war. He seeks to reduce terrorism, yet he exacerbates it. He wants to eliminate poverty, yet he increases it. He wants to eradicate diseases, yet he produces new ones. He resembles the man who transformed everything into gold and died of hunger. Except that here, the gold is blood. Alexander the Great burned all the wonders of Persepolis. Hitler made Berlin a field of ruins. And the new masters of oil and coal pollute our atmosphere. The man of power has only the power of destruction.

What he wants to do, he does not do. On the other hand, what he does not want to do, he does. If we take a closer look into the heart of the entropic furnace, we see that the man of power is fabricating what he cannot even see: the liberated person, the free man, the sage. How does this happen? Here is the general outline: two simultaneous and opposing movements participate in this process: the elevation of the idol and the exclusion of the pariah. The extreme tension between these two releases a considerable social energy. Consciousness is then intensified and Socrates is reborn from his ashes.

2. The insanity of power is recognizable in the insanity of excluding the "insane."

In his fascinating seminar on Michel Foucault's work, Jean-François Malherbe clearly discloses the process through which the idol is elevated at the same time that the pariah is abased. Examining Michel Foucault's *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (*History of Madness in the Classical Age*), professor Malherbe identifies the complex mechanisms by which madness defines reason and reason, madness. Each opposes the other so as to clarify itself. We know that the Classical period constructed one of the forms of reason that would become our idol. It clarified its structure, its rules, its applications, etc. We forget that, at the same time, it defined madness as well.

Classicism did not define madness as the often awkward attempt of consciousness to transcend a form of reason that appears inadequate (as the Middle Ages did so well). Classicism could not do this, for it was concerned with constructing an idol (exclusive values) and not with enabling us to glimpse an integrative evaluation such as the transcendence of reason.

An idol is a strange thing: it defines itself by excluding what it isn't. The Classic idol "reason" was clarified by the exclusion of madness. Just before Classicism, Erasmus said, in his *In Praise of Folly*, "...the madman reminds each of us of the truth about ourselves; in the comedy where each one tricks the others and himself, the madman is comedy in the second degree, the tricking of trickery, he says in his foolish language, which doesn't look like reason, the words of reason which resolve, in a comic way, the comedy..." In sum, in the Renaissance, "reason" and "madness" find their connecting link in a passing beyond the limits. There is a super-reason, an intelligence that integrates madness and reason. Classicism will destroy their synergy.

Classicism produces an idol, something "clear and distinct" (to borrow the language of Descartes). This creates a pariah: the insane person. It becomes a matter of identifying and excluding him (or her). The internment of the insane then becomes inevitable. This is a benefit for them (a rational structure is imposed on them for their own good) and a punishment (they will no longer come to offend good and reasonable society). This is the very principle of exclusion.

In this transit through repression, the reason that banishes madness is reason no longer, but power, social power. "The family, with its requirements, becomes one of the essential criteria for reason, and it is it above all that demands and obtains internment." It is, moreover, no longer a matter of once again putting reason in question. Critical intelligence is directed toward madness, not toward reason. In this way, the world's madness becomes reasonable since those who don't find it reasonable are the insane. If it keeps on excluding the insane, the "good society" will become perfectly rational, it is thought. This is the ideal recipe for doing the opposite of what one wants.

Comenius, a contemporary of Descartes, contested this idea in his *The Labyrinth of the World and the Paradise of the Heart*. For him, on the contrary, the sage is one who finds the world mad (because he can look above a certain kind of reason which is only power's disguise). Anyone who finds the world sensible participates *out* of his madness as much as *in* his madness. He has interiorized his madness to the point where he no longer sees it. Even while he no longer sees his own madness, he thinks that he sees very clearly that of others. The thicker the beam is in his own eye, the more distinctly the straw in the eye of the other appears! This straw is nothing other than the projection of the beam in his eye.

And the madman cannot escape from it. If reason is a stranger to madness, the madman himself is stranger to his madness. "His madness is precisely what he does not understand," professor Malherbe tells us.

Yet, in driving into mirror images what they reject in themselves, reason and madness, idol and pariah end up showing the idol's opposite side. By concentrating the insane in the same spot, we may end up seeing the insanity of such an exclusion. Mental hospitals bring so many insane people together that the insanity of the hospital itself may at last be seen. The Socratic eye can then turn from the "reasonable world" that someone wants you to see (the idol) to the unreasonable world that has actually been produced (the enormous mental hospitals of the 1950's and 1960's). Suddenly, someone can see that the world is insane! At any moment, the idol can be denounced by the pariah. In short, exclusion itself can be seen as the essence of the world's madness. Now, exclusion is inside anyone who excludes another in the name of reason, it is his own doing. Someday someone will surely come along who will see that the man excludes a part of himself he does not want to see.

Let us generalize the work of exclusion and intensification that the idol accomplishes. A man wants to show that he is strong. To do this, he submits himself to a model of force (the idol). He expels from himself all "weakness" (what isn't the idol of force). But he himself is never perfectly like the idol. Then, what is he in fact? He is the relation of force with weakness, the relation of idol with pariah, the very relation of exclusion. This relation will end up being projected on the weak (the pariah). Little by little, without his knowing it, the man will experience moments of weakness which will increasingly become images of the war taking place within him. At times he punishes himself or arranges to be punished. Exclusion is a projection of his madness, and the more he projects, the more concentrated it becomes and the more concentrated it becomes the more likely he is to see it, become angry as a result, and exclude even more.

When the bishop sends the heretic to the stake, he punishes himself vicariously. He puts to work all his hatred of the heretic in himself. Sacrificial rituals are the enlarged image of exclusion. As a result of continually excluding, the man of power finally demonstrates exclusion. The bishop who is present at the condemned man's (or woman's) agony may be awakened to his own drama, unfolding in symbolic form in front of him. In Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone*, after the death of Antigone (consciousness), Creon (the tyrant) realized what he had done, became aware of all the blood that was shed (including the blood of his son, Antigone's lover). Creon created for himself a tragedy in his own image. He saw himself. And the entire essence of tragedy is in that seeing. "The poison of the world is me." Rare are the tyrants who see the damage they have caused, but the spectator of the tragedy sees them. The artist will be the one who precipitates consciousness and intensifies it.

Consciousness cannot be completely broken up. You can bend it, twist it, and tie it into knots, yet it will still be working and will provoke the appearance of more and more glaring symptoms of what is taking place within the person. The process of excluding the mad intensifies the madness of the reason. The man of power never has a sense of proportion; he always lays it on a bit too thick. With his weight, he wants to crush one pan of the scales and doesn't see that on the other pan he is lifting his own contradictions up to the view of all. The madman is beginning to reveal more and more "clearly and distinctly" the world's madness. He is a microcosm, a concentrated exaggeration, a mirror that enlarges. In the world of religion, he is the witch of Salem; in the world of science, he is Frankenstein; in the world of power, he is Rasputin. The truth of the world is projected upon him. He intensifies the image of the world.

As the clinician makes contact with the madman, he/she begins to get some idea of what is happening outside his (or her) clinic. He/she struggles not to see. But the madman intensifies the image. The psychiatrist can at any moment revise the diagnosis: pass from "this man is insane" to "this world is insane." During the First

World War, the Germans brought rabbits with them in the first submarines. Why? Because the rabbits became agitated and acted crazy when the pressure reached the critical threshold. The rabbits knew the truth about the imminence of an explosion. They had to go back up. Pariahs are in the image of these rabbits: they show us the abyss.

Sickness is what the idol "health" excludes; criminality, what the idol "integrity" excludes; poverty, what the idol "wealth" excludes; the feminine, what the "male" idol excludes ... but humans are strange animals: their collective behavior frustrates the consciousness of individuals. Consciousness is at work. What it cannot see directly, it transforms into collective tragedies and finally someone does see. Socrates speaks. Raymond Abellio writes somewhere: "It is those who can give refuge to the strongest demons who will one day receive the greatest graces..."

3. Inevitably, to the madness of excluding the mad is added the madness of war.

The pariah is almost always never enough. Increasing the numbers of the mad, the poor and the destitute leaves us indifferent. Something more solemn is needed, a more concentrated suffering. Blood is needed, fire, and burnt flesh. When the man of power is worked upon by consciousness, and the latter has done all it can to make the madness of the world be seen, and emphasize it, inevitably one man of power declares war on another man of power and it is the entropic coma: an accelerated destruction.

The ultimate objective of war amounts to all at once projecting the totality of the man of power's inner torment. It is about using a battlefield like a movie screen and on this screen, of indulging in a slaughter for the "honor" of the powers. It is about relieving ourselves of an excess of anxiety by all at once making everything we fear a reality. It is about radically reversing the movement of life. Such is the objective aim of war: make a bloodbath before our eyes and call this "victory."

War operates on men. It literally disembowels them, and spreads their entrails out on the grass. The man of power does his utmost to justify his crime, but the crime is there in front of him and reveals him to the world. Now everyone knows who he is. On June 24, 1812, Napoleon entered Russian territory with an army of 400,000 men. He returned with 25,000 survivors! On August 6, 1945, an American plane dropped a bomb. One hundred and forty thousand died instantly. A couple of days later another fell on Nagasaki. There were 70,000 corpses. Today, we are slowly simmering the oceans by burning coal and oil. The riders of the Apocalypse have been let loose.

Certainly, each war does have its economic, political, social justifications and so on. But this does not explain the extent of the massacres, the systematic rapes, the torture, the machine-gunner's strange pleasure in mowing down dozens of men at the waist. War is a male gizmo after all, a perversion of virility: rather than engender children, kill them; rather than create works of art, destroy them; rather than meet the needs of humans crush them. The function of war is symbolic, sacrificial, and necessary for stifling an inner emptiness. Great empires kill; this is their primary function.

The saddest and most pitiable fate falls to the most peaceable nations when they are confronted with a radical choice: defend themselves or perish. They are, at that point, drawn into a mechanism. And yet they can only get free, however, by escaping from this mechanism. If they manage to practice the sort of detached and purely defensive warfare that Sun Tzu taught, they can avoid the worst, avoid entering into the attacker's obsession. If not, they marry the enemy, becoming like him, and conceiving children like him.

Where are we in regard to war? In the Western world, the first total war dates back to 1618 (it would last until 1648). It is called the Thirty Years' War. It destroyed directly and indirectly between 50% and 70% of the population of Central Europe. It took place at the turning point between two great successive movements of expansion. Before the Thirty Years' War, it was internal expansion within Europe. Each nation is the potential or active predator of the other. It was the period of precarious balances between the forces of expansion confined on one continent. After the Thirty Years' War, these games of internal expansion were "relieved" by the global expansion across the oceans. This is the period of the conquests of America, Asia, Africa and Australia. It is, in short, the globalization of European political expansion.

At the end of the end of the 19th century, political colonialism had completed its circuit of the world. As there was nothing new to conquer, war returned to European soil. The colonial wars would culminate in the Great War (1914-1918). Countries like Germany, Italy, and Japan wanted their share of colonies. The Great War would be a colossal slaughter, but not the final tomb. The power-plays of internal rivalries continued. In 1918, nothing was resolved. Germany was humiliated. The will to colonize was still there. There had to be, then, another even more destructive war, that of 1939-1945, which was in fact the continuation of the Great War. A crisis-point was reached: Japan's atrocities against China, that of Germany against Europe, the extermination camps, then up to the crowning horrors - Hiroshima, Nagasaki.

These two world wars were, in fact, only one long pivotal war. Before 1945, it was about colonial expansion, that is, the expansion of political empires. But a political empire is very expensive because the colonialist must ensure a minimum of rights and consistency. We recall how Gandhi drove the "rights of English citizenship" like a wedge into the British empire's inconsistencies.

The tree finally fell. The lesson was learned and learned well: why keep on with a rather expensive political imperialism when all that is needed is to take the material and human resources there where they are? This is the birth of American neo-liberalism (which is in fact a neo-conservatism, a fundamentalist conservatism). So after 1945, economic imperialism replaces political imperialism. A series of wars ordered by the new type of expansion would ensue. These are wars of economic subjection. They themselves create civil wars, coups d'état, and all sorts of deliberately provoked and localized wars (it has to do with perverting and scuttling any movement that might arrive at a true democracy, a democracy capable of countering economic domination).

Today, an economic empire holds sway and, besides the blood shed in wars, three consequences are apparent: the destruction of ecosystems, global warming, and the absolute poverty of populations who are banished, excluded, grievously exploited, or refugees. This is what we have come to. It is impossible to imagine a greater accumulation of "symptoms." What is at stake are the biological, climatic, and societal balances of the planet. The intensification will perhaps be in proportion to the expansion!

Yet how does this intensification function? The idol is of great importance for the warrior. Imagine a general returning from a horrible battle, and, with the television screens still littered with corpses, he declares from the height of his podium: "We have succeeded in slowing the rise of the price of oil by two percentage points!" No! All this has to be justified, and well justified. The population itself wants the lie. The truth would demoralize it. And the lie must be in proportion to what is visible: the blood, the corpses, the orphans, the shattered buildings.

In general, when the chief is none other than the "priest" and in the confusion of roles, he himself preaches war in the idol's name, we are very close to the crisis-point. And

all peoples that are too ashamed of themselves instinctively recognize their leader in the High Priest and their salvation in his preaching. Why? Because he is in the best position to organize the sacrificial ritual, a punishment in proportion to the sin (his own projected onto the other). And if he has before him, as enemy, a priest like himself, it is the apotheosis; nothing will come to slow the mechanism and alleviate the drama.

Each war possesses its own machinery that must be made ever more complicated (consciousness must be prevented from following the chain of causes). War is both for consciousness (so that it might awaken) and against consciousness (so that it might remain blind). More than anywhere else, the idol's power of exclusion is at work. To exclude is to conceal, but to conceal is to concentrate in the same spot. Put dust under the carpet long enough, and the hump in the carpet will show where the dust is. War exposes the real goal that the man of power pursues: to bring together end and beginning, tomb and birth. To want to bring end and beginning together is to want to die. Einstein demonstrated in his limited relativity that all space is the result of a delay in information. If information went faster than the speed of light, at an absolute speed, for example, the whole of cosmic space would collapse into an infinitely small point. Life only exists because the end is delayed. If the end flowed into the beginning, there would be no life. The man of power wants to hasten results. All of technology aims to accelerate responses in the direction of the supreme perverse desire: to murder time. This is becoming as clear as the head of an arrow. The arrow strikes the consciousness. This awakens some. War produces a self-portrait that is impossible to deny.. Someone somewhere will end up by seeing.

4. The priest presides over the great wars in spite of himself.

The priest also intensifies consciousness in the end. The priest identifies with the idol, but a large part of his being is unable to conform to it. This is the part too shameful to admit. It is the nature of idols to be infinitely less complex than human beings. This surplus of life and creativity in humans is dirty, impure, and unworthy. Humans ought to be just as puny, metallic, mechanical, and predictable as their idols. The priest will go to the greatest lengths of repression, close to mystical psychosis. He is in a good position, then, to supervise collective hallucinations.

The priest seeks to intensify an image of what, in the body, is crushed under the idol (under the superego). All that the idol denies in the body, the priest intensifies. This is his asceticism. He is the one who makes an attempt at meeting the idol consistent with the idol. Consequently his body and his psyche bear wounds and lacerations from the incompatibility of the idol with the body. He becomes the mirror of whatever there is in ideology that doesn't work when it is taken too seriously. A number of "mystics" are famous examples of the psychoses to which these attempts at identification with the idol can lead. They intensify the image of the producer, the submissive servant and the sacrificed pariah.

The more the idol's image is intensified in a priest, the more consciousness seeks to illuminate that image, render it glaringly obvious to the eyes of the community. The better illuminated and more vigorous this image of the idol is, the more it divides people, between those who see themselves in it and those who reject it. But the priest is also in the image of the body crushed under the idol. The example of the crucified is striking. The message is clear: the idol (the Father) demands the sacrifice of the flesh. Obviously, the crucifix is something else as well. But this has to do with the sages' ascent and not the symbolic tool of power.

Let us summarize. When the internal tensions of a nation, an organization, or a business approach the critical point, either the priest organizes the sacrifice of a pariah, or he opts for a war. The sacrificial ritual of the pariah has the merit of

furnishing the perfect image of the human-idol relation. The holy war exports the ritual while blurring it into an enormous chaos. Nonetheless, in both cases the tragedy is presented to consciousness, which can now see the unhappiness power creates when it takes the path of force. The result is twofold: the self-image becomes dazzling clear, and consciousness is sharpened by pain. War and the pariah are a single self-image: "Man of power, self-hate is what you are."

However, consciousness, even when sharpened by tragedy, refuses to give itself to those who profit from the machine of power. The poor, the excluded, and the pariahs have a much better chance of seeing and reacting than does the lowliest of leaders. He who profits from war cannot see war. He who profits from power cannot see the consequences of power. "Blessed are the poor." The truth may set them free.

Let us repeat it, all intensification is two-fold. It has to do with creating an intense self-image that intensifies consciousness by a representative drama. This intensification is achieved beneath the social pressure that crushes the pariah, beneath the horror of wars that sometimes awaken a man or a woman, and beneath the religious divisions that from time to time create a sage.

The artist can occupy four different roles: priest, if his work preaches for the idol; warrior, if his art serves as a weapon; accomplice in the sacrifice of the pariahs, if he "pretties up" the poor. Yet it does happen that art takes hold of the artist and intensifies his or her consciousness. Art then becomes an attempt (often desperate) to make people see the state of the world and the state of the body, dying under the crushing mass of the man of power. True art denounces, but more than that, participates in the integrating ascent.

CHAPTER 12: THE ASCENT OF THE SAGES

To what can we compare the Kingdom of God? It is like a mustard seed: when it is sowed, it is the smallest of all the seeds; when once it is sown, it rises and becomes the largest of plants, it puts out great branches and the birds of the air can nest in its shadow. -JESUS

Wisdom does not begin apart from fear, but on the contrary, it is like diving into fear. Florensky relates its beginning:

...I had just begun to lead an independent life. I had settled down in an isolated lodge. I was alone, without any furniture, without even a bench: my clock was the only object in my "set-up." I sat down on a box and worked there. Cold, emptiness, barely enough to eat... Evening was the most terrifying. Night was falling. It began to rain, and the raindrops pattered on the tin roof. Abruptly, they struck thick and fast, drowning out the dry tick-tock of the pendulum. The rain was falling in sobs. The roof moaned in ultimate anxiety, in cold despair. One might have said that frozen clods were striking a coffin's lid. It seemed to me as if my chest were open and the cold water were running straight into my anxious, weary heart. This icy autumn rain brought darkness and fear. In the house, only two living beings: me and the clock. And also, every now and then, a fly which buzzed, powerless, against the window black as some animal's mouth. I was happy that at least it was there...

Without the excavation of interiority, no freedom is possible, for there is no subject to struggle against society's determinisms and the world's inevitabilities. As long as we haven't returned to ourselves, in the place deserted by the play of social forces, as long as we have not taken root in our bodies and in nature, we really do not have the shoes to undertake the ascent.

It has nothing to do with the rise of mystical feeling, nor with the strengthening of a will of iron, nor with the setting forth of a thought equal to any test; it simply has to do with the gradual entry of lucidity into the universe. The fog lifts and the body feels the presence of things. Beliefs collapse. What is surprising in Socrates or in Jesus is that they believed in almost nothing. While the person abandoned to social forces believes in almost everything, they believe in a single thing that they aren't even able to name. In that thing alone they believe, but they truly believe in it.

All dust inevitably falls back on a center of gravity. Meditation is not a form of complicated gymnastics with the goal of reaching fundamental serenity, it is not an exit, but an entrance into what is there. Something is present. Wisdom's first step consists of leaving the abstract and above all that strange abstraction, the word "concrete". That's just it, the concrete is not a word, and there is no word to express the concrete. The concrete is ineffable, it is the primary experience, the founding act of faith. The

sage forever remains a child, infans, perceiving the reality beyond words. We can read in the Tao Te KIng:

The people are all rejoicing
As if they were feasting at the ox-sacrifice
As if they were climbing to the wide-viewed hills of
springtime
And I stand there with vacant mind
Like a newborn still without expression
Left in my corner, having nowhere to go.

Sages are liberated persons. They do not construct a world outside of this world, but participate in the world as it rises like dough; they are the ones who activate the yeast. We find in the Sufi tradition these few verses:

You will always be alone.
Why? Because the tenants are without hats or shoes,
No believers, no unbelievers,
They have abandoned good as well as evil,
They desire neither name nor reputation
Without lip and without mouth,
Above traditions, visions and States,
Above the secret dreams of the chamber of light and of miracles.
They have lain down drunk in the odors of the lees of the wine.

The ascent to wisdom is the descent to the lowest in this world. The ascent is not a road leading to a goal, but a development starting from a source, a leavening, a seed, a light. It is not an exploit, but the natural state of a human being when he or she accepts consciousness.

I am stopping here. The objective of this book is not to describe the ascent to wisdom. For the moment, I would like to simply suggest what the movement of the ascent to wisdom is as the structure of power races toward death. Obviously, what makes the dough rise is the leaven and not the violence of the baker. To prevent the rising, the man of power strikes. Alas for him! He activates the leaven.

1. The end of an age.

I would like first of all to again pose the question I left implicit at the beginning: are we at the end of an empire (which will be replaced by another) or are we at the end of all empires, imperium, absolute domination? This is a question of dough. If acts of domination are activating the leavens of consciousness, intelligence, judgement, and liberty, the empire is preparing its opposite. Here are three signs to begin with that, in my opinion, are destroying many illusions and, because of this, clear the way for a hope that is more mature perhaps:

1. We have such powers of war, industry, finance, and media manipulation that it is impossible to escape our own causality: the imbalances we are creating can be fatal to us. To know that we have the means to destroy ourselves sharpens consciousness. To know that we cannot keep on going the same way without smashing ourselves to pieces at some point wakes a few people up. Yet this is not sufficient. How many times has Man hurled himself into the grandest slaughters knowing full well that he was activating the vicious circle of vengeance by doing it? Contemporary man knows just one thing more than medieval man, and he knows it dramatically: he is equipped to break everything; he has become an elephant in a world of china.

2. The problems created by the empire (the obsessions with domination) cannot be resolved by the idea of empire nor by any of its visions, its conceptions, or its obsessive fears. The problems which arise before us cannot be resolved by strategies of domination (if not, they would have long ago been resolved). These problems have their solutions elsewhere (in collaboration for example). The principle of domination is the breaking of reciprocity in every domain of thought and action. We are increasingly intelligent, but the projects this intelligence has been used to achieve are fundamentally stupid. One example among so many others: the enormous engineering project set forth by the city of Boston to build a six-lane super highway beneath the city. A masterpiece of ingenuity (all the construction sites were dispersed in the liquid clay beneath sea level) for a blatantly stupid thing: automobile traffic (the most unsuitable means of transportation imaginable in an urban area). It is impossible for omnipotent America to do anything that does not drive it down. The true solution is outside of its system of thought.

3. The problems the empire created can only be resolved by what the empire disdains. They necessitate the forming of what the tragedy is intensifying in the consciousness and the intelligence. What the empire stamps upon with scorn, what the empire considers to be without strength and value, that and that alone can resolve the problems created by the empire. Techniques are only tools. The question is to place them at the disposal of a principle of collaboration which can solve these problems. If power is a break in reciprocity in our relation with nature and our fellow human beings, the solution is inevitably in reciprocity.

Briefly, two movements are unfolding before our eyes: the obsession with domination is dragging us into suicidal military, economic, and ecological catastrophes; in the secrecy of marginality, humanity is preparing itself to start out again on another foundation. This second movement inevitably proceeds from a very small quantity.

I insist on this point. The cornerstone of this ascending movement is a small quantity, the smallest quantity possible. Sociologically, the smallest number possible is "I." As long as the "I" waits for numbers of people to act, nothing can advance. The "I" must reach the level of disillusionment necessary for it to say: "I, that's me. I must act, even if I'm the only one to do it."

Consciousness must attain an enormous intensity in order for that foundation to be my own "I" and not that of others. Socrates, Jesus, and Gandhi perceived that they were, each one of them, an "I," a founder. When I in my turn perceive this, the community of personal consciousnesses will be born. The beginning of community and solidarity is not "we," but "I."

"I" is the baby, "we" will be the adult, and this adult will come later, perhaps much later. As long as I believe that the beginning must be "we" and that "me" will follow, everything is lost. People tell themselves: "It makes no difference if I reduce my energy consumption and nobody else does it." The others are a perfect alibi for me to refuse my own birth as an actor in society. This refusal to be born to the world is the very fuel of the structure of power. The structure of power comes from the abandonment of power by the "I's" who refuse to be "I's." But as soon as there is an "I" somewhere who takes his or her power back, Rome crumbles. As long as that "I" is Socrates, Jesus, or Gandhi, this is insufficient, for one "I" holds up the ascent: me.

"But," people tell me, "humanity has never made a fresh start on any other basis than domination. So, you are dreaming. Even Jesus, and maybe especially Jesus, became a weapon of domination. You are forgetting that every society that has tried to live on

a pacifist basis has been eradicated or assimilated by a civilization centered on force. So, what difference can a 'me' make?"

It's true and it's depressing! It has to do, as I see it, with the very tautology of despair.

Nonetheless, if the "I" is demoralized, if it rejects its own social birth, the mechanism of power will inevitably remain a mechanism since it lacks a thinking subject. For the "me," it is a question of being born, and for the "we" it is the essential prerequisite. This despair, this feeling of powerlessness is so important for the mechanism of power that it is preached everywhere. We end up believing in it. We believe in large numbers and we forget that a large number, when it is not composed of "I's," is infinitely fragile. A small amount of consciousness has enormous power at its disposal. One or two "I's," truly born, can bring down a big machine. In England a few years ago two young activists produced a tract declaring that the junk-food chain McDonald's primarily targeted children and made them sick. The multinational spent a colossal fortune in a libel suit. The two young people won the essential part of their case and nearly brought the colossus down.

In Quebec, who, during the Duplessis years, would have predicted the Quiet Revolution? Not, in any case, those who scrutinized the statistical indices. All was going well and perhaps a bit too well for those who held power. You would have had to observe the "details!" For example, the fact that the Church had gotten hold of most of the instruments of power (detail!) This led a few "I's" to suffer in their consciousness. This suffering led to the fall of an enormous monument: the power of the Catholic Church. All that was needed for everything to collapse was one abuse too many (perhaps the Church's ties with fascism) and a few small but awakened groups. When power centered on force appears almost absolute, it is very near its fall because it no longer has any authority. It is a bronze statue on a clay pedestal. Two of three newly born "I's" easily topple it. One drop of consciousness can overthrow an empire (if the drop is of the quality desired.)

Force undermines authority and without authority, force exhausts itself in its fundamental contradiction: it dominates only through an every-greater expenditure of energy which finally awakens a few "I's" (sometimes only one,) but this is enough. This awakening changes everything. I would even say that the refusal of the great majority to become someone concentrates consciousness on the fewest "I's" possible. This is perhaps one of the important factors in the birth of wise and "incredible" personalities. When an "I" sees that no one will act, he takes firm hold of some pieces of rope, enters the Temple, scares the oxen, and overturns the platforms where the money changers and sacrifice-sellers stand. The general mediocrity has fanned an anger into flame.

Obviously, Quebec's Quiet Revolution was no more than an aborted revolution, a small change: the rise of a secularism that would obediently enter an ideology, the so-called neoliberal one, a matter of passing from Catholic servility to American servility. All revolutions have aborted for pretty much the same reason: revolution and maturation are mutually exclusive (this is precisely what Marx didn't see.) Nonetheless, the example of the Quiet Revolution makes us think: we can't trust the weight and the size of statistics.

The turning of an age that is coming can, like all such turnings, only result from a supreme act of freedom: the birth of some "I's" who will be founders.

The most difficult step in the inevitable transition (this, I believe, is Bergson's essential message) consists of abandoning exclusive values and accepting integrative values. This presupposes ridding ourselves of the habit of making good and evil two antagonists, two incompatible entities, two mutually exclusive realities. The temptation

to make force an evil, an evil to be excluded, is great. The passage from power centered on force to power based on authority will not be accomplished through the exclusion of force (that is a dangerous utopia). We have used force and we will use force. We have abused it, and we must master it. It will thus be necessary to integrate, "I" by "I", this stage of our collective existence during which we have killed each other for hundreds of years. This apparently shameful past was no doubt a period difficult to avoid. However it may be, our past is violence because the violence is in us. To want to exclude it makes it worse. We must integrate it, that is to say subordinate it to consciousness and to thought. Education is precisely that: to subordinate force to the authority of wisdom.

2. On the horizon, a civilization of trade is dawning.

After the era of "force" will not come the era of Paradise, but probably the era of trade in the context of a universal democracy whose form remains to be invented. I will put forward here one scenario: trade (mutually agreed-upon exchange of the fruits of labor, with reciprocity in these exchanges) is incompatible in the long term with domination. Trade is civilizing. Contrary to what is said, we are not a civilization of trade; we are, on the contrary, almost incapable of trade. Trade lives and develops where reciprocity dominates. The best proof of our great difficulty in conducting trade was provided here in America beyond all doubt. We attempted to trade with the Amerindians, but, owing to our inability to civilize our death instinct, we destroyed them. Amerindian societies perhaps knew better how to trade than we do.

Trade is not the battle of forces, but the sharing of works. True trade is the opposite of war. In trade, humans exchange creations. In war, they exchange destructions. When trade is successful, war grows distant. When a nation or an enterprise is no longer capable of healthy competition, it makes war. War is always the trick of the cheater, the panic of the loser. It may be that one day we will enter into the era of trade, that is to say, into the era of the taste for justice. This era cannot be anything but ecological. For traders seek continuity not from their power, but from their relations with other selves, and they know, that these relations depend on their relation with nature (from which they draw their works).

Despite the terrible genocide of the Amerindians, examples of the scenario can be found over short periods in different places, among others, in New France in the seventeenth century. In the St. Lawrence valley, the upper Mississippi and as far as the land of the Natchez, the French were a minority in relation to the native peoples. The fur trade, but also the survival of people and colonies, depended on their ability to interact with the Amerindians. As soon as they forgot that constraint, they paid the price. In some localities and for some years, trade civilized a number of Frenchmen. Certainly the appetite for profit created abuses of all kinds, but trade always presupposes moderation. It is not the absence of power, it is power moderated by the necessity for reciprocity. This is a step that is not negligible.

The traders are always thinking of the health and happiness of those with whom they deal, for their existence depends on the other's existence. The man of power is incapable of trade; he always ends by crushing the one he depends on. I believe it is trade that will do away with the emperor. No one wants to trade with the one who dominates and grossly exploits him. For the empire to crumble, to stop trading with the emperor will suffice.

Trade requires institutions capable of controlling force. Only a universal democracy is able to become a guardian of trade. But that's exactly it, democracy rests entirely on the education of consciousness.

The man of power is weakened whenever a pariah breaks his chains, whenever a warrior awakens on the battlefield, whenever a priest at last emerges from the religions of fear. This liberating reversal has a gender, perhaps. One more speculative question! If the man of power isn't really a man, but virility which has ended up in fear of self, liberation may be feminine in essence.

What is the history of civilizations? A way of organizing time in which, little by little, but inevitably, the facts agree with the symbols we invent. We always end up by being in the image of our gods (projection of ourselves). The civilization of force has ended up by resembling Jupiter. The man of power plays with man, and with woman even more so, as if they were his things. Consciousness is theatrical, "tragic." When the symbol is attained, consciousness has succeeded in putting in image form what it wanted to denounce. The tragedy is there before our eyes: the fate of woman is the very symbol of what we are doing to the thinking subject. We have put our tragedy on the stage.

The symbols we project onto the heavens organize the facts. In the heavens, the perverted virility of the tyrant has subjugated the feminine. On earth as in heaven! On earth, women are statistically poorer and more deprived of the instruments of power, and thus more receptive to the intensification of consciousness. If the man of power began with the dethroning of the mother goddesses, he may end with the arrival of women free of fear. As for man, he will remain in his fears for a long time yet. Man is anxiously waiting for woman to be born to herself. Then, he will dare, perhaps, to assume the virility, the ultimate virility of engendering, with the women, a world founded on collaboration.

Force rests on fear, retribution, dependence, manipulation, and ignorance. If women leave fear, dependence, and ignorance behind (ignorance consists of learning only what is taught) everything can swiftly turn completely around. I do not believe that man will pass from fear to confidence before woman does. For woman to escape man's hold is a question of human evolution.

A civilization centered on force consumes a staggering quantity of fuel just to remain at the same level of spiritual and intellectual atrophy. It has to create an enormous entropy in order to stagnate around its reflexes of domination. But in consuming its energies, it leaves a place for something else that will surprise it.

3. The stages of consciousness possibly form a Jacob's ladder.

There is no method for growth and ascent. Stop stifling life and life will revive -- this is all that it takes. Here, I will only sketch out a few guidelines perceived while meditating on the lives of a few sages who have, in my view, experienced the ascent. The ascent is achieved through integration, and consequently through encompassing. The encompassing consciousness works on the intentional consciousness (directed by intentions), and what is not understood will be projected in the form of a tragedy. The tragedy of tyranny produces four results: an outer desert, an inner desert, an increase in danger, and much suffering. Briefly, what is not heard in the inner peace of Socrates is screamed in the tragedy of Sophocles. The consciousness of certain spectators "transcends" the tragedy, encompasses it, and passes beyond it. This is what gives the work of art its power over power. This "transcended" consciousness will inevitably play a part in the future. When the drama is completed, those spectators who were awakened will build a new world. They don't leave this world, they change it.

Six stages open out on the horizon, not successive stages that make it possible to measure or "evaluate" the ascent, but concentric stages surrounding each other like the rings in a tree trunk. The ascent is not properly speaking an elevation, but a widening, a deepening and an integration of the past. The memory integrates, the will

grows firm, the intelligence breaks through. These three tools of consciousness work toward growth. This means that we grow from resonance to resonance and not from perfection to perfection (ascending to an idol). For example, at the end of his life, an old man appears to have lost everything, but he has integrated everything. He has not left his childhood behind, it shines through his face. He has not left his adolescence behind, we see it in his hope. His human appearance is falling into ruin, but his human nature has never been so well expressed. This is what the ascent is: to lay hold on the fabulous power of life's great fragilities. What dies forms the fertilizing ash for the succeeding stage.

I might take the risk of stating the six following stages of consciousness:

1. This is the moment when consciousness, obsessed by goals, remains incapable of inversion. It is egocentric, incapable of empathy (but can feign it), incapable of the principle of reciprocity, incapable of understanding proportions, incapable of learned ignorance, incapable of reading interdependences. It takes itself as the sole model and the only reference. It is unable to understand another point of view. It is one-dimensional. It sees itself as the island of reference, the island of truth. The only logic it is capable of is one with three tenses: goal, means, results. It doesn't perceive any ethic but utility. Ethics (like everything else) is, for it, nothing more than one means among others of manipulating human beings as a function of its goals. For it, everyone is like that. Those who think otherwise are nothing more than hypocrites. It can only accelerate entropy because the world's hostility is the element in which it moves.

2. This is the moment when the Socratic consciousness emerges. This consciousness is capable of inversion. It is empathetic, is able to take different points of view, seeks reciprocity, and understands interdependence. Yet its lack of lucidity and its illiteracy in regard to its body and the world keep it within the realm of power's games. It can't yet differentiate its representation of the body from its real body, the representation of the world from the real world. So it remains incapable of grasping proportions, incapable of learned ignorance, and consequently its good intentions are constantly reversed in its achievements. It does the contrary of what it wants to do. It lives according to a dualistic morality where good is, more than anything else, regarded as the absence of evil. Acting according to "norms," it contributes to power's games in spite of itself.

3. This is the first moment when consciousness becomes aware of the ascent. Here, consciousness is not only capable of inversion, but of attention also. The person realizes how difficult it is to read his/her body. He/she concentrates on this task. Personal development is a major preoccupation. The person begins to become an individual, and stops behaving out of imitation (it is the birth of the "I.") This consciousness becomes capable of a learned ignorance in regard to self (perceives the difference between its representation of the body and the body itself). It listens to its body, but does not listen to the world very much. Gradually, it arrives at a lucidity that permits it to escape the vicious circle of power's games. However, its lack of attention to the direct relation between body and world prevent it from attaining freedom of action. It does not seek to modify the environment, only itself. Its ethics are subtle and take account of the portion of mystery in humans. Alas, in spite of all its good intentions, it continues to be manipulated by the games of power.

4. Here, it is the attentional consciousness (and not just the intentional

consciousness) that becomes capable of inversion (it realizes that its body which is projected onto the world is itself the projection of the world). It sees itself living in the history of the world. The fate of the world is as important to it as its own fate. It is capable of compassion, communion, and solidarity. It manages to fall out of love with its conditioned "destiny." It is able to produce free acts. It dimly perceives the serene being of its transcendental consciousness. It experiences the universal "we," the collective being forming in the history encompassing it (it is the birth of "we"). It practices an ethic of collective responsibility. It succeeds in no longer allowing itself to be used by the man of power. Within its consciousness is intensified, sparks spring out, and the consciousness is able to share new conceptions.

5. This is the first appearance of the liberated consciousness. At this stage, consciousness really wants to become embodied, slip out of the idol, and fully enter life with all the risks that this entails. Confidence has entered and made its nest in the human soul. The person is no longer a simple potentiality, but actualizes him/herself by producing original, concrete and multiple works capable of facilitating the widening of consciousnesses. Ethics at this level goes beyond good and evil. This is not just an ethic of responsibility, but above all, an ethic of participation in creation. This consciousness contributes to the emergence of freedoms. As such, it facilitates the ascent of those around it. In most cases, the man of power, having identified it as an authority capable of catalyzing the social bond and bringing solidarity, consequently wills its death.

6. This is the moment of transfiguration, the object of the following chapter.

Is there a final enshrouding? I hope not, for when the pleasure of creation has "launched" us, we continually seek empty spaces for new possibilities. Each leap of consciousness finds its synthesis in a great feeling. In his final feeling, the old man assumes the whole of his life. The ultimate end is never anything other than a work of art that invites us to another work of art (sometimes at a higher level).

CHAPTER 13: ART AND TRANSMUTATION

You gave me mud and I have made it gold. - BAUDELAIRE

Transmutation, the passage from one face to another, is the expression of the ultimate synthesis and the final passing in a given great cycle. Transmutation, the passage from one face to another, is the expression of the ultimate synthesis and the final passing in a given great cycle. It is no longer a question here of a progression within a civilization of power (which inevitably passes from empire to empire by little cycles), but of a passing beyond the illusion of empire itself (whether it is political, economic, social or cultural), a maturing of the idea of power. Transmuted beings, whether they are persons or works of art, prefigure what civilization will be once it has rid itself of the present structure of power, a structure which renders human beings powerless in the face of their own insanities. There will no doubt be other great challenges (for example, that of reciprocity in trade), but in general the empire will have simply become an object of derision. If an Alexander the Great, a Napoleon, or a Hitler appears, he will do no more than make people laugh and will not be able to gather any power. If a mass of people abandon their power to a political or commercial tyrant, they will inspire pity. This collective transmutation awaits us in the future. For a long time, true art and wisdom have been its reflections. It will be a society where individually and collectively, power will be assumed and not transferred from one irresponsible person to another.

I cannot approach transmutation without thinking of Raphael, the artist whose Transmutation expressed his ultimate legacy. His painting is remarkable for its meaning and can serve as a synthesis. But before going into Raphael's particular synthesis, we must understand the general meaning of art. True art is above all an awakening of consciousness in the face of death and a rising up of meaning in the face of the absurd. Art, in sum, carries on the negatively entropic work of life.

We have emphasized this in order to say that all creation, as opposed to all destruction, is a rising against entropy. We have recalled Bergson's idea that, with few exceptions, the masterpiece takes time to catch on since it requires a complex (and not a complicated) intelligence. This greater length of time is worth it, for what consciousness gains it will never lose. Grain by grain the island of the mind emerges from the sea. Regressions can very well occur, but someone will always enjoy a masterpiece, and raise her/himself to the height required to understand it. Art is a sort of cog railway, an ascension of the consciousness which rises unusually slowly, by fits and starts, but does not fall back. The potential is acquired. It is not acquired for the unconscious; it is acquired for consciousness. Those who accede to consciousness accede at the same time to the treasures of the mind's acquisitions, to culture, I mean. Others don't even perceive them. The fact that Gandhi existed is enough to trouble all those consciousnesses standing in wait for the truth. Now no one can any longer be at the same time awakened and satisfied before having attained, in their own way, an equality with Gandhi in the expression of their love.

What does the work of art do that enables it to participate in the negatively entropic rise of life? Negative entropy can take another form than that of complexity. A very weak entropy, and consequently a very strong negative entropy, can be compatible with a very great simplicity. Entropy is high when many elements can be rearranged without the organization, the general order, being modified. When there are many elements,

the disorder, the entropy, comes from the fact that many things can be rearranged without this changing anything whatsoever, for there is no rule or principle of arrangement. This is the case for a jumble of books thrown pell-mell on a dump. On the contrary, the notes that form a musical masterpiece can scarcely endure the smallest change. But if the quantity isn't there, a very weak entropy and a very strong negative entropy can take a completely different form. Let us imagine a form so simple that the slightest perturbation would be immediately perceptible. For extremely small quantities,

it is symmetry and the levels of symmetry that add to negative entropy. According to recent theories of the inflationary Big Bang, this would have been the case in the primordial universe. It would have been so simple, that is, there would have been levels of associated imperfection would have been measurable and would have had enormous effects. Entropy was close to an absolute zero. It was the highest degree of negative entropy discernable in the smallest quantity imaginable. It's the same thing for art. Certain masterpieces are characterized by simplicity and not by simplism. Simplism can be anything, but simplicity is unique and very rare.

More generally, we can say that masterpieces, like living bodies, are characterized by the presence, at the same time, of complexity (tendency toward diversification) and by simplicity (tendency toward integration). Simplicity integrates all levels of complexity into the work. Bach produced a music at once very simple through its integrating principles and very complex through the diversity it could integrate. It is the extreme simplicity of the integrating nucleus that allows complexity to appear unified.

A masterpiece can sometimes take the form of an act so simple that it is at the same time highly negatively entropic and a great traveler; it can cross time and space like lightning, and become contagious for every awakening consciousness. Lao-Tse, Socrates, Buddha, Jesus, Gandhi and many others produced such acts. They have no effect on unconsciousness and irresponsibility, but change the whole fraternity of consciousnesses.

Let us now imagine a universe so simple, so un-entropic, so strongly negatively entropic that to understand anything whatsoever, one would have to understand everything. Since it would be impossible to advance in any field of knowledge, one would have to make, all at once, a leap of understanding and grasp everything in its totality. Fortunately the universe is at present sufficiently entropic for distinct fields of knowledge to advance in relative independence one from the other. But the primordial universe did not permit this, and the artistic masterpiece does not allow this either. It must be understood all at once by a sort of leap of the mind called transfiguration, a transition from one figure to another. This is why, when an act becomes a masterpiece through the purity and simplicity of the one who accomplishes it, this act seems to slumber for a long time in the cultural background, then suddenly causes a leap for an entire civilization.

A masterpiece imposes its authority on consciousness and intelligence. It brings about an irreversible effect, not that a fall is impossible, but that consciousness will forever be obsessed by the masterpiece. For example, the life of Jesus is a sort of masterpiece. Despite all the efforts to coopt this masterpiece, to distort and misrepresent it, it survives in spite of everything. The life and the word of Jesus seem to have been at once so simple and so complex, so negatively entropic, so unique, that it will always be possible to intuit them despite the historical muddle created by his interpreters (whether they are for or against.) If someone takes a work of Bach and debases it, it is so negatively entropic at its origin that a person who studies it seriously will succeed in understanding that he or she is in the presence of a falsified work. She or he will discover, at least in part, the original work in the falsified work because of the simplicity

of the integrating principle. Such is the first power of a masterpiece: it maintains a sort of internal incorruptibility and whatever may be the distortions, a truly sensitive consciousness, an attentive intelligence, can find the essence of the work.

The second power of a masterpiece comes from its ability to lead all honest consciousnesses. This is confirmed by, among other things, sympathetic sensitivity. If we return to the example of Jesus, we see a man who, when slavery was at the height of its legitimacy (it is the essence of empire to find ways of legitimizing slavery) proposed in his life and words a clear vision of the equal dignity of each human being. He wasn't the first to do it, but the first to make it a masterpiece, the first to pay its total price. Very slowly, this is affirming itself, not among the masses as such, but among consciousnesses of good will and honesty. This consciousness of equality will rise very slowly, but unfailingly. In the Middle Ages, people still collectively enjoyed the public physical torture of pariahs. Even painting was unable to make suffering's face appear in the heretics who were burnt. People didn't seem to see this suffering. Starting with the twentieth century, the man of power is required to hide in order to torture. Apart from exceptional contexts, he can no longer make a collective spectacle out of it. Consciousness has gained something. And the man of power is required to export the greater part of the extreme poverty, torture and gross exploitation that are his characteristics. If he had not regained control of the media, if the media were still capable of seeing the Gandhis in this world, the man of power would make humanity indignant. The masterpieces change very slowly and very subtly the thresholds beyond which the man (or woman) of good will grows indignant. It's not much, but it is, I believe, irreversible. The man of power spends more and more for repression, payoffs, propaganda and lies; he is using up his energies in his struggle with consciousness. This means that consciousness has the advantage, for the more a statement stays open and holds truth for the core self, the less necessary it is to expend energy for it to cross space and time; this is the principle of authority. Authority is recognized by this: its balance of energy is positive; it creates more energy than it consumes.

So, what is the mission of art, if not to bring a transfiguration to those who produce it, those who savor it, and those who let themselves be touched by it. This transfiguration demands a very high level of negative entropy in the work and nothing else, no strategy, no particular expenditure.

1. Transfiguration in art.

The *Universalis Encyclopedia* attributes two main functions to *Literary Creation* (article by Gilbert Durand): to escape death and to give meaning to what has no meaning. These two functions are taken up again in an entire literature about literature. When we want to emphasize the fact that these two functions are one, we employ the word "transfiguration." To transfigure means, then: to immortalize and to elevate in meaning. The world demands the act of writing in order to be transfigured by it (to escape from death and the absurd.) Previously, it was intergenerational memory that undertook this role. The word "writing" is used here in the widest sense as propagation by a language that provides intelligibility. Music, painting, theater, cinema are languages. Certain persons have even lived a life that was essentially symbolic and linguistic. Their life was in itself a work.

Art transfigures because it makes the world to enter into the mind by participating in the mind's struggle against death and the absurd. Nature struggles against death and the absurd long before art. It is itself a work of art. But the human being takes up the work again and tries to raise it a little higher. Art is rooted in the movement of life and participates in it by taking up on its own account the negatively entropic work of life in order to bring it to a higher level of complexity and simplicity. It is not about creating a

reality beside nature, parallel to it, but of adding a surplus to reality, of making reality a garden, exalting it, transfiguring it. This is done in two movements:

1. A movement against death which consists of producing a time which is neither the eternity of immobile things (closed values, idols, infallible laws), nor the radical end of life. The poet Rumi (13th-century Persian sufi) sings: "What is this reality whose image has given its sweetness to the form? When it hides itself, it is as if a demon had been born..." Reality is born of the relation between two movements: the thing and the eye, the fact and the look, the being and the consciousness. It is first of all the things, the persons, the beings who want to be written down in order to land on a new shore, a shore that is more certain, more meaningful, more creative, more enduring. Think of Gabrielle Roy who, watching an old woman working in a field, heard her soul cry out: "Write my life," that is to say, find my life a new place of existence. The writer's work consists, then, of creating a character who "actualizes" that woman at a superior level (not superior in dignity, but superior in collective meaning and in cultural duration). All of this woman's feeling rests in the non-knowledge of her own status and it is from this non-knowledge that the writer draws. She/he adds her/his ability to know and to express.

"What is it that I don't know and is already enlightening me." This is the poetic question of Hermann Broch. The artist adds a level of knowledge to this non-knowledge that inhabits being. When the book is written, I feel that I have touched the mystery of the unknowable that lives in being, and I know more of the unknowability of its mystery. If the artist arrives at his or her ends, he/she has given the person a second life. The character enters the collective imagination and lives there even more concretely than before. There are characters in novels who have participated in political, cultural, economic, and spiritual revolutions very much more than most of us have.

2. A movement against the absurd which permits the artist to discover and raise new visions. Art provides a better access to the naked world of beings. It has to do with approaching things in order to make them speak and then to add to their words. What the artist wants is to participate in the dialogue between humans and things, to make things include in their movement the suffering and the hope of humans. The writer casts his or her existence in front of things in order to compose with them a more humane world. The ultimate function of art: to stand in primordial time, to write from this standpoint and transpose it on to a trajectory where it is a stronger opponent to death and to the absurd.

Claudel wrote in reference to Rembrandt:

It is a great date in art history when painting stops having a ceremonial or decorative role, and begins, without bias, to train an intelligent lens on reality and to constitute the catalogue of these complexes or simultaneous phrases, lines and colors, through which creatures learn to extract a meaning as they incorporate one into the other. The Dutch artist is no longer a will that executes a preconceived plan, and subordinates means and movements to it, but an eye that chooses and understands, a mirror that paints. All he does is the result of a reflection, of a learned exposition from the plate to the lens; we could say about all the figures he provides us that they are returning from a trip to the land of mirror-silver... These men, these women have become acquainted with the night, and they are returning to us less repelled than stopped by a denser environment; thoroughly bathed in a light borrowed from memory, they have become aware of themselves.

The transfigurative function of artistic creation calls upon all the resources of love of which consciousness is capable. Love is undoubtedly what allows us to struggle against ourselves, against the world, against humans, against the gods with the intention of snatching from them a face outside of death and the absurd. In love everything refuses decoration. Love goes spontaneously toward disillusion. It wants the truth. It wants the one I love to struggle against me, for I want to know myself in my truth. Love is thus the result of a radical act of faith in regard to truth and the consciousness which forever seeks it as its original light. This truth is the primordial time. Once rooted in this truth, I want to make it tell the best of itself, its hope. What is hope? Hope is nothing other than a real and legitimate potentiality that hides in being. Physicists seek the potentials of physics; artists seek the aesthetic and ethical potentials in the real, in primordial time, and exploit them to the maximum so as to fully exercise their power, their authority. The artist is one who does not yield an inch of the power he or she is capable of, and that is why the man of power, who is nourished by others' "letting go," tries so hard to coopt the artist.

Once the work is completed, it possesses a surprising power over reality: it acts in reality. For example, the work of the architect configures the interior space of humans and of civilizations. This power comes from the discovery of, and participation in, a very real potential, the one that geometry exercises on the mind. To transfigure is to raise potentials to the level where they act so as to regain power (authority) from the man of domination. I believe that the man of power is born and lives not by power but by the abandonment of power. When the artist fully assumes her or his power, when he or she escapes from the prostitution of his or her art, she or he transfigures the world. As long as consciousness remains at the level of complaining, as long as it sees power in the man of power, it cannot go forward. When consciousness enters the artist, it is to go beyond complaining, simply rebelling, and simple nostalgia in order to take the abandoned power back. That demands an enormous amount of authenticity.

2. Raphaël's *Transfiguration*.

If ever a man was close to power, Raphaël certainly was. In 1508, Pope Julius II called him to Rome to participate in the great project of restoring to the papacy all the radiance of the emperor-potentates of long ago. Thanks to his talent, it went very quickly. On August 1, 1514, Raphaël was named project manager and chief architect of the new St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. In 1519, Pope Leo X, who had extended his responsibilities in the area of urbanism, also entrusted him with the project of "depicting ancient Rome in drawings." Raphaël enthusiastically participated in this radicalization of papal power and did this during Luther's lifetime, at the very moment when the "faithful" could no longer put up with the Church's anti-evangelism. In November 1520, Cardinal Julius de Medici commissioned Raphaël to paint a *Transfiguration* (and to Machiavelli he entrusted the responsibility of writing the history of the city.)

(Copy of the painting, *The Transfiguration*.)

The magnificent painting has to be read. A wide shadowy stripe divides the canvas in two: on the top, the transfiguration on Tabor; on the bottom, a totally different scene -- the apostles are trying without success to purify a young man possessed by the Devil. But this lower scene is, it also, divided in two by another, even more shadowy stripe, a diagonal stripe that divides the apostles from the family that is bringing the possessed young man. This radical hierarchization of immortals above and mortals beneath, of pure to the left and impure to the right, is the first mark of power in the Church of Power. It is the mark of exclusive values.

In *The Transfiguration*, the idol is represented by Moses holding the tablets of the Law. The story of Moses is, in essence, the story of the temptation that consists of passing from the burning bush (inspiration) to fixation in a code of law (idol). As soon as the burning bush has become a law of exclusion, purity is no longer an integrating ideal but a separating ideal, raising the pure to the role of idol, and reducing the impure to the role of pariah. (This separation, wholly Pharisaical, is precisely what Jesus struggled against all his life).

Transformed by the idol, the scene taking place below Tabor becomes the tragedy of a prideful Church, separated from the suffering of laborers and pariahs. At the heart of this rejected world (toward the right), a young man possessed by Satan. Who is Satan? Contrary to the idol, he is the disorganizer. Who is the child? Here, isn't he the fool Erasmus praises! The kingdom of the world is torn between the idol and the child pariah--It is in this division that the idol and Satan collaborate in making the world tragically unbearable.

But in Raphael's canvas, the stroke of genius is this, that only the possessed child can endure the light of the transfiguration. It is the child possessed and twisted by contradiction (idol-pariah) who withstands the light of the transfiguration (in spite of his rolled-back eyes). All the others are turned away from it (except for St. Just and St. Pastor, the patrons of Narbonne). The pariah is the microcosm reflecting the tear in the social fabric the man of power introduces. In his flesh, he carries tragedy; he is the truth stripped bare.

Raphael's canvas perfectly outlines the Church's missed opportunity. The apostles are calling upon the Law instead of approaching the child. The Law is supposed to be the mirror of Jesus even as it contradicts his mission. The child's family is calling upon the apostles....But no one is paying attention to the child, who is the only one looking at Jesus. And this Jesus, too "glorious", has no time to take a look at the child. And yet, one might think that were Jesus to arrive from the little village we see at the foot of Jerusalem (there where, in the canvas, Moses' left foot points), approach and take the child's hand, anything could happen. If suddenly consciousness were to awaken in the spectator looking at the Raphael painting, everything could change.

When Raphael's premature death arrived (he was only 35), they laid him at the foot of The Transfiguration. Vasari reports: "They put him in the room where he had worked, placing The Transfiguration next to his head; to contemplate that work which seemed alive alongside his inanimate body made the soul explode with pain." Did Raphael see? Did he see that he had painted his own drama of a man on board a machine from which, it appears, it is so difficult to free oneself?

So, what is it that we don't understand that makes us persist in refusing to look at the child? If Raphael has presented the problem so well, does he outline a solution?

I have stressed this idea: the essence of the man of power is to spread out in a great expansion, a great frenzy and a great desertification. Yet as it expands, it intensifies the thing that will reverse it. In Raphael's Transfiguration, where are the sites of this intensification? First of all, the child himself. It is the nature of the unfortunate to bear the symbolic scars that denounce the tragedy of domination. Next, facing the child, two apostles appear to be on the verge of looking at him: a young one expresses compassion and an older one, caution. In their gaze, something is intensifying despite their incomprehension (we see it more clearly in a preparatory study of Raphael's, Two Heads of Apostles on grey paper, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum). The two apostles are on the point of crossing the gulf of shadows separating them from the family.

(Copy of the drawing Two Heads of Apostles)

Looking at these two apostles whose consciousness is awakening, the obstacle is obvious: the younger is looking at the child's mother whose suffering we can guess, and the older seems to be saying: "Watch out, danger, caution, moderation, it's a woman!" This old man is looking at a partly nude woman: Mary Magdalene. What is this woman doing? She is pointing out with her finger what needs to be done: "Save the child." In the Gospel of Mary Magdalene (apocryphal gospel), we can read: "Take care that no one leads you astray by saying: He is here, He is there". This same gospel insists on the integrating mission of Jesus: "He participated in the elements of our nature so that it might be joined to his roots. This is why you are sick[...] You do what takes you away. [...] He calls us to become fully Humans. [...] Let us become the Human Being in its entirety; let us allow him to take root in us and grow..."

The beginning of the transfiguration is thus indicated: Everything starts right in the center of the canvas in the vector connecting the young apostle to Mary Magdalene. Raphael seems to be telling us: "It is in passing through the feminine that we will arrive at the child".

If we are in the image of woman, if we are creators first of all, it is easy to understand that transfiguration is dangerous! Yes, creators have to confront the void and fly off in space without ever being certain that anything will support their wings. They must stand in the anguish of Icarus, and this is a grace. The key to this rash leap which alone can save us is found, perhaps, in the life of Jesus. At his baptism, it was said: "Immediately after the spirit had moved Jesus, he went away into the desert". The word "immediately" has a great deal of importance. It means: "As soon as the desire moves you, get moving, do something, approach your self, your nucleus, your source." You must go ahead even before you have found the form for your action. Above all "before", because the form of your act must not come from you, but from the relation itself, the relation with your self, with nature, with your sister or brother human. "Don't be concerned about what you will say or do", the action will find its direction in the relation. The desire has no object. The desire aims at a subject who, she or he too, feels the desire for a subject. Everything will work out if your desire doesn't lose sight of the subject of its desire. But the action will fail if your desire loses its subject and falls into obsession with an object.

While looking at Raphael's The Transfiguration, I tell myself that if the apostle were to encounter the flesh-and-blood woman who is there, and not the projection of his desire on a material surface, the encounter would inevitably be fruitful and transfiguring. Transfiguration is the encounter, reciprocal but never completed, of the human being with her or his otherness. When a human being enters wholeheartedly his or her adventure, where she or he is infinitely vulnerable, history can begin on something other than the desperate strategies of force.

The nucleus of the self

All this hope may appear astonishingly naive. It rests on what Hermann Broch calls the nucleus of the self and the ancient mystics named the depths of the soul. It has to do with a spontaneity characteristic of human beings which leads them to want:

- To intelligence, that is to say, to truly know the inner universe and the outer universe, to interiorize the outer world and exteriorize the inner world, to understand in terms of relations all that is and wills to be.
- To be intelligenced, to let ourselves be truly known, be interiorized by someone who wants us to be ourselves, who prompts us to become different from him (her) self.

- To observe reality, to contemplate it, to ask ourselves what things are without us, to want to see them without disturbing them, to see while making ourselves imperceptible.
- To complete, to participate in creation, to struggle against death and the absurd.
- To harmonize, to add to the emerging harmony of nature, to integrate and reach superior levels of simplicity and complexity.
- To take responsibilities, to take power through the authority my person is capable of so as to collaborate with others in the advancement of a truly human society.
- To fulfill oneself by accomplishing works, works where I discover myself in my relation to the world and to others.

These are, I believe, the principal spontaneities attributed by the ancients to the superior soul. They are associated with what Freud called the impulses of the Id. They give to human beings all their creative and social vitality. Personally, I don't know how I could justify any hope whatever if I eliminated this superior soul from human psychology: I would not know how to explain the indignation of the human person in the face of his/her species' collective behaviors and I would not be able to understand the meaning of the lives of a number of people such as Socrates, Jesus, Gandhi and so many others.

The nucleus of the self resembles gravity, however. Gravity is the weakest force in the entire cosmos by far. On the other hand, it has no spatial limit, and it is totally cumulative. Gravity can light a sun only after it has gathered around itself a very large quantity of cosmic dust, of matter-energy. The cumulative effect of the pressure then exerted ignites a nuclear fusion reaction ... and mass spontaneously becomes light, heat, and nutritive energy for life. Socially, such places of intensification exist. At the opposite pole from the "rich and famous" idol is the poor and forsaken Pariah; at the opposite pole from the "intelligent smooth talker," the voiceless mental patient; at the opposite pole from the "consenting conformist," the marginal non-conformist. Each idol engenders its excluded. It is there that suffering accumulates, it is there that the symptoms become tragic, it is there that a hidden future is being prepared. All that is needed is an artist's spark. Certain artists need a medium (painting, writing, music...), and others not; their life is sufficient. When the artist really encounters the sacrifices of the pariah, something happens: a new light creates an indignation in the consciousness vis-à-vis certain collective behaviors. This finally engenders epochal changes because consciousness knows instinctively where the man of power's Achilles' tendon is to be found. Bitten at the moment when he is at his highest, heaviest, and most sure of himself, he collapses and decomposes, becoming, through inversion, food for future wisdoms, a series of lessons and counter-examples to be recounted by the children of the millenium to come.

CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST PART

Raphaël awakened me. It seems to me that the scene is happening now. Exclusion is as active as ever. What is different is the numbers. We exclude by the billion and not by the thousand. Our war-machines kill by the million and not by the hundred. Our polluting devices burn coal and oil by the billions of tons. Our information-manipulating systems send trillions of gigabits of advertising into the atmosphere....And we are multiplying in proportion. The forests, the apes, the whales, the schools of fish, the polar bears, the ozone layer....all seems to be disappearing before our eyes.

However, the principal characteristic of our still-young century lies not in numbers, but in the secret of our real power: we have the means of repairing the mess we have made. For the first time, humanity can escape hunger, thirst, extreme poverty, and the diseases connected with it....For the first time, it can restore the deserts it has created....This is a unique moment. To know that we have the means of reversing the human part of our misfortunes intensifies consciousness. The only thing lacking, the unique and minuscule ingredient, is just this--the power to use our powers with intelligence and freedom. We have not yet given ourselves the power to regulate and channel our powers; in short, we are politically stupid exactly because we are sick with a power-mania that disintegrates power.

Now, the tyrant and those who serve him in sacrifice or "honor", know in the depths of themselves that they are the only obstacles. They know too, and we all know it, that in a few decades, the damages will be irreversible. We are setting up in front of ourselves a wall that will soon be impossible to cross. The window of escape is now; tomorrow may be too late. To know that it will soon be too late intensifies consciousness.

However, the man of power and his servants will not change their dynamic. They are incapable of doing it. It is dangerous even to maintain any illusion on this subject. Yet their lethal game can be abandoned. As in the theater when tragedy turns ridiculous due to rhetorical abuses, dramatic excesses and repetitions, at the moment when the climax of misfortune touches on the burlesque and all the threads of the scenario show their knots, the play loses its authority, or rather, all the play's authority rests in its own denunciation; at this moment, a number of listeners feel nauseous and suddenly have only one desire: to get out. To drop out of the structures of power then becomes a common phenomenon. Only the first-class passengers still sleep in their luxurious cabins; the others have left the ship and are already sailing in the future's boats.

We can leave one by one, by groups or by peoples, the infernal Titanic of the devourers of the planet, we are not held in slavery, we can build another world. There are possible elsewhere because there are places invisible to those who are engaged in the structure of power. Still, this new world will need a different ethic founded on different bases. If not, we will witness nothing more than a new America, a deplorable amnesia that amplifies the worst of the past. But it seems to me that the new ethic is showing some signs of being born. Very far from the word "ethics," very far from its sociology and its discussions, there where very few are looking, in pain and hope, in a world that is for the moment largely feminine, new solidarities are in labor.

I have this dream. From all corners of the world the first fruit of a long interiorization rises. For the first time something arises not to take the place of power, but to cure us of power. As if consciousness knew that the moment is unique, it awakens and calls

for wills.

- The activists of "anti-globalization," of ecology and universal democracy (the only counterweight to the current national plutocracies). I am not speaking of those who infiltrate the movement to make it deviate toward violence, but of the authentic movement faithful to Gandhi's pacifism. What is striking is the spontaneity of the actions, the variety of strategies, the relative avoidance of dogmatisms, the adaptation of the action to the context, the limited presence of men of power in their midst, the amazing collegiality of decisions. For the man of power, they are difficult to combat, for they employ, while restoring them, his own words (democracy, freedom, justice, economy...); they don't offer the vulnerability of a power with a single head; they are unpredictable in their strategy, they are like a spirit coming out of the earth.
- A little bit everywhere guides are being born, masters of thought of remarkable quality. These intelligent women and men have liberated themselves; no longer do they coldly rattle off about Man, history, science, philosophy, etc.; they no longer allow themselves to be crushed by the weight of learned formalisms; they "think with their hands". All disciplines are represented here. Physicists, biologists, sociologists, anthropologists, philosophers, theologians, artists of literature, theater, painting, and cinema are working in transdisciplinarity. They no longer seek to direct; they breathe a spirit.
- A large number are buying land or gathering together in neighborhoods, villages, and communities. They reject consumer society, practice barter and voluntary simplicity, developing a social and ecological economy. What is more important, they take the time to live, to connect with nature, the body, the arts. They build houses with recycled materials. They compost their garbage. They refurbish old clothes, furniture, and household appliances. They are forming already the world to come.
- Others are supplying underground energies; billions of people suffer from hunger or thirst, and thousands are scorned or tortured. This active suffering would, in other times, be spontaneously transformed into revolt (and in part, this revolt is taking place). The radical imbalance of armaments prevents the overthrow of power. Courageous women and men are giving cameras to oppressed peoples who produce a terrible, yes horrible image of "imperial" actions. The tragedy is displayed. And this image is slowly mobilizing consciousness.
- Prepared over centuries, the rise of feminism is clearing its path between identification with power and a refusal to be identified with the victim. It is in fact a new lucidity and it influences everything, especially our vision of the life of the mind. Personally I see in it the source of a great upheaval in the very foundations of the civilizations of power. The idol may fall and a new life of the mind may emerge out of the dust.
- Spiritual consciousness is also in emergence. A new spirituality is being unveiled. After the sectarian era, we see appearing here and there, but always more numerous, divers of the Absolute. These are experienced beings who have accumulated enough confidence to leap without a net into the depths of human innerness. Whether they bear witness to this in visible works or are content with living intensely, they shine. They are rooted in depths unreached by the traditions, and their ecumenism ensures their unity in difference.

Across all these poles, one integrating force is at work. It is not characterized by a messiah, a woman or a man, a saint or a god. It is like the noosphere Teilhard de Chardin spoke of; it is like what connects the neurons of a great planetary mind. It is the contribution of what is greater than us and yet is in us, the contribution of what is greater than nature and yet is in nature. It does

nothing without us, but it is never alien to what we do and it unites us in its grand harmony.

Teilhard de Chardin said in The Divine Milieu:

We imagine sometimes that things repeat themselves, indeterminate and monotonous, in the history of creation. It is because the season is too long, considering the brief duration of our individual lives---it is because the transformation is too vast and too internal, relative to our superficial and limited vision, for us to perceive the progress that is being made, tirelessly, through and with the aid of all Matter and all Mind.

[...] Under the commonplace appearance of things, out of all our efforts, purified and saved, a new Earth is gradually being created. [...]

Breaking all the dams where, in appearance, the veils of Matter and the mutual impermeability of souls contain it, it will invade the face of the Earth. [...] The anguished, collective, and effective waiting for an "End of the World", that is to say, for an Exit for the World [...] the mad hope for a remolding of our Earth.

The mind is the acrobat of time. It can jump over the last pages of a chapter without reading more. It can close a book which suddenly bores it to begin another not yet written. The mind is the power of new beginnings. It never has to untie all the knots. It is without sin and without fault. It finds the past amusing, and runs off without any warning. It makes leaps that throw the historian off the trail. Fundamentally, it is a creator of worlds. Here it is a meteor falling into the sea, there a social mood that overthrows a kingdom, further on a sage who changes the course of a people, and all of a sudden a warming precipitates an Ice Age...

Mind is the right to singularity. The only things that the mind doesn't know how to do are redundancy and eternal continuity. Predictability exists only where the mind has gotten tired. It surely does have the right to sleep here and there; it will reappear elsewhere, on other levels, for other eyes. This is its privilege. Mind is not bound to time. It is not the sort to be rooted like a tree. It doesn't dig ever deeper in the sediments down to previous lives; it doesn't especially like the bowels of vanished Pharaohs, no, it is more the bird type. It flies off for the pleasure of leaving a branch, a nest, a ledge. It likes to leave. The poet catches one of its feet for the simple pleasure of leaving this world. There are other worlds. There are so many other worlds.

Nonetheless, if the sun sets boiling in a purple haze, we expect a storm, and if the wind abruptly turns toward the east, we fear it will come tomorrow, and if in the morning the sun gently passes from salmon pink to a very light yellow, we tell ourselves that, after all, the weather will be good. I am not a master of signs, for the mind is not a good servant of the weather. So I do not know if the weather will be good today or tomorrow, but I do opt for a great leap forward. Such is the ethic I faintly perceive, not a duty, not a feat of will, not nice resolutions; it is not about adding to what already crushes the spirit, but on the contrary, like the sails of a schooner, it is about going along with our liveliest tendencies.

Yes, the question consists precisely of basing ethics on impulse and not against it, on condition that we not remain on the surface, but take our desires by the deep end. In the deep waters of ethics, superficiality is the only mortal fault, for only the superficial diminishes pleasure to the state of a transient spasm. The will to go forward in truth

and in depth constitutes the one unique and sufficient condition allowing us to sail joyfully toward our ethical future.

**SECOND PART:
THE ETHICS OF THE PRACTICE OF POWER**

CHAPTER 14: THE QUESTION

In our reflection on domination, one question cuts to the bone. The dominator goes toward death, but he grows and takes on enormous proportions because many among us abandon our power a little or a lot. We give in. For example, we yield our economic powers to banks who manage our savings with no other values than short-term profit. We delegate our political powers to representatives, mayors, deputies, ministers, and presidents without making sure there is a follow-up. We abandon our social powers to institutions such as the social services, the child protective service, the detention centers and the custodial centers. We pass the power over our health on to doctors, pharmacists, and hospitals. We entrust our brains to advertising; our eyes, to television screens; our children, to day-care centers and schools; our future, to profits; our past, to psychologists; our common history, to ideologues; our soul, to churches or to nothingness. At death, we abandon our bodies to the funeral trade. All these abandoned powers, large or small, will be taken by others who want them. To gather up these abandoned powers, we must be ferocious competitors.*** And to compete ferociously, we must in general be very much in love or love an ideology more than ourselves.

Is there an ethic of the practice of power? Is it possible, for each person, to shoulder the maximum amount of power that it is ethically possible to assume? Is it possible to imagine a democracy, that is to say, the greatest possible decentralization of power to the point where each one is able to bear the responsibility incumbent upon her or him?

It will not be possible to develop this ethic without first going deeper into the foundations of ethics, as we have in regard to the foundations of power, and this will not be done without once more taking up some fundamental elements touching the exercise of power.

1. The first power comes from thought.

Power resembles a bow. For the hunter to come to invent a bow, he must in the first place have imagined a goal: for example, to kill an animal in order to eat it. He salivates as he looks ahead to the future, not the future that would come to him naturally, but the future that he wants, now. Next, our hunter formulates the most direct, effective, and rapid means of attaining this future he has desired and imagined. This man now has a weapon to show to fate. Next, it is a question of stringing life's moments around the cord connecting desire to the "previewed" future. Power tears us loose from fate and turns us over to a history "willed" by us.

One might object that this constitutes an unavoidable natural law, that when the tiger covets a gazelle and races toward it, it exercises a power. It discharges energy for a goal. We are in its image. Could it be otherwise?

But is the tiger simply an instrument of fate? Does it do anything other than connect hunger with the gazelle? It is, in fact, roped to the gazelle. The gazelle must, on this day, be torn apart between the tiger's teeth. Without the possibility of escaping from a necessity, there is no power, but simply movements which act in conformity with nature's laws. Power requires that something escape from fate in order to enter into a plan.*** The fate of the human being is to realize her or his plans in the world.

Thought fires targets into the future long before it fires arrows. In short, thought is

power's first act, and all thought rests on the rather fragile hypothesis that my sealed fate, the one that is necessary and predictable, the one that leads me inexorably to death, that this fate is paired with an open fate. Even more, this supposes that the fate of the things and beings surrounding me can, it too, be bent to my will a little, a lot, or completely. In brief, there is no power without thought and there is no thought without a distance judged to be effective. Unlike tigers, human beings think their desires, judge their moral legitimacy and the relative effectiveness of their actions. Their thought has nothing abstract about it; it is power in actuality, a second creation that acts upon the first creation.

Human beings think their desires, transform them into goals and imagine the paths: nothing appears to force itself upon them. The real or illusory power they have, they tear from the fabric of time. At least, that is their founding hypothesis. They think that if they weren't there, everything would go according to the immediacy and the necessity of needs and responses. Humans make history with fate. It is as if they could build around time a second dimension of time which adds to the uncertainty of the physical world. It expands the zone of chaos and bifurcations in order to draw out of them profitable or perilous new routes.

This does not mean that they lose the sense of proportions. They know that their power is relative; they know the fragility and precarity of their minuscule power wrested with such difficulty from necessity. They know by example that the last words of their lives are already written, that from the beginning, the period is fixed. Whether they distance themselves from this period, or approach it, it will close on them like a black hole. There is a point of unknowability that shuts down all our plans. Past this point, nothing more is visible, palpable or even plausible. It is as if a malicious professor of literature were to ask her or his students to write a story in a notebook in which many words were already transcribed, and where the unhappy ending can be discerned: "no one gets out of here alive." In fact, the poor student can do no more than add here and there some nuances, accessories, and dreams, many of which will crash on the rocks. He or she even knows that what others snatch from their fate can very well work to his or her own detriment. Everyone can lengthen her or his own biography by borrowing from those of others. This is certainly what the richest do: their life expectancy grows in proportion to other people's destitution.

Our stories are bound each to the other. My neighbor's freedom is as dangerous to me as I am dangerous to her or him.

If thought is power, to think is also to tremble before the immense domination of necessity and the unbelievable interdependence of our mutually dangerous freedoms. A coyote can kill a man, and my brother can vote for a president who leads us straight into a war that will kill a hundred thousand of us. Nevertheless, the little thinking caterpillar that we are slowly slides along the threads of time, arches its back and manufactures one by one those small silk bridges that will give our course through life a little originality. Thought's bow is raised against time's insults. The open wounds, the sicknesses, the suffering, the premature death of children---it will have none of these.

How is it possible not to want fate? Through what pretention can the human, the minuscule human, oppose the cosmos, study the laws of physics to walk on the moon, break the genetic code to prolong the days of a few privileged people?

All thought is a moral judgement on fate. Thought supposes that fate deserves to be amended, improved, and all moral judgement is a function of a point of view. "Seen according to the interests of such-and-such a city, such-and-such group, or even the human race, it could be better". There is no moral judgement without a local point of

view, without a particular point of view. As soon as thought wants anything, it wants something other than what would happen if it stuck to universal fate. This is what philosophers have called intentional consciousness. That the universe be harmonious in its entirety is less important than to eat tonight. The will wants to step back from necessity, and wants this in the name of a value it accords to a specific being (generally me), to a group or to a definite nation. For any particular point of view, there is something better.

Thought is a giver of values as soon as it looks at reality. Eye and values can never be dissociated. If a reflective eye were ever to look at values, it is with values that it would do it. It might ask itself, for example, why it prefers its mother's anger to its father's goodness.

Isn't this a trap, this leap over reality? Won't humans fall back to earth? Is it possible that they might lose the sense of gravity, no longer fall back down, and begin to swim indefinitely in their own thought as they go off the road of being? Might they even find themselves completely split in two? They might, for example, imagine that they have finally conquered their enemy, even as they push the planet to the edge of the precipice. How many times has humanity gotten lost in this way, convinced that it is doing good as it organizes great genocides?

Thought can enclose observation and action in a looping system. It is not just sometimes that it does this, but almost always. Why?

To see is to attribute values to things. The observing eye impregnates reality with values, colors, and forms. Then every action transcribes these same values into reality. It is far from certain that reality will "con-form". But the eye can never rid itself of its values; it evaluates the results according to the values that have guided the action.... To sum it all up, thought furnishes the questions and the answers, the decisions and the results. It projects its own cinema on reality. Is it not enclosed in the infinite solitude of its point of view? Isn't it caught in a closed circuit? It may well believe it has made the world better at the very moment when thousands of species are disappearing, on the eve of its own "autocide"!

Yes! Without any doubt, thought is bound in a loop, but it can also unbuckle the loop. Thought can see what to do in order to think.*** However, this act is an additional effort that is not for the moment inscribed in our collective habits!

2. The second power belongs to consciousness

We call consciousness that aptitude thought has for distributing values in every direction in order to remake the world. Consciousness is a kind of light indissociable from the distance thought takes in relation to things and especially, in relation to itself. All distance is only distance if there is, simultaneously, separation and connection. Without separation we see nothing, and without a connection we see nothing. Thought is the separation, and consciousness is the connection (as physical light is a connection), but it is a possible connection and not a necessary one.

Thinking imprisons us if we think thought with the values of thought and not with the values of consciousness. If consciousness is employed with full awareness, it is possible for thought to perceive the values that it adds. It can do this in the name of another value, a value of consciousness, the desire for truth, for example.

The eye sees in colors; thought sees in values. It sees nothing but the fruit of its "moral" interaction with reality. It sees only a world judged by itself. For its part, consciousness sees thought and sees it interacting with reality, but this is only possible

if it brings, in regard to thought, values thought does not have. If it sees thought with the values of thought, it becomes thought's accomplice and thought locks itself completely in its own value system, the value system closes, and we have the radical isolation of power in a closed value-system. Power no longer has any power over power, and the world is in danger because thought no longer sees what it is doing, or rather, thought sees what it wants and not what is happening. It has lost even its desire to truly see, and consequently can very easily persuade itself that all is well even as insecurity becomes worldwide.

On the other hand, let us imagine that consciousness does bring in its values, values capable of questioning thought's values,. Then it would say: "Ah! That thought, when it thinks of trees, has a desire to make a better world, but its true desire is to make profits with that forest. That thought is telling itself a tall tale indeed..."*** In this way , consciousness can denounce thought. It acts as if it detected the moral filter in the eye in order to set this judgement aside and better see reality. All this can function only if it really wants to see.

Consciousness is a sort of ethical light that strikes and confronts the moral light of thought. If it really wants to "know", it will see that thought's vision is spotted with intentions. Consequently, it will be able to try to remove the values of these intentions in the name of other values. In short, the intention of consciousness must be guided by the value "truth" while thought, for its part, is generally guided by utility in regard to a goal (a specific interest). It is intentional.

At its best, science is certainly a movement of consciousness which wants not only to know, but wants to truly know. Science, however, is not a movement of consciousness in regard to all of reality, but in regard to one dimension of reality (the dimension of reality where phenomena recur according to identifiable and calculable rules). Science (search for one type of truth) is, then, necessarily critical of technique (search for a specific utility). Poetry and the arts in general are also in search of truth, but of another kind of truth, the truth of the meanings of reality. In summary, we see that consciousness is turned toward truth, that is, toward a value that can challenge the values of thought. If consciousness were not "the search for a true thought", if consciousness were only a result of education, there would not be, even for a minute, any disillusionment either in a person, or in a society. Ethics would not be possible, there would only be sociology, and what is more, this sociology would not be a science, but an ideology about ideologies.

Consciousness can sleep, or be coopted by thought; it is optional and even, rather unusual. Why then does consciousness, numbed and anesthetized by thought, almost always do nothing more than justify and echo it?

The characteristic values of consciousness (the base of which is truth) seem to have come from another world, from an abnormally great distance, from a place where the particular interest disappears into the universal. Examining the motion of a train in relation to another train, Einstein was suddenly convinced that all viewpoints should be equal from the viewpoint of the information he received on their position in space, and consequently from the viewpoint of the light that distributes this information. Thus, limited relativity was born. This removal of one's own viewpoint (so as to take a viewpoint on viewpoints) has taken centuries to be accomplished because, to see universality, it was necessary to escape immediate interests. However, this distancing has permitted a nearer approach to reality. Relativity describes reality better than does Newton's theory. For intentional thought, the advantage of the universal viewpoint did not appear evident and yet, nothing better serves the particular than the universal viewpoint (if it is not corrupted).

***However, if thought looks through rose-colored or dark glasses and consciousness goes along, then thought will believe that the truth is dark or rose-colored, and will apply the truth to a knowledge (whereas truth is not a knowledge but a state of consciousness). To apply the truth to a knowledge (to have the truth rather than to want the truth) is the error of errors, the error that leads to fanaticism, the essence of all closed value systems, the essence of domination that we have described as a closed value system. Thought rendered omnipotent by the inaction of consciousness will be, as Broch puts it: "in a state of maximal truth", that is to say, possessed by a false feeling of truth in regard to its knowledge.

***Truth and knowledge can never touch each other, for truth is an aspiration of consciousness and knowledge is a representation that thought makes in regard to reality. They can no more touch than can theory and reality. They pursue, but never catch each other. This is the first theorem of ethics. Truth operates in knowledge, but no knowledge can possess the truth.

Thought desires to know in order to change the fate of things; consciousness wants that knowledge to be fulfilled in truth. Consciousness encumbers thought with a surety that is not necessary for power and for action, in any case, not necessary in the short term, not necessary from the viewpoint of the lifespan of particular interests (even if these particular interests affect an entire nation).

3. Thought and power should complement each other

Let us sum up; thought can "know" everything is rose-colored only after having colored the world rose. Thought can "know" that fate is hard and tragic only after having watered the world with its own expectations. Consciousness has seen thought water the world with its expectations. But what does it want, what does consciousness want if not the truth about thought and about reality!

Two levels of values interact:

- * that of thought, which wants a better fate;
- * that of consciousness, which wants a better thought, a true thought.

This interaction is not symmetrical, however; the level of consciousness always wins. This is why the force of an ideology can collapse so quickly even if it has held a whole society in its grip for centuries. A person can lose his or her beliefs suddenly, and regret the loss bitterly. It very often happens that this "darned" consciousness undermines a whole system of thought, an ideology, even as we consider this ideology necessary for our happiness.

If consciousness does its work, if it pursues thought with its universal values (mainly truth), then consciousness will constantly bring thought back to the path that leads to a meeting with reality. If a corrupting alliance develops and consciousness turns its attention away from thought, thought will go its own path alone.

What the ancients called "good will", "sincerity", and "purity of intention" is nothing other than this ethic of morality, than this ethic of consciousness that consists of liking to contemplate our thought misrepresenting reality for the great pleasure of denouncing and correcting it. This love of truth that we call consciousness is in the end our sole foundation. To attempt to base humanity on anything other than this principle of truth is simply to postpone the date of this disillusionment

Domination leads action toward a type of satisfaction and pleasure which is only effective if the interest of all is attenuated, fades and vanishes before the interest of

some. A banquet is pleasant and succulent only if those who are eating forget those who are not eating. Now there's an example of thought duping consciousness. But what gives consciousness its pleasure, what corresponds to its desire?

The desires of consciousness (desires thought at a second level) mobilize thought and action toward another kind of pleasure, a strange pleasure, violent, persistent, and even piercingly painful: the pleasure of the universal. For what is truth, if not a point of view which is no particular point of view. If, for example, a law of physics applied only to Jacques, we would not be speaking of a law of physics, but of a miracle. What guides science is that all viewpoints are, in principle, equivalent.

Applied to social issues, the pleasure of consciousness can never be to eat, but to wish that all could eat as much as I can. In short, equity, justice, and goodness can only be the truth; they are the truth of social issues, the equality of points of view. If justice is the truth of social issues, it is not a thing that is known, but an aspiration of the consciousness. Justice, in brief, is a desire pursuing a form, but a form with which it will never be satisfied. And since it is nothing other than the call of the universal, it can take form only with the totality of other humans and not through an *a priori* intellectual reasoning. Justice galvanizes the collectivity into taking itself in hand. It is fraternity at work, fraternity taking its responsibility vis-a-vis each one..

This desire and this pleasure to will the "common and universal good" beyond the particular are certainly dangerous, for their slightest perversion produces a fanatic. Nonetheless, if it arrives at purity, this intention in regard to intentions can get thought out of its spell, out of its trap and help it to reenter the road of being.

The danger comes perhaps from the confusion between universality and totality. Like the eye, thought delineates objects only against a background of totality. If not, there would be no thought at all. The gazelle stands out from the landscape because my thought constitutes a landscape from which it detaches the gazelle. Thought by itself cannot perceive that the landscape it sees is one possible landscape among others. The landscape formed by sounds is not the same as that formed by light, and what can we say about the olfactory landscape, or about the landscape produced by gravitational waves. And if we stick to the visual landscape, it would have looked different to me if I had given more importance to the trees than to the houses, to the green grass than to the multicolored flowers. Even here, it is consciousness that, turning toward thought, reveals to thought its own construction. Thought configures totalities and takes these totalities for the totality, for universality. To take one's group, one's people, one's nation, one's race or even one's species for the universal is an error of thought that indicates that consciousness has not done its work.

As long as consciousness does not relativize what thought perceives and knows, it sees it as true. Left to itself, thought takes its constructions of totality for true universality. For example, the totality of a religion's faithful form, from that religion's point of view, the universality of the people of God (this is the etiological meaning of the word Catholic).

Thought thinks against a background of totality. Consciousness, from its strangely detached viewpoint, will make it sense that this totality is not universality, far from it. Every totality is constructed through abstraction. An abstraction is a bombardment of values which removes value from some in order to give it to others so as to create a totality like "me", "people", "nation", "the faithful", etc. It is a bundle of closed values, exclusive values which take away from some what it awards to others. In the sentence: "It is better that one die for the benefit of all", the word "all" is an abstraction, a totality from which many are excluded. This has nothing to do with the universal which raises the concrete to a sacred level. The desire for universality would say: "It is

better that this person live rather than what I imagine 'all' to be."

At the slightest complicity of consciousness, thought is in its own world and flounders in its own abstractions. In this world outside the world, it is in a "state of maximal truth" for the simple reason that it is not able to discern its lie. It does not doubt that what it sees is true and what it does is good. Only a conscious thought (in the strongest sense of the word) can doubt that it is seeing the true and doing the good.

From this brief analysis, we can conclude that power is thought in actuality. But consciousness sees thought and weighs it. This is just as much of a pain as a counselor is to a king! It is tempting to corrupt the counselor and go one's own way according to the system of values of thought alone. If this occurs, the person is inevitably in a "state of maximal truth", and power automatically deviates toward domination, that is, toward particular interests.

A dominator is a person, an organization, or an institution that has lost the consciousness of its own thought and that organizes its action in such a way as to put consciousness to sleep. It takes its knowledge for truths. More subtly, it thinks that knowledge can be true, when actually truth is not on the same level as knowledge.

When consciousness enlightens thought with its concern for truth, it relativizes knowledge. Relativity applies to knowledge and not to truth. Truth, for its part, is an absolute unrivaled tension, but it is not and cannot be knowledge; it is a feeling about knowledge. Through truth, I know that I am not in a state of maximal truth, and I see my thought's constructions. Like the beaver, I realize that my field of existence is only a hut made of branches amid a great mystery of things. From then on, my power is slowed by the truth, the doubt, and the questioning that a concern for truth brings. I abandon portions of power here and there, I delegate, delay decisions, and consign bits of social, political, and economic power. ***Those who don't hesitate at power, those who have rid themselves of consciousness and advance as quickly as a rabbit because of this will take these abandoned powers and make them work for particular interests. Soon, the world is in their hands.

An ethic of power is situated at the second level: that of consciousness. It is impossible to maximize our power without entering this ethic. Without this ethic, power turns to domination, either because it leads to abandonment of powers, or because it encourages the appropriation and accumulation of abandoned powers.

Ethics is a house within which consciousness and thought learn to talk to each other. It is only within this ethic that each of these can fulfill itself. At its beginning, this ethic appears to slow down action, because, at first, it is reflection. But if consciousness surpasses the speed of thought to reach its own speed, light surpasses darkness and right action precedes reflection, as is shown in the lives of certain sages.

CHAPTER 15: DESIRE AND DEATH

When thought abandons its consciousness and advances alone, without an internal contradictor, its goals grow precise and fixed like the North Star in the night, and time becomes a work-table. The logic becomes clear: destroy the undesirable and produce the desirable. It doesn't ask any questions about the desirability of what it calls desirable: "We desire it, so it must be legitimate." Nor does it ask any questions about the universality of this "we". By this very fact, it has at its disposal an absolutely unequivocal logic. As for means, it will find them, it will make them, it will force them to obey.

Here is the question: why does this focussing, this concentration of means to obtain what we want lead inevitably to unhappiness, to destruction and to death? For this is certainly how it happens: give an innocent little child everything it needs to do what it wants, and it will make itself and others unhappy. Do the same for a man with good intentions, and soon he will be unhappy. Rare, very rare, are those who attain fulfillment and happiness after acquiring an overabundance of means. Why?

1. Thought, in the end, sees more truly than the eyes

No sooner do humans start to think, than they distribute values. Consequently, they attribute values to their most essential needs. Henceforward, they will want not simply to eat, but to savor and to share. They will not want to simply enjoy sex, but love and commune with each other. And, most complicated of all, the loftiness of values does not shield them from unhappiness; on the contrary, the most beautiful ideals have encouraged the birth and growth of empires. And all the empires have engendered bloodbaths, and left behind them immense deserts and mountains of trash.

What evil spell has been cast on humanity that its greatest and best aspirations always and unceasingly end by being turned against it?

To think is to attribute values, is to organize the will around values, and it seems that this at the same time leads to a more comfortable life and a more bloodthirsty life and in the end, war, pollution and obesity come around to dissolving the happiness even of the most affluent. This is how empires come to an end.

On the chain that binds ideals to social reality, on the path that goes from the desire to do good to politics, there are thousands of ways to twist the loveliest values and lead them to disaster. All this has been quite well analyzed with much precision and competence. But this only explains the how. I, for my part, ask myself why. What is it that leads a profoundly ethical animal to worsen his condition by wanting to improve it to the point of endangering the planet he depends on? This is really quite extraordinary. Was life wrong to place its bets on thought? After our disappearance, the dominant animal will no longer be distinguished by size like the dinosaur, or by thought like Homo sapiens. What will distinguish it? I ask myself this. Perhaps it will be distinguished by consciousness. Until it appears, I would very much like to know why, for several centuries, Homo sapiens has resolutely entered on the path to suicide, for his soul and for his planet.

Let us return to thought. Where is the fault? A type of thought that would, one supposes, be the best means of connecting needs to an environment would count solely on technique, on means. It would not be concerned with thinking about needs

and according them a value, but rather with satisfying them with increasing effectiveness, and that's that. But in order to develop a technique, we must see what is possible, and not just the facts. We must imagine the tool in a stone or in a simple branch. This intelligence of the possible represents a major asset, but it is a two-sided weapon. To imagine the possible lifts our head out of the ocean of reality. On the one hand, reality will be severed, with all the dangers we have seen, but on the other hand it will also widen almost infinitely on a "super-concrete" reality, leading to an even greater peril.

Let me explain the "super-concrete". Intelligent trappers ask themselves what a rabbit sees. They can say to themselves: "If I were a rabbit, if I had its eyes, its nose, its ears, its mind, what would the world be for me"? Their ability to imagine and enter another's viewpoint gives them an advantage. But simultaneously, through the inevitable reciprocity of all thought, they will ask themselves: "Could it not be that at this moment, a mind far greater than I is asking itself what a little thinking animal like me is seeing in the immensity of the mountains. Perhaps the mountain there behind me is asking itself right now what a human might see and imagine!" If I can explore the viewpoint of animals whose evolutionary summit I am, so they say, another greater than I am can explore my point of view. This being sees what I don't see, feels what I don't feel, thinks what I don't think. Can I enter this point of view that is above me?

Yes, thought can enter a superior, wider, more encompassing viewpoint. In the beginning, it was through anthropomorphism (tendency to conceive of divinity as being in Man's image), then through theological speculation, and finally through scientific and mathematical speculation. Here is an example: We are in the age of quantum physics and string theory. If I had very good eyes, I could see electrons, different types of quarks, gravitational fields and perhaps even Higgs' bosons. The world would have a diameter exceeding 13 billion light-years and would be billions and billions of times more complex than a rabbit. This reality that thought discovers when it puts itself to the test of scientific experimentation appears unbelievably more mysterious than anything we can imagine when we remain on square one, more complex, more simple, more astounding, more grandiose and prolific, more terrifying and harmonious, more majestic and disturbing than all the gods imagined in the age of theology. It is, for us, a "super-concrete", a concrete reality which is no longer evident to our senses, but is to the senses we have given ourselves theoretically and technically.

The passage through abstraction grants human beings admittance into a cathedral they have constructed intellectually and yet imposes itself upon them as truer than the stones they see with their eyes and touch with their hands. For those of us who love science, there is no doubt about it. Medieval man speculated about God and experienced God in darkness. He had no doubts either. However, I think that all the same he did doubt a little more than the astrophysicist doubts the existence of distant quasars. For, in addition to speculation, our physicist has created "telescopic senses" that allow him or her to "see" the results of his or her deductions.

It is within the power of thought to fabricate an abstract universe which, with each advance in scientific aptitude, grows closer to reality, a reality that is proven every time to be greater and more stupendous than the finest science-fiction novels. The passage through abstraction is achieved by simplification and yet creates a universe that is much more complex and simple than all that Newton or Darwin had imagined. In other words, even if the methods change and improve, one constant remains: what we find after thinking is much more immense and mysterious than what we perceive with our eyes and our ears. Through technical innovation, all we wanted was an easier way to catch rabbits and here we are lost in the sidereal vastness of galactic superclusters! Thought achieves the tour de force of escaping the limits of its point of view, so well that now we are living in a world much too big for us, an enormous world, a world

humanly impossible to assume.

Our actions are determined by the feeling produced in us by this "super-concrete" world that surpasses and surrounds us. Those who feel lost in a hostile world will lock themselves into a closed system, a system based on domination. Those who have confidence will remain in an open system and will be capable of collaboration.

2. Desire and thought are indissociable

Desire inhabits thought and mobilizes thought toward an object. I want to eat this rabbit... Out of concern with effectiveness, thought takes the risk of imagining the possible in order to develop better tools. Too bad! Now it has garnered new knowledge that is totally useless and yet much tastier than a charcoal-grilled rabbit. Thought leaves reality and returns with armloads of extra reality that now lend his life an anxious flavor. Can we trust what surpasses us?

Science tells us that the world is truly very great, religion tells us that the world is truly very great, and in both cases, the difficulty is similar: where is trust to come from?

Some will say: "Watch out! In the Middle Ages, speculation led us to a God greater than Man, but unverifiable. This was only a mass hallucination, thought wandering off the path. Today, there is nothing like this. Speculation has provided itself with an anchorage vis-a-vis reality, and we call this anchorage "science". Yes, in fact we have ended up with a universe far greater than all the gods Humanity has imagined, but above all it is much more real than the gods....

This is surely what I mean: the growth of the scientific mind is a growth in reality and this is part of the meticulous use of thought. Bravo! This only makes our feelings in the face of the immensity and complexity of the totalities we are constructing even more concrete, legitimate, true, and consistent, and these totalities are increasingly close to universal reality. Science has enlarged everything, including our idea of size. ***Plato's demiurge (the architect-god of the universe) seems to us small and simplistic, less "divine" than the universe of galactic superclusters revealed to us by the Hubble telescope.

So, what do we mean by real, by super-concrete, by more real than reality? Is it an inflation of the imagination like some think God is, or is it an inevitable result of scientific thought?

When my thought thinks something, this thing that I think is obviously a representation, an object of thought, an abstraction. But once this abstraction is proven through experimentation, my thought is forced to admit that the thing it thought of exists, the thing it thought of is undeniably at the other end of its tools of perception. What I see, and thought of before, is more true than what I saw before I thought. The criterion of truth here is affirmative. This so great, complex, yet simple thing is more true than what I saw in the beginning with my physical eyes. ***Already, string theory allows us to begin to understand that the 15 billion years separating us from the so-called Big Bang is only one step among others that have preceded this inflation of space-time.

This new reality surrounding me, this reality that gives me life and death, is a gigantic circle of things that has all powers. Moreover, it is because it has all powers that I can deny its reality. A meteor perceptible only by very sophisticated instruments would become terribly real if it threatened to fall on New York or Paris. The equation for the conversion of mass into energy ($E=mc^2$) became super-concrete at the moment when thousands of Japanese were killed by it. Super-concrete, for if someone had taught them Einstein's equation, they would only have seen a theory. This theory made

visible a grandiose and terrifying thing: a grain of energy much smaller than a bullet can destroy a whole city. An extremely abstract equation literally fell on their heads like a mountain of fire.

The fault in desire that transforms it into death-instinct is this: "This morning I wanted a well-cooked rabbit because I was hungry, but I caught a kind of magma of cells so minutely organized that I would never have imagined such an invention on my own." It is not the desire for the infinite that has produced God, but a strictly limited and completely defined desire that led me by force, in a world so vast, so boundless that now I am grappling with a feeling of terror: the feeling of a soul lost in the vastness. I can even say that, in the face of this cosmos I have found, my gods now resemble little straw rabbits.

Is this feeling given only to lovers of science? I don't think so. All the suckling infant wants is milk, and here it is with a mother that surpasses it completely, that it doesn't understand, that it can't assimilate, that it can't reduce to the state of an object of satisfaction. The man wants pleasure, and here he is with a woman; the woman, with a man. He wants to hear a bird, and here he is with all of Mozart's works. He wants to reproduce, and a child arrives with his or her irrepressible questions... For each minuscule desire, always answers that are too large.

Reality infinitely exceeds desire. Now there is reason to ask ourselves: "But what desire would be big enough, infinite enough, to encompass reality?" This desire must exist. It is not that desires are too great to ever be satisfied, but that reality is so great that it arouses a desire for the infinite. Ethics does not consist, then, of reducing desires to the notion of need, but, on the contrary, ethics consists of enlarging desires until they pave the road of reality.

It is here that the medieval period is ahead of us. The desire for God is nothing other than this desire that is capable of accepting reality in all of its grandeur, a quantitative and qualitative grandeur that the dictionary has always defined by the term "divine". But we have not yet reached the Middle Ages, the Middle Ages are ahead of us, in the future. They bore an ideal that we will finally understand through having gone against it. Nonetheless, the fundamental desire of the human being, discovered in all its splendor in the Medieval age, has finally encountered a cathedral far more Gothic than anything humans had imagined, a cathedral at once too immense, too complex, and too simple for our imagination.

And we are now contending with feelings inevitable and yet unbearable: contemporary thought has not succeeded in desiring the vast world it is discovering. This is the most decisive contemporary fact:***we do not succeed in desiring a world as astounding as the one that comes to us through scientific journals.

The immediate reaction to this feeling is consumption. Since my most primitive, primary, and simple desires inevitably lead to inordinate responses, to an enormous cosmos, I am first going to reduce these responses to very few things (objects of metal and plastic) and then I will dictate to myself the desires these tawdry things will satisfy. Such is the essence of consumer society. Thus luxury, the big fast cars, the fortified estates, and the private jets exist to reduce desires to their puniest possible level, to an artificial, ridiculous level. All these accessories for dolls, these decorations for the rich form another type of abstraction, but one which, this time, has nothing of the immense and the infinite, has nothing of the super-concrete reality of biological bodies, celestial spheres and free electrons; these are no more than small buzzing forms capable of delineating my social position. ***In the green civilization, this will not exist, for women and men will live in the terror and the enchantment of things.

3. Consciousness is nothing else than the living desire for truth

Scientific thought leads to the world, but this world is always too grand, too complex and too simple for humans. There results from this a feeling that can neither be mastered nor identified, that is beyond joy and anguish, that can just as readily submerge us in terror as in enchantment. Who can endure this feeling? It is only good for making works of art that draw us further into reality, this time the reality of the heart. Thus, face to face with the infinity of the stars, the infinity of the soul opens, and feeling develops... Stop! Oh, that a house would cover me with its hewn stones, its intricately-carved wooden furniture, its luxurious decor... I don't want to see, even for a minute, the mystery that might enter me if I suddenly began to feel a true desire directed toward a true piece of reality.

Whatever course it takes, the thought that would be the jack-of-all-trades of its needs remains obsessed by a reality that exceeds all its predictions. A feeling wells up out of this that is very difficult to define, an overpowering feeling that neither discipline of heart nor discipline of mind can master. Those who have been shaken by this feeling have become either mad, or mystics. It is preferable to find some poultice to put on it. For the majority, this is overconsumption, the destruction of the environment, in other words.

What is it that is so troubling in this immensity that opens up in front of thought as it dares to go forward?

The universe we are discussing appears torn between the super-intelligent ingenuity we find in its globality and the pitilessness it displays toward individual beings. On the one hand, this reality appears to correspond with the desirable values of symmetry, unity, harmony, and elegance, in brief, to mainly esthetic values, and, on the other hand, this same reality shows a total indifference to the suffering and death of individuals. If I take the viewpoint of the totality, I am enthralled, enchanted, seduced, and if I take the point of view of individuals, I am disenchanting and unable to forgive. Individual suffering and death shock us profoundly in the face of the immortality of the cosmos. Whether reality is divine or mechanistic, death cheats, and marks an unjustifiable gap between the grandeur of reality and the monstrosity of what it does to individuals.

In the name of the value of beauty, I may submit to the charm, but in the name of the value of goodness, I feel obligated to rebel with all my strength. I am the dispenser of values, and this world scandalizes my values or, more precisely, this world scandalizes my desire for consistency between beauty and goodness. I am torn. Reality gains my trust on the side of beauty, and I yield; it excites my greatest hostility in regard to goodness, and I rise up in revolt. To suppose this universe to be impersonal and thus irresponsible is not sufficient to overcome this feeling. Quite to the contrary, such a machine appears so hostile and absurd that the only riposte imaginable is to use it against itself, to dominate it, to subdue it with its own laws to the point of rendering it unviable. This rage against the world machine leads not only to more anxiety but to more effective means of making this anxiety a reality. Fear, in consequence, drives us to destruction and destruction drives us to fear.

The scandal of a world imperturbably calm in the face of the tragedy of individual death obviously rests on one hypothesis: the suffering that I see, the death that I see is the way that I see it: a final end. And up until now, no other viewpoint has succeeded in making us see death otherwise; all the other hypotheses have proved to be unverifiable. The mystery remains intact. Each time that we imagined something greater than what our eyes saw, we profited, for the world truly is greater, but as for death's horizon, it stayed shut. Everything in the universe is great, except for death

which remains a closure, a radical limit

The question of immortality is not just theological; it is at the heart of the feeling behind the world's unhappiness. For if the world is cruel, if it is a machine without a soul, a force which goes its way with no concern for individuals, why should I be surprised if the president of an empire does the same? Is it possible to imagine that humanity is better than the cosmos that gave it birth, that maintains it, that surrounds it! How can we be strangers in this cosmos? If it is a machine without a heart, we are machines without a heart. Certainly, it can happen that a man like Camus, revolting against reality's absurdity, rebels and tries to practice solidarity, but this will always be an exception. The general law is the amorality of the beauty of the spheres. Can we teach children the mechanism of evolution such as Darwin and Lamarck imagined it in the nineteenth century and hope that they will show compassion for the infirm and handicapped who would die were they abandoned to nature!.

But let's not go so fast. Let's return to Camus. That a man would decide to go toward a greater solidarity with the world's exploited, that he would decide this against all the logic of the machine of this world, this lands us precisely in the heart of ethics.***In the face of this so beautiful yet so cruel world, humans should, one might suppose, seek to destroy every search for goodness, compassion, and pity and act like true fascists. With no hope of defeating a mechanical giant whose energy equals mass multiplied by the square of the speed of light (an enormous figure), they ought to tear their souls out.

***The logic of such a vision of the world is the death of whatever there is of humanity in humans, and a desperate attempt to become reabsorbed in animal life (which is equivalent to suicide since our advantage as a species is our sociality). If a man like Camus succeeds in escaping this logic, to raise himself to a healthy reflex like the solidarity of humans against death, it is because he is haunted by a value which has no equivalent in the cruel world: the human being collectively struggling against individual death.

In summary, if beauty is inscribed in reality, human beings should think of goodness as a potential inscribed in their own hearts. For Camus, God does not exist, for God is in the future, and it is up to humanity to make God. Beauty we see, but goodness we must imagine and realize. Beauty can be verified: the more we formulate hypotheses based on beauty (for example, hypotheses of symmetry), the more reality seems to conform to it. Magnificence of mathematics, splendor of the harmony that finds its object! Goodness is constructed also, but the more it is constructed, the more we are outraged by the suffering, the death, and the total absence of compassion that the mountain shows to the mountaineer.

Let's look a little more deeply at this revolt for a moment. Yes, really! Why does the mountaineer go out to meet the imperturbable mountain? Why, deep down, would he resent it if the mountain were to ever intentionally save him? Why, in his deepest depths, does he prefer the mountain to be impersonal and indifferent? If goodness were in the mountain, he would have no reason to go there. He goes there in order to experience the emotional realization, terrible and yet entrancing, that the beauty of reality needs our own goodness, as if it were up to us to make a better world. And if, inevitably, we want to make the world as good as it is beautiful, it is because we are in some way the equal of this vast cosmos. The mountaineer wants to say to the mountain that if, by its beauty, it is greater than he, he is greater than it in the capacity he has for goodness toward his companions. The mountaineer can look at the mountain without shame. I think that this is the feeling that sublimates the emotion of hostility.

Desire seeks a response in reality, but if it does not find it, it creates it. Desire creates

what it lacks. When desire finds a duty instead of an object, it begins to exude a very special pleasure, a pleasure so intense that many men have left beloved wives to go and die on a harsh and implacable mountain. They have won on this mountain the pride of bringing goodness and beauty together.

The desire for truth is the foundation of truth. The desire for beauty is the foundation of beauty. The desire for goodness is the foundation of goodness. Desires are the foundation of values. The value of true beauty guides science and art in their encounter with reality. The value of true goodness guides human beings in their relations with their environment. The desire for true beauty leads to the satisfaction of finding a beautiful world. The desire for true goodness leads to the satisfaction of creating a good world. Beauty inhabits the cosmos through its presence; goodness inhabits the cosmos through its absence. Beauty is something we see; goodness is a duty.

Yet who can endure this duty? Who can escape this duty of trying to lead the world to a goodness equal to its beauty? Who can assume this duty? It is quite simply too heavy a weight for a consciousness that perceives itself as minute amid the immensity. So here is the terrible consequence: human beings find themselves confronted with the necessity of inventing an idea of goodness that will inevitably be premature.

Hermann Broch calls poetry 'the impatience of thought'; poetry cannot wait for science to establish the truth about the meaning of the world. Science requires centuries to discover a tiny little piece of the puzzle, and even that, with a good percentage of uncertainty! How then can we expect science to show us the whole of the picture? We cannot, however, live for centuries in the absence of meaning. Poetry short-circuits the process and takes the risk of guessing the meaning of reality before we have even obtained any view of the whole. This is an inevitable risk. Likewise, we cannot expect to have a perfectly mature idea of justice, equity, and compassion in order to practice them. The temptation becomes strong to pretend that we have no need for patience and experience, that we can short-circuit the process and arrive directly at the idea of justice. Such an ideological justice is nothing other than the impatience of thought applied to the value of goodness. Such impatience leads to tragedy.

Empires are founded on an immature, overzealous, formalized "goodness" that Bergson calls closed values and that we have called: exclusive values. As we have seen, it is always about creating a remedy for a disease, a threat, or an attack by Nature. It is about contending with the presumed hostility of the world. It is about fabricating a justice and a democracy capable of overcoming every natural injustice. It is about fighting Nature with weapons worthy of her cruelty.... It is, in sum, about dominating the world, imposing goodness on it, our vision of goodness. And we know what unhappiness this leads us to, for, though to enhance the beauty of flowers is, thanks to a garden, possible---it is a simple continuation---to oppose goodness to the apparent hardness of nature is to counter hostility with hostility. We have examples of beauty from nature; of goodness, we have only intuitions. There is the whole problem of ethics.

A dark and agonizing feeling haunts us. Nature is immense, mathematically harmonious but dazzlingly cruel. It represents a very good example of overall management and a very poor example of the management of individuals. It leads us to believe that individuals are of no importance in comparison with totalities (this is characteristic of tyrants). When the tiger strangles its victim, it participates in natural selection. The tiger is good for the species, but without pity for the individual. We cannot submit to such a nature and yet we are only an infinitesimal particle of this nature. As a result of this experience there is one moving emotion and one moving

fact: a great taste for death and a great danger of death. This emotion and this fact form a self-generating spiral which, accelerating, goes toward ecological, economic, and social catastrophe. This is the thesis of the final part of this book.

The taste for death and the attraction toward individual and collective suicide derive from the very heart of the cosmic emotion: the splendor and cruelty of the cosmos. The cruelty of the heavens and the earth, the hostility we perceive there lead us to the path of domination. We want to drive a certain sense of justice down Nature's throat. We want to tame it so as to make it more equitable in regard to human efforts. We devote our technology to these efforts. The deadly danger is not the result of a will to do evil, but of the improvised attempts at goodness, justice, and equity we are required to make. And since these improvisations are done in a spirit of hostility against Nature, they lead to ideologies of domination.

We wish to impose an ideology of justice, democracy and social order by the intermediary of forces like the states, and above the states, the banking, industrial, and commercial multinationals. In the absence of identifiable models in Nature, we invent schematic, closed, dogmatic, and non-evolving ideas that we use as swords to slice into good and evil. We reach such levels of incompetence that we destroy Nature's equilibrium. Out of wanting to put it, and all those who resist us, under subjection, we are destroying the Nature that feeds us. Finally, caught in the vicious circle of domination, the death we create adds to the hostility of the world we are struggling against. A great taste for death filters into us as we are hacked to pieces in this battle. Added to our misfortunes is a tendency toward collective suicide. Not the silent suicide of the desperate man or woman, but the hateful suicide of the man who wants to

drag his whole family along into death, or even the psychopathic suicide of one who kills until he is finally shot by someone stronger than he is.

All this rests on a hypothetical vision: the cosmos surrounding us is beautiful, the world is beautiful, but it is not ethical. From an aesthetic of nature we go to an ethic of disgust. Is there another way?

CHAPTER 16: FROM THE AESTHETIC TO THE ETHICAL

Ethics might be presented as the primordial feeling in action. It is certainly useless to say to someone or to oneself: "This must be done and that must not be done." A human being will always do a little more of what he or she feels and a little less of what must be done. But what feeling are we talking about? What is the fundamental emotion that guides the human being toward life or toward death? On what does this emotion rest?

Must we telescope all feelings toward a vanishing point which might be for example: the eros of Papa-Mama-little girl or Papa-Mama-little boy? Do all feelings derive from the familial relational complex? By what miracle would the family encompass and surpass heaven and earth to the point that all our feelings about the cosmos would be dependent upon our erotic and familial relations? How could the family render its thin boundary absolutely impermeable and enlarge it to the point where it would cover the firmament, the mountains, the trees and even death? In short, how could the family make itself the master of the primordial feeling? What parent has succeeded in suppressing her child's questions about the stars, the ants, the butterflies, or the dog found dead by the side of the road? Who has been able to believe that we can dilute metaphysical questions with sexual instincts?

Certainly, the cosmos we see is undoubtedly our own construction; it is surely the projection of our frustrated, repressed, wounded or radiantly fulfilled desires. But this is just it, we are aware that we are dealing with a projection, and isn't this awareness of the projection subordinated to an even greater certainty glaringly obvious to all thought, even the crudest: The world existed before me; Papa and Mama depend on the world; we all depend on this world; the whole family and every family is born from this world; we don't say so, but it is obviously the world that calls the tune."

1. The primordial feeling

It seems to me that our feelings are in fact subordinated to subtle and omni-present feelings imposed by the presence of an immense and omnipotent totality. All our little powers are borrowed from a nature that can take them back at the first storm. Every child knows that lightning can strike the house regardless of Mama's incantations. The general feeling that we experience in the face of nature remains primary and all the others are subordinate to it. The primary feeling of the fish is the feeling of water; it is this feeling that surrounds all the others. Perhaps the fish will only become aware of this feeling as he lies dying in the bottom of the fisherman's boat, but on that day precisely, he will realize that this feeling has always been there and that it has always directed his other emotions.

A culture is defined more by its cosmology than by the ideologies or the mythologies that attempt to articulate its contradictions. It is not surprising that the great religions seek to enlist cosmologies in their service. And each new cosmology puts the religious explanation seriously to the test. Certainly, a tradition will strive with all its strength to maintain the cosmology it has appropriated, but inevitably one day someone rectifies the collective view, for consciousness is satisfied with thought only if thought finally responds to the call of truth. As long as the call of truth prevails over the need for security, society remains living, evolving, in other words.

The Middle Ages did not survive the cosmic transformation imposed by Copernicus. The universe ceased being centered on Man. At the dawn of the twentieth century, the cosmos had become totally autonomous, resting on its own forces, its own information, its own mechanism. It had lost its finality and because of this it had fallen into the absurd. It was even thought to be irremediably turned toward death. This could only intensify our impression of inhabiting an unbearable world. The new theories of the last thirty years proclaim a major change: it is possible that the cosmos is making a U-turn and is indicating a completely different direction than that of death. This may modify our reflexes of domination and diminish our so-great love of death. However, culturally we are a century behind the latest cosmologies, and it is the absurd and mechanical cosmos that still dominates.

But let us return to the paradox of all the cosmologies. In the relation of thought with nature and, more precisely, in the relation of mathematics with reality, we are increasingly edified by the elegance with which nature succeeds in uniting an extreme simplicity of principles and an extraordinary complexity of expressions. The symmetry, the organization, the subtlety of the dialectical relations between the energy-states of matter stimulate our taste for learning. We have never uncovered in independent quantities a single simple, granular particle in conformity with what Cartesian thought would have wished to find. We will never touch anything that closely matches our first crude models of an original matter. "Relations" and "objects in relation" are everywhere infinitely interlinked, fundamentally indissociable and philosophically dialectical. Everything seems to live according to a principle that escapes our clear and distinct concepts of matter and mind. Reality appears to be dialectical: an atom of reality is neither this nor that, but vibrates following a dynamic opaque to our imagination. This incomprehensible dynamic manifests itself simultaneously as a wave and as a particle, simultaneously in a continuous and a discontinuous manner. The cultural imagination remains seriously behind in regard to the physics of the cosmos which does indeed elude the imagination, passes beyond the imagination thanks to a seemingly very abstract mathematical equipment. Everything converges nonetheless toward defending a principle which verifies, at levels we would never have imagined, that the infinitely simple creates the infinitely complex (but here the simple is never simplistic.)

What we are discovering constantly dismisses Cartesian logic and leads us in to new logics increasingly daunting to the imagination which, for its part, is still trying to decide between an image of matter or an image of mind. Nothing presents itself any longer as either an image of matter or an image of mind, but as something which lets itself be mastered not by any predefined mathematic, but by the evolution of mathematics itself and thus by a sort of reason of reason. Therefore, the cosmos appears rational, never rational according to any simple idea of reason but always rational according to the evolution of rationality. In fact, what is spectacular is that reality requires us to modify even the forms of our rationality and our logic, to the point where, when we agree to think in an increasingly subtle way, the cosmos reveals a greater part of its mystery to us. This is something. The cosmos is educating our thought in the direction of subtlety. Science, here in any case, eludes closed systems and tautology. Already the idea of the absurd is obsolete: it is too simplistic an idea to stick to the skin of the cosmos. An absurdity cannot force thought to think better in order to advance from discovery to discovery.

The world is forcing us toward a new logic, a logic that produces an unheard-of pleasure. Beyond what science reveals, we are experimenting with a new kind of intellectual pleasure: thought loves to be subjugated by reality, and it likes just as much to be outsmarted by reality as to advance toward it. It discovers the pleasure of never winning but of always progressing. This is even more satisfying than imagining,

as classical thought did, that the world will soon be understood thanks to an elementary geometry. The unbelievable mathematical complexity that we are discovering in the universe constantly satisfies our thoughts and yet no experiment has ever absolutely confirmed a theory, a simplification, in other words. We are taking more and more pleasure in dialoging with a reality which always leads us by a length. In short, we are forced to develop an open system of thought, and an open system pleases the mind much more than does a closed system and this is so despite the price to pay in insecurity and in humility. For science, to think in truth remains a passion.

The most extraordinary theories always prevail over the ordinary theories. Nothing arouses our anger in this amazing way the cosmos functions. With each discovery, we tell ourselves: "Just look! The world is even more breathtaking and beautiful than we had imagined." What is particularly pleasing is to discover that reality always ends up putting us in our place. In the end it is what calls the cards. Science is beginning to discover that it is not isolated from its master. Its desire for truth prevails over the pretention to hold the truth and this produces a new feeling, a new pleasure which is gradually eroding our obsession of hoping to dominate the world.

The scandal is, as it happens, on the side of goodness: it is impossible to imagine a world turned so far toward individual death as the one we have before our eyes. Even if the new theories no longer speak of a death of the cosmos, it remains that the universe we are discovering keeps alive as a whole due to local, punctual, and individual deaths. Nothing is called into question on this score. The death of individuals is necessary for the movement of life. Individual death is necessary for the immortality of all. Energies are always in metamorphosis. Metamorphosis is even consubstantial with energy. There is no energy without a change of form. Without death, without the passage from one form to another, the universe would quite simply not exist. Every individual, every species and every planet, every atom, every molecule and every sun are only one provisional link according to a sort of strange finality: to develop the greatest multiplicity and the greatest complexity of forms thanks to death, thanks to transformation. To create, to erase, to recreate while adding complexity.

The emotion resulting from the indifference of nature for the individual appears to me to be the basis of the ethical tragedy of societies founded on domination. Human beings cannot surpass their supreme mother and they are completely overwhelmed by her contradiction: she gives birth to us, feeds us, fascinates us by her beauty and then devours us without any consideration for our personal feelings. She seems to demonstrate what psychologists call pathological ambivalence, the syndrome of the "barbaric wedding."

I personally remember a young adolescent who told of how his mother, so beautiful, cheerful, and pleasant toward all the good-looking men she met, became terribly cruel when she turned to, and turned on, him. She then went into an inexplicable anger, struck him with the first object she found, then wept hot tears, taking him into her arms with the voluptuousness of a mistress. At the age of 17, this young boy came to us at the rehabilitation center. He had stabbed his mother who, fortunately, had survived her wounds. There, I believe, is the whole fundamental ethic of human beings in this era when nature appears more and more beautiful and increasingly cruel. It is because of this, perhaps, that our most beautiful works of art, chiefly in music, have been contemporaneous with our greatest genocides. Beauty appears to whitewash crime. Aesthetics justifies violence. Our wars -- familial, national, economic or other -- are absolved from above, by the cosmos itself. Can there be a judge above the cosmos, more credible than reality?

It is no use to be shocked by our odious way of destroying each other; we will always resemble what we see in the immensity of reality. And if human beings want to change anything about this, they must first be able to see things differently and these things must demonstrate that they are right, provisionally at least. Our ethics will always be logical in relation to our vision. Our arm adjusts to our sight. Human beings are incurably rational; they embrace and always will embrace the logic of the cosmos and will do this even at those times when the logic repels them the most. If nature seems odious to them, they will imitate what they understand about her at the very moment when they are fighting her as an enemy. They will pay her back in kind.

Inevitably, the cosmos can only be the place of norms. It is, by itself, the normal, the healthy, the good, and this is so in spite of all the speeches about pity, peace, and equality. Under a cruel heaven, we cannot exclaim to a president or a prime minister: "You are acting like a dominator, you are pathological and immoral --". If he has the cosmos on his side, if he has the norm on his side, all our speeches on compassion will only make him smile, for he will certainly make good use of them politically! How can you cure a person that the cosmos considers to be healthy, that is to say, that is just as psychopathic as it is?

2. The reversal necessary for the development of a new primordial feeling.

The only way before us is to approach universal reality in order to better examine it. This is doubtless why astrophysicists have become the great preachers of the end of the twentieth century.

We who are only philosophers, lovers of truth, we might try the following strategy: educate ourselves about the beauty of nature in order to find a path in it, a path of goodness, not of a goodness that is only imagined, but a goodness that is possible and emerging, that wants to come into being, a goodness that is not an ideology, but a concrete potentiality progressing in its manifestation. After the Big Bang of cosmic beauty why not the Big Bang of cosmic goodness! A simple delay in emergence. The universe, which appears to be without goodness may, after all, be aiming toward a sort of goodness reconciled with individual death. Goodness may, in relation to beauty, simply be a couple of billion years late, the time necessary to be desired and wanted. In short, can we find an ethical principle in the tendencies of nature just as we find an aesthetic principle in its actuality?

A reader who directs his or her phenomenological telescope in the single direction of subject to object and never of object to subject will find this trick childish to say the least. He or she will say that I am only projecting on nature. I will tell her or him that nature projected itself on me first. This reader will then tell me that I am caught in the vicious circle of projection in any case. I will tell her or him that a way of escaping this does exist; as proof of this, look at how science allows itself to be challenged by reality. The reader will then tell me that this is false, that science doesn't really approach reality, but only improves its power to represent it. Then I will ask him or her why he or she feels such a need to close all the doors. If there is no exit, we will learn this not by closing doors, but on the contrary by trying to open them.....

If I often return to the methodological problem, it is because I believe that there is in this problem our first ethical clue and it is a big one. I repeat this: the only qualities useful to us are desire and confidence in what may contradict us through experience. To walk in truth is to have as a companion a contradicter we can trust. To have confidence in what contradicts us is the only way to open a closed system of values. I must return to this determining point. The young boy who was terrorized by his mother will never know the source of his own story if he doesn't achieve the minimum of trust that would allow him to encounter his mother's reality beyond the revolt she forces on

him. Revolt and a feeling of hostility inevitably lead to the vicious circle of projection. Only through trust do we arrive at experience. The therapist's question is the following: "How can the young boy achieve the minimum of trust that would allow him to communicate with his mother?" If the therapist can arrange to have the young man observe his mother in a protected and supervised context, he may possibly modify his idea of his mother. He might be able to understand his mother from her point of view.

We could, for example, apply the principle of video-feedback, filming the mother as she walked down the street to go to work (any daily activity would do). Then we would film interviews with her on different tangential and apparently innocuous subjects. Then we would project the films for the young man to see. It would be necessary to ask the young man to describe the scenes without ever commenting on them. It sometimes happens that in this way children can see their mothers. They then experience the strange sensation of observing her for the first time. They experience the pleasure of putting projections aside in order to see their mothers. Then and only then can they understand, perhaps, that a rape victim whose child resembles its father is torn between what she loves and what she detests. Grasping a small portion of their mothers' tragedy, they may be able to see their own tragedy. This won't solve everything, but it will initiate an exit from the tautological hell they are in. The hate they project on their mothers is the hate that their mothers have projected on them. This young man is the image of the challenge our society must accept vis-a-vis nature.

Exploring a small fissure leading out of a closed system can set anger into motion, and that is the important thing, for anger enclosed in a narrow circle ends up by killing. For a society, this leads to the disaster of wars and to the destruction of ecosystems. Every attempt at therapy with a culture as client will begin with an attempt at video-feedback: to study nature with the capabilities of an honest science. I am employing an analogy here. Nature is not a violated mother (although numerous myths tell of this). However, to human sight, Mother Nature seems extremely ambivalent: "It is through the deaths of individuals that she manages to create more and more complex beings. Her indifference to particular cases appears to be part of her aestheticism."

But what is it about? From a point of view that is even somewhat objective, what is life, what is death?

Since the elaboration of the Third Law of Thermodynamics (each substance possesses a finite positive entropy which becomes nil at a temperature of absolute zero), death is absolute cold, the ultimate entropy, the entropic maximum, the tendency toward cold that warm bodies display when left in an expansive and isolated environment. The cold here is not simply the absence of heat; on the contrary, with the heat diffusion, cold inexorably produces a degradation of information. And what is the degradation of information? Nothing other than entropy, the diminution of complexity.

So, what is complexity? That is one tough question. We must return to it in more depth. If a million letters of the alphabet are kept in a box in complete disorder and a crafty little imp rearranges some of the letters, it is impossible to discover what has changed by using one's intelligence; only an excellent memory might be able to do it (for example, a computer's memory). To discover the mutations, the changes, and the displacements of one letter in relation to another through intelligence, we must have recourse to some principle of order. If a grammar, a syntax, and an orthography exist, and I mean by this laws of relation and interaction, then I can perceive the changes. A poem possesses a very weak level of entropy, but a great negative entropy, for I can understand its different levels of order (spelling, syntax, grammar, semantics, etc.). Similarly, a petroleum molecule is more complex than the gases produced in its combustion because more elements are organized in a complex manner following intelligible electromagnetic laws.

To be oriented toward death signifies that, if nothing from the exterior influences a system, the simple passage of time will cause the connections that maintain complexity to break, slowly but surely. Heat diffusion is equivalent to a loss of information, of intelligibility. This supposes two ingredients: the multiplicity of elements and the simplicity of intelligible principles. Let us imagine that the intelligible principles are infinitely multiple, as multiple as the elements, then in that case there would be no measurable entropy (there would be no concrete universality). Supposing that there was only one element: where would the complexity be? It could only be some configuration of the element, an intelligible configuration, that is to say a symmetry and even a large number of levels of symmetry.

From the aesthetic standpoint, the cosmos is like a great musical composition: many notes and few principles, the greatest diversity with a minimum of laws. If our universe is an isolated expanding system, it is entropic and is going toward cold and toward disorganization. Starting from a very complex beginning, it is inexorably going toward an end where all the elements will be similar, interchangeable and distributed in complete disorder; it is going in a straight line toward noise, the absence of all form of intelligible melody. ***The entropy of a dying universe is a number which approaches the zero of complexity, the zero of intelligibility but never reaches it.

Entropy is measured by the number of permutations which make no intelligible difference in the dynamic whole of a system. A library is in total disorder if I can alter the position of any particular book without anyone being able to see the difference by her or his intelligence even if it could be observed by memory. A dead cosmos leaves no foothold for thought, only for memory. In short, such a cosmos has no aesthetic range.

But then if the cosmos is going toward the greatest possible entropy, it is because it began with an enormous complexity. Now, it is said that the beginning of the cosmos was an extraordinarily simple quantity of energy, where the laws of interaction were not even differentiated. How can we see an enormous complexity there? The answer offered by the M theory of strings is this: there was, in this world's beginning, a great number of levels of symmetry. After this there were breaks of symmetry, which led simultaneously to general entropy and local complexification. A great number of levels of symmetry is equivalent to a very weak entropy since symmetry gives rise to intelligence, as it allows for distinctions starting from intelligible principles.

The logician Leonid Levin has recently demonstrated an amazing result that ensues from a reinforcement of Gödel's theorem of incompleteness: to the law of the conservation of energy a law of the conservation of information will be added. According to this, the cosmos will pass through all possible transmutations yet will remain at the same overall level of complexity and intelligibility.

We will not enter into all sorts of technical details here, but employ a primordial analogy to better understand death, an analogy in the medieval sense of the term, in the strong sense where human thought is the analogy of the cosmos well before it can make the cosmos an analogy of thought. More simply expressed, thought and the cosmos are inevitably in resonance and always, obviously, it is the cosmos that takes precedence. We cannot disregard the fact that we are immersed in the cosmos, that we are a particle of the universe and, if there is an intellectual activity that proves it, it certainly is science.

So let us continue our analogy. There is beauty in the human mind because there is beauty in a starry sky. This principle of beauty offers, indeed is, the possibility of a foothold for thought, a foothold on numbers. And the smaller the number is, the more

there is a necessity for numerous levels of footholds for thought: the levels of symmetry. A musical composition causes a human soul to resonate to the degree that it drives ambivalence to extremes, the ambivalence of, on the one hand, allowing oneself to be taken over by the intellect (principle of the simplicity of principles) and, on the other, of letting oneself be lost through metamorphoses, through changes of configuration. When a composer succeeds in producing a principle out of the principle which makes this principle a total mystery even as it continually reveals a little more of itself, his or her work seduces us in an extraordinary manner. This is the function of style. Aesthetic seduction resembles a woman who leaves her perfume everywhere and her footprints nowhere. If mathematics follow the aroma of thought and imagination, the footprint of forms, then the cosmos certainly does have a distinguishable style. Is this really the style of death? This is a capital question because it constitutes the source empowering our ethical behavior. We don't do what we will; we act according to how we feel.*** The style we discover in the cosmos is finally what will pass through our culture and fashion our future behavior.

Beauty demands that a simple principle act in the metamorphoses, through the deaths, through the multiplicity of notes transformed one into the other. This simple principle must be simple enough to give intelligence a foothold but never so simple as to allow intelligence to dominate it completely. Intelligence would dominate this simplicity of principle, if it could reduce the principle to a complete, sufficient, and predetermined law. Briefly, for the world to be beautiful, we must be able to advance in our understanding of it, but without ever finally attaining this understanding. In a way, beauty does demand that intelligence be vanquished, but in an eternal combat. For example: if thought is checkmated on the level of ancient plane geometry, it is compelled to change its level of intelligibility, it is compelled to pass from plane geometry to multidimensional geometry. The failures of thought compel thought to think differently. Thought always has before it a mixture of mysteries and knowledge, but this mixture itself is growing larger. It is continually gaining more of a hold on reality and yet reality still eludes us over and over again. There is no beauty unless knowledge advances but never reaches an end. If a work comes to be captured and completely subjected to a mathematical principle and thus is intellectually describable, suddenly that work no longer has aesthetic value. If the mystery remains so opaque that thought cannot advance, the work has no aesthetic value either.

***In information theory, complexity is defined by the size, measured in bits, of the smallest program capable of creating the object. In other words, when intelligence has located the memory (principle of reproduction) it has conquered the object. It may be that no object in nature can, in an absolute sense, be reproduced. It may be that, in the cosmos, intelligence is not optional. This, I believe, is the essence of beauty.

What does this tell us in regard to the style of death that, according to our still-classic culture, the cosmos is supposed to have?

The beauty of the cosmos only exists because forms, constructions, and complexities such as atoms, molecules, cells, and animals disappear in order to reappear different and in the long run more complex and, locally, more negatively entropic. No reproduction is identical. Forms don't disappear in just any way, they disappear in the name of a principle which refuses to give to simplicity, a simple simple simplicity, and to multiplicity, a simple multiplicity (***which would make things reproducible by simple robotics). Death is not just any way of escaping from intelligence, it is not just any mystery, it is mystery itself, that is to say, the flight of beauty from intelligence, a flight which gives intelligence a foothold sufficient to increase its desire to know and sufficient frustration for that desire to rise a little higher in the scale of intelligence and feelings. To make of death's mystery a final and definitive period, to close the cosmic

system, is to cheat on the very foundation of cosmic aestheticism.

In sum, death is part of the beauty of the cosmos, yes, but as mystery of mysteries and not as a rationally simple end as, for instance, the final period of a novel would be.

As in a highly seductive musical melody, the refrain is never the same and yet is recognizable. The forms disappear and return in another way. We perceive them as similar and yet different. What we feel above all else is a principle. We feel it, but we can never perfectly identify it; something always escapes us.

The style of the cosmos produces forms, but never forms that are immediately definable, and above all not the form of a final conclusion. Nevertheless, despite this mystery, we find bothersome the idea of thermodynamics where the transmutation of forms comes at the price of a general degradation of information. This at least is the understanding the twentieth century had of thermodynamics, and this has been reversed only very recently and then only on the theoretical level. For classical physics beauty is assumed to be nourished by the decrepitude of forms.

One essential point must be stressed here. There are two modes of death:

- * The first mode is the "trans-figuration" of forms. Forms disappear and new ones appear. And locally, on a planet like ours, for example, this is expressed by an evolution of forms toward complexity.
- * The second mode of death is total death, whether it be of individuals or the totality (according to classical thermodynamics).

We can observe the first mode of death. The second mode of death remains a belief that is fragile, unexplained, unverified and at present contested on the theoretical plane. The first mode of death is indispensable for the rise toward the complexity of life-forms. The second mode of death is a belief that makes the blood run cold. It may very well be that it is but one component of the contemporary myth that encourages despair, justifies the apparent absurdity of the cosmos and sustains the attitude of hostility that drives our culture to the domination of nature. However it may be, the aesthetic of death, death as a necessary element of aesthetics, has great resonance in our culture.

I have always asked myself what there was aesthetic in the life of Alexander the Great, of Kublai Khan, of Napoleon and of all those great murderers who have shed blood in the name of a principle of unity as indeterminate and symbolic as the idea of empire. There is a style there, the style of death. These invaders presented themselves as, and pretended to be, the image of the cosmos. We see paintings of them mounted on their horses as if the cosmos were mounted on humanity. They wanted to lead the world in the image of what their culture projected on the cosmos: an empire of force. The feeling that we devote to them resembles the feeling we have for nature: a reverently kneeling fear, a mixture of admiration and prostration, of hatred and respect. Yet have they really done death's work like nature does death's work, with the same concern? Does their death-dealing style resemble nature's style of death? Is it the same death?

If nature fundamentally possesses a style of death like Alexander the Great's, we will never escape the idea of empire; our death instinct would prevail over our life instinct, and we would eternally be entropic, accelerators of entropy. Any ethic of goodness and compassion would always be an ethic against the grain, as marginal to politics as the evolution toward complexity appears marginal to us in a cosmos viewed as doomed to death. But perhaps we haven't understood the style of the cosmos! Perhaps we have projected our idea of death and domination on it too much! Perhaps

science today is opening up a break in the wall ! Perhaps a change in our vision of the cosmos is approaching! What is fascinating in the call of consciousness for truth is that it forces intelligence to draw closer to reality and finally, it may be that reality may end up by making an impression upon us, by influencing us to adopt a style nearer its own.

There have been many abrupt changes in our vision of the cosmos since the Bronze Age, but the world, in our eyes, seemed always to be turned toward death, toward a sort of inexorable death. It has always been necessary to "save" the terrifying splendor of the cosmos through the highly relative "goodness" of the gods and by a judiciary and theological function of evil , in other words, by a religious management of justice. Time and again we have attempted to justify the cosmos by placing death and evil on our shoulders. "Through our sin," Judeo-christianity says, "suffering and death entered the world." In Antiquity, they called "redemption" the act by which a philanthropist purchased a slave or a prisoner in order to liberate him or her. Later, the Redemptorists took the place of criminals so that they could be freed. More generous yet, we have seen women or men plead guilty to a crime they did not commit in order to redeem someone they love. We have redeemed the cosmos many times by accusing ourselves. It took Jesus to try to redeem the redeemers that we are. Yet we are so convinced that the style of the cosmos is suffering and death, that we live in a vale of tears, and that all our redemptions serve only to accuse nature. For us, the cosmos is fallen. I mean by this, in contradiction with our idea of what a cosmos turned toward life should be, a cosmos that is good, just, equitable, and compassionate.

So where can we find an example of goodness? Is it even legitimate to wish for goodness in a cosmos without pity?

3. A new cosmology

A turnabout is possible. It has been heralded for thousands of years, but has it been understood? At stake, however, is the only possible foundation for ethics, in any case the only possible foundation proposed until now. A foundation which may be able to change our primordial feeling in regard to everything.

First of all, nowhere have we succeeded in identifying an absolute beginning and an absolute end. Physically and biologically, we cannot speak of death, but of disorganization and reorganization, of constant change of forms, of the constant metamorphosis of energies. On the other hand, never have death, entropy, and degradation appeared to us so precisely as the very paradigm of mystery (what we are always discovering a little more of, but never completely; what connects intelligence to what surpasses intelligence). Death is only the mystery of time, and we can say nothing about it, save that we see in death the evolution of forms toward complexity. Life struggles against entropy with all the strength of death, with all the strength of metamorphoses. What shocks us is not this metamorphosis, but the discontinuity in the thread of time from the point of view of personal consciousness. What difference does it make if life migrates from one form to another, if our consciousness cannot follow the thread of time. There too we know nothing. The end of consciousness cannot, by definition, be the subject of a scientific experiment. We bump into mystery.

Secondly, it is not because goodness is not the habit of the cosmos that the cosmos is not turned toward goodness. It may be that goodness is the hope of the cosmos, that is to say, its wished-for and possible future, its trending. Certain philosophers make the following proposition: to be certain of immortality or certain of death are two forms of certitude incompatible with a beauty turned toward goodness. If the cosmos were an invention whose essence is to create an aesthetic pleasure turned toward

goodness, it would not be otherwise. As Bergson put it, the universe should be perceived as a "machine for making gods". "Machine" is obviously not the right word. It could be said that the cosmos is a work whose aesthetic character is such that it incites us not only to create beauty, but also to devise what is lacking in the work: goodness. It is a little as if a composer had imagined a work which seduces us not only by what it is, but also stimulates us by what it is not. The aesthetic of the cosmos may only be the overture of a work which is meant to be even grander thanks to our participation, the participation of all the intelligences and of all the consciousnesses that inhabit the cosmos. For this hypothesis to have the slightest hold on our intelligence, we must see, or at least glimpse the direction of the cosmos, its potential for goodness, its orientation toward goodness.

When one-celled organisms "decided" to associate to form a society of cells, a plant or an animal in other words, they opted for a form of solidarity, for a form of goodness. Each cell was ready to die to save the society. Obviously, in this example, the ability to take the viewpoint of the whole is limited. The "us" cannot be extended to the universal; it is an organized club confronting other organized clubs. Nonetheless, the ability to take the universal point of view lies at the center of all the fundamental particles of the cosmos. Each element of the cosmos bathes in an overall force-field (for example, Higgs' field which defines mass) and no boundary prevents this field from embracing the universal. We can then defend the hypothesis of Bergson and Teilhard de Chardin: yes, death is necessary for creation, but death is never an end---; on the contrary, its end is to inspire the invention of continually more complex forms of solidarity, leaving a greater place for intelligence even as it baffles it with enormous numbers and complex unions. Something struggles against death, and death itself forces this something to develop ever wider and more universal solidarities (here too, I am not speaking of the abstract universal but of the real universal, the one that encompasses us concretely). It may be then that the style of the cosmos is not death, but life, a life based on strange fraternities where personal salvation embraces collective salvation.

Imagine that goodness is actively awaited, wished for, hoped for by the forces of life. Imagine that the beauty of the cosmos is an aesthetic invitation to surpass aesthetics by means of ethics. Imagine that goodness is a happy mastery of the mystery of death through which individuals experience an enormous pleasure in sublimating themselves for future generations. Imagine that my mother and my father who died concerned that there be a better world for those who would follow, imagine that their happiness, their smiles in the face of death's mystery were not fictitious. Imagine a being capable of placing collective hope above his or her personal hope. This being would seem to us so noble, so good, that we would say to ourselves: "Yes, the mountains, the trees, the flowers, the horses really do await this being." This cosmos will have finally created, without imposing it, a form of beauty truly turned toward life, it will have achieved an aestheticism of goodness, an ethic in other words....

I know quite well that I am playing with mythologies here. No cosmology is at present scientific. They are all competing hypotheses. The important thing here is to observe the decisive importance of these cosmologies for ethics. Since ethics are the result of primordial feeling, and primordial feeling is what we feel faced with the concrete totality bombarding our skin with every ray imaginable and unimaginable, it is impossible to imagine teaching about a cosmos directed toward death while hoping for behavior directed toward life. Yet reality is still there, and it is what will have the last word as long as science is guided by a concern for truth, and in other words, as long as consciousness does not neglect its work on thought. Basically, what I see as important here is the necessary act of faith by which an individual can attain an ethic of goodness, an ethic directed beyond death (and not against death) toward new forms of solidarity that are increasingly universal or, if you like, increasingly ecological.

It is very much a question of an act of faith. When I speak of an act of faith, I think of that young man who, one day, went into a burning house to save a child. After the rescue, as the child was crying in his mother's arms and the young man regained his wits, he asked himself: "Who was it that jumped into the fire to save that child?" He had the impression that "something" in him had taken possession of him and that thing considered the unknown child's life as important as his own. Unwittingly and without religious language, he had entered the world of faith. Faith is nothing but consciousness in action when we don't have time to prevent it from acting. It is consciousness moving faster than thought.

Between knowledge and experience, there is trust. Children take their first steps on the kitchen floor before they have had any direct experience of the floor not giving way under their feet (as opposed to the water in their mother's womb, which did give way). For one moment, they accomplish an act of faith. They have guessed that the floor will not give way, and they trust their foresight. Human beings are required to advance in the cosmos they imagine at the same time as they advance in the real cosmos that they test out.

To know by means of science, we must make the minimal hypothesis: I suppose that the universe is like this, that it is very simple and mechanical, almost dead. That allows us to add only what is necessary to explain measurable phenomena and nothing more. Thus intelligence advances from the simple to the complex, from the static to the dynamic, from death to life, from the era of particle physics to the era of string physics ... Yet each step requires an act of faith. Researchers would not spend several billion American dollars to test Higgs' bosons if they did not take it on faith. An act of faith unavoidably consists of adding to a simple hypothesis the small ingredient that serves to make comprehensible such-and-such a phenomenon which, for the moment, cannot be explained without it. Faith leads in the opposite direction, then, from the minimal hypothesis; it doesn't take away, it adds. Each time, it hypothesizes that there is a foothold for the intelligence that is less simple but more extraordinary, and that it must invent new ways to grasp reality.

I think that a culture imprisoned by death and the absurd can only escape from its confinement if it engenders, as science does, life-directed acts of faith. In short, not only can we succeed in imagining that the cosmos, thanks to death, is turned in life's direction, but we can also dare to make an act of faith directed toward a superior hypothesis: that life possesses its own continuity. There is a form of beauty which agrees with goodness and this is so much wanted that perhaps it is the thread of Ariadne itself, the exit from the absurd. Faith is the act by which a closed system fractures its horizons. Faith is the opposite of a belief: it is not a decree of thought, but a necessary transition for the advance of experience toward truth. It is not an act of thought, but an act of consciousness.

Belief in a cosmos turned toward death belongs above all to the nineteenth century, and faith in the hypothesis that it is turned toward life belongs to the twenty-first century. In this respect, the twentieth century was a century of transition. The sign of this change has been given us in the new sciences which are opting to search for ever-more unsuspected mechanisms of interdependence between the universal and the particular. It is possible to define life by the reversal of entropy, it is possible to define goodness by the discovery of interdependencies turned toward life, life that is sustainable not in its forms, but in the orientation of its metamorphoses, in the direction of its evolution. It is possible to glimpse a cosmos turned toward life and to want to participate in it.

CHAPTER 17: AN ETHIC OF POWER, AN ETHIC OF LIFE

Community order would never have been born, if the individual soul had not found a direct union with the supernatural; only the work that desires to serve the supernatural directly, equally serves the general interest on this earth. - Those are innovative thoughts that are extremely dangerous, Virgil; they are harmful to the State. - HERMANN BROCH

Let us reiterate the question: how can we regain power over ourselves, over our environment and over our future without this being no more than a list of pious hopes, a series of instructions which will inevitably remain sterile? How can we assume our power, strengthen it, exercise it without falling into domination? How can we become in our way, according to our talents, our strengths and our weaknesses, a citizen useful in the building of a fair and viable world?

We have proposed it from the beginning -- the only ethic capable of assuming power and turning it toward life rather than death is an ethic of authority. Certain qualities give a person authority. The ethic of authority can only be a setting into motion of these qualities. Authority is not a question of strategy, of behaviors, of good ways to act; it comes to a person who lives in truth concretely. Authority is what comes when one sincere consciousness recognizes another sincere consciousness. Why? Because consciousness knows that, deep down, it systematically prefers the truth to popularity, to success, to happiness, to security, and even, in extreme cases, to its own life. Since truth is the viewpoint of the universal, the viewpoint of all concrete beings considered equally, it follows that, for a collectivity, a sincere consciousness represents a desire for justice. When a desire for justice is recognized in a person by other persons, an authority arises.

I know of no better example of authority than the one Bernanos proposed in *The Diary of a Country Priest*. A lowly parish priest without the slightest attractiveness, taciturn, homely, socially awkward, unrefined, and always on the verge of breaking down in the face of the immensity and the complication of souls, ends up gaining authority over these beings broken by guilt, and he delivers them. His one and only asset: to dig in the mud of souls without any smugness, as if he knew that the raw truth inevitably leads to a cornerstone on which life can bounce back. Nothing else, and above all nothing other than this conviction that the truth sets free. He is sincere, he is never superficial, he is as a consequence humble in regard to himself, pitiless even, and he speaks frankly, taking all the risks. He never abandons any bit of authority that he knows belongs to the truth.

The man or woman of authority does not defend any knowledge as being true; on the contrary, they perceive a truth starting from which every idea is relatively false, and they pursue this falseness right into its furthest corners. Authority results from a threefold relation: a person who recognizes the authority, a person who assumes the authority, and the desire for truth. It is in fact a collaboration of consciousnesses which watch over each other so as to never "take themselves for someone else," to never lose humility, the sense of proportion. Since life is collaboration, authority is turned toward life from the start, and that is why it takes on death. Authority always knows that truth is never an item of knowledge, but the tendency revealed by many items of knowledge. Consequently, one who is familiar with authority knows that it will not lapse into fanaticism... Nevertheless, he keeps an eye on it. Truth consists of

recognizing that no idea is worth the life of a being. Truth is inevitably a call of life, and when life truly calls us, death no longer calls us, but awaits us. My friend's best friend is my friend. Death is life's best friend. But it is never ahead of life, but is always behind life like a faithful dog who eats the scraps of forms so that life will not have too much weight to carry. Like a galactic black hole, death is hidden light that is crushed in the darkness so as to liberate creative forces for new forms of life.

In summary, an authority is a person who has assumed death, not to be confused with a person who desires death with all his fear, with all his scorn and all his hostility.

The question is the following, then: how can a fragile being who has nearly abandoned all of his or her powers to banks, to market forces, to the cogs and conveyor belts of society, to political manipulations, to advertising, to social forces--- how can such a pale and sickly person, who every week is quietly paid the salary of his or her powerlessness, how can such a person become a river rushing toward life to the point of accepting all the big and little deaths which will doubtless be necessary if he or she is to lead a life of influence and responsibility? In short, how can we make a scrawny, shivering being into a solid, open, and determined person? How can this metamorphosis be possible, stable, and definitive? Ethics is the science of metamorphoses. What, then, is the dynamic of the metamorphosis from coward to social leader?

1. To will the world

The silkworm which hasn't yet decided to take root in its cocoon wanders, leaving its silk behind it.... And the forces of industry dispose of this as they see fit. It's not that the caterpillar's silks are worthless, but that the insect, not caring about them, abandons them. Wage-earners are like a kind of silkworm; they could care less about the results so long as they receive their salary. How then can they rewind these results back around their consciousness, retake responsibility for them?

It all began on the second day of vacation, after driving all day toward the sea. It is likely that in the morning of the day of departure, it was raining, and the traffic was hellish on the freeway interchanges. There was smog perhaps, and, pressed down by its weight, fog in the low places of the road. It is almost essential that the person at the wheel has been oppressed for some time by a great fatigue, a lassitude approaching disgust. The night before, no one had said goodbye. It all seemed like an escape. Alone, and, more than that, filled with the need to be alone, relayed his or her instincts to the accelerator. The car tore through the fog, and the sky became increasingly limpid, translucent, and crystalline. It was if a roof had opened and space was stretching out its arms at last.

And then, the person found her or himself sitting on the sand facing an immensity of quiet water beneath the cries of gulls, while on the sea, a ripple erased all memories of a previous existence. A calm, and nothing else, a calm like the warmth of a mother. Why wasn't there anyone on the beach that day? Why hadn't any ship broken the line of the horizon? And why was all the infinity of the past now without an image, empty, a vague sadness without cure, or desire for cure, as if it were a weight? For a moment, this heart with its regular beating wanted nothing more than to feel its own heaviness in the peaceful melancholy of the light.

I don't know if you have ever gone for a week or two to no place in particular, just to let the turbulence of the demands in your life settle down. For my part, I have not found any other way to begin. It's strange how, once on the beach, all the activities needed to keep the urban hells moving can appear futile, arbitrary, and unreasonable, just the opposite of an obligation. To be acted upon by social forces, to sell, make phone calls,

buy, produce, set the pace, turn around, is suddenly equivalent to never having done anything. You find yourself sitting on the seashore with the certainty that you have never lived one single day.

Consciousness is in action. It is not duped by the obligations that get the better of us. This is doubtless the only thing to say about ethics. When we are not acted upon by a force, consciousness begins to act on the body and on thought. It extracts truth. In front of the ocean, everything regains its proper proportions. The giants of industry and commerce are foolishly grimacing dwarves. And if, behind you, a small child toddles in a hurry to the beach and there he is, his bottom in the water, his chubby back comprises all the beauty in the world. The rest has disappeared without leaving the slightest trace. What suddenly strikes you is that from the start, you haven't for one moment desired either society's spinning carousels that make our lives so dizzy, or the little child who just plopped in the water.

I didn't will that the sea invent fishes, I didn't will that children be happy sometimes, and unhappy sometimes, I didn't will that the wind run aimlessly over the sand, I didn't will the flight of birds, nor the cry of gulls, I didn't will the least of the trees, nor the forest, nor the bears, nor the deer, nor the cruelty of the cat in the night, nor my own thoughts' looking over this vast world. Have I desired that nature exist? Not yet. By what miracle could I have done anything useful with this nature? I had nothing to do with the sky being pale blue, the sea dark blue, and as to my contribution to the green grass, let's not even talk about it. I have been enlisted instead on the side of those who are against, of those who want the fish to be in warehouses, of those who want spruce logs to be piled thirty feet high in their wood yards, of those who want all the gold gathered in one big pile, of those who like the Africans, white; the winters, warm and the heat, air-conditioned. Since I didn't want Nature, I slipped into the ranks of those who act against her, simply because they were carried away by a revolt whose origin they ignore. The reality of the sea, the birds, the salt and the children, this play of things and of people on vacation away from possessions and my transformations, I did not will this at all--- by what magic could I have willed reality to be better, more alive, more unified, more viable, more durable? I have never willed either the good, or the evil. "Let there be!", these three little words from the beginning of the world, I have never felt them.

We fabricate another world because we have never for two seconds looked this one straight in the eyes. And this fabricated, dominated, organized, lubricated world, which rolls in the sweat of the poor and the blood of victims has made us "sticklers for death". At our first encounter with a naked and silent thing, this death floats over us, and its immense lassitude sits on our heads with the heaviness of lead. This is why an afternoon at the beach can be very trying for a consciousness wanting to get out of its corset of social habits.

If we wait too long, consciousness becomes a weight, an anxiety, an emptiness, an enormous melancholy, an old man's exhaustion. Sometimes we must sleep for a week in a chalet before getting to the beach and seeing a child plop his bottom in the water, catch ourselves laughing under the influence of this enormous power, and this gigantic authority that forms the beings and things before us. This is the beginning of a person who risks becoming someone. When Jesus saw Jerusalem, he became the one who turned it upside down. When Gandhi saw India, he became the one who would relieve its plight. The eye is an organ that allows light to enter; light is energy in action.

The first hero is the one who, facing the horizon, laid down his weapons. It is impossible for an armed man to think of the world because he thinks he is able to protect himself from it.

The first moment in the rectification of our own being is inevitably poetic: an echo of things in a consciousness which has laid itself totally bare.

They may call me sentimental . They may tell me that a poet can do nothing, that no one listens to him unless he piles praises on the swarming of cities and the squealing of tires. If his lies are flattering, then he will be heard. At the slightest truth, he is lost. He has no power. He has authority only over the tiny portion of humanity that knows how to penetrate a text... This is without counting the enormous pressure of suffering created by the lie.

The carousel we are caught in kills. The great power of the poetic moment, really poetic, that is to say totally indifferent to money, glory, and success, comes from the fact that suffering bears the truth about this world we have constructed. Our collective actions make some suffer from excess and others from want according to the market forces, according to unjust interests, in other words. To the one who objects that Nature already causes suffering, I reply that there is no need to add any more, that Nature is what she is, that we must come to terms with her, go in her direction to improve the comfort of all and not destroy the lives of some in order to build the villas of others.

If a woman or a man gets up one fine morning, and climbs the hill in front of her or him, that woman or that man would weep. It is sad to see us pile ourselves one on top of the other the better to lay waste our future. Everything that no one wants to hear, that woman or that man does hear. And she or he is seized with terror, with a terror that quickly becomes compassion when it lets truth equalize the points of view of all. And where would this compassion proceed from if it did not come from her or his deep and secret nature, from her or his aspiration toward the truth? And since the truth is nothing other than the universal point of view engraved in the personal point of view, truth, by itself, creates the taste for goodness and for justice. Thus goodness is perhaps nature's point of view in the human being. The fireman who leaps into a fire to save someone he does not know is following an instinct stronger than all the other instincts because it is not an instinct, but consciousness when it arises in its truth.

2. Justice is at the foundation of consciousness

A girl asked me one day: "Why is wickedness supposed to be a perversion, and why couldn't perversion be on the side of goodness?" Her question was heavy with an experience that was truly lived, suffered, and perceived, and was very painful. It was the same thing as asking: Why does goodness naturally appear when a person distances him or herself sufficiently from his or her personal interest, even if the person was abused in every way during his or her childhood?

I have often observed this "resilience" of goodness in the most badly hurt children. In a culture turned toward domination, however, rare are those who believe that goodness is primordial. But rare also are those who have sounded the enormous abyss, the unbearable anxiety of supposing that the lie prevails over the truth. Such a hypothesis is nothing other than horror become the norm. Imagine a consciousness that realizes that it cannot trust itself, that what is deepest in it fundamentally loves the lie. Suddenly, it is grappling with the paradox of the lie: is it a lie to think that what is at the basis of my thought is a lie? It cannot even be certain that the lie is a lie, for that would already be a truth.

A consciousness like this would go as swiftly as possible toward death and if it survived its vertigo long enough, it would ask itself in the name of what would it take the trouble to confess that it was a liar? To see oneself as a liar presupposes that a desire for truth trickles through the lie and exposes it. In brief, as soon as the lie is

recognized, it cannot be a foundation since truth alone is capable of wanting to expose the lie, while the lie never wants to be taken for what it is.

It follows that, even when a human consciousness exposes its lying nature, it does it in the name of a truth more primordial than the lie. The lie, then, is inevitably a perversion. The truth is not. The light can make shadow, but the shadow can never make light. To doubt that the truth is primordial is already to demonstrate that the truth is at work, wanting to expose the lie. And the quantities are unimportant; a drop of truth is sufficient to make visible the secondary character of the lie, just as a point of light in

the sky makes the thick darkness of the night visible. In brief, as soon as evil is felt, it proves that the good is the foundation. Ethics is a sense of smell. To sense evil is the ethical function of the good in consciousness. Simply put: if truth is not the foundation, the lie quite simply does not exist. What is truth? It is what gives the lie existence.

This demonstrates that ethics cannot be anything other than truth at work. Now, we are inevitably natural beings, beings created by Nature. Consequently, at least in us, Nature wants truth. And since truth is the origin of goodness, we can deduce from this that Nature wants to practice goodness through us and that evil is necessarily a perversion, not a force of Nature.

Pardon me for recalling Rousseau's famous thesis: "Man is good, it is society that perverts him"! But seeing that so few people seem to have understood it and that many have ridiculed it, I saw fit to return to it. For, without this thesis, the revolution that France inspired and that was aborted by its Napoleons, the revolution against domination, this hope, this future would have no foundation. Now, this foundation is essential for all ethics of the exercise of authority. Without it, not only is it impossible for us to lie (without the truth, what is lying?), but it is also impossible for us to suffer from lies and from evil (without revolt, suffering is felt perhaps, but it is not felt as evil). Deprived of moral foundations, and consequently without lies and without suffering, we would go to death quite happily.

Consciousness derives from detachment from a particular point of view for the purpose of embracing the other concrete ways of viewing the world. It is detachment that allows us to see, with a quiver of joy or aversion, thought in action and thought's actions. It is Nature that wants something other than competition, that wants another level of collaboration, one that is a little more universal. I believe that consciousness is seeking to go not against Nature, but with Nature a little further than Nature would alone. It is the eye of Nature looking at Nature in order to take a forward step without falling flat on her face. It looks in life's direction, that is, in the direction of solidarity. If the solidarity of the bees does not require a conscious choice, the solidarity we must build demands it.

To be this look that wants a better world, to want the good in truth and not for honor and glory, this is a first condition. The second condition is to realize that this good is not a form in which we must mold reality, but a movement of connections, of relations, allowing us to think and act together in a manner that is lucid and not automatic. Consciousness is unavoidably humble because it perceives proportions, its size in relation to the vast unknown of the mystery of things, and because of this it wants to be with others and with Nature.

To see human beings suffer, to see them suffocate themselves little by little in the gases of their consumption, to see them mutilate themselves, to see them transform the world into a furnace, all this inspires pity. We arrive, I believe, at the beginning of authority when we have pity on "the man who is afraid", when we feel within ourselves

the human being wanting to be better.

That woman or that man weeping over the world from the hill across the street has arrived at the beginning of authority. For the present, suffering is our sole authority and this authority lives in the man or woman of compassion. If there weren't a billion starving people in the world, if thousands of children were not dying in absolute poverty, if war killed no one, if there weren't all these tortured, mutilated, lame and wounded persons, there would be nothing to say. The smoky city and the beach of my vacations would produce the same feeling in me.

To feel the contradiction between the beauty of the landscape and the suffering of humans--- this moment of poetic truth is the only cocoon I know that is capable of giving birth to an authority. This pithy phrase, like all phrases rich in contradictions, must slip between two traps: on one side, the trap of aestheticism where consciousness evaporates in the beauty of the landscape; on the other side, the trap of miserabilism, an obsession with the sordid where consciousness lies crushed by suffering. The salvation of consciousness is to utilize the grandeur of beauty and the weight of suffering as an acrobat's balancing-rod that will allow it to go forward on the narrow wire of truth.

The first step in ethics is to accept consciousness, stretched like a drumskin between these two extremes formed by the rugged beauty of the cosmos and the unhappiness of humans. This first step has received a name that has become unbelievably banal and with no philosophic value. But however banal this name may be, it remains eternal since it is bound to the three great aspirations of consciousness: truth, beauty, and goodness. Those who sacrifice none of these three aspirations find themselves torn: they walk in front of beauty with a fiance's happiness, they reject the lie that hides unhappiness, and they feel the call of their poorest and most destitute brothers. Love, in brief, keeps them connected to the founding values of humanity and to the pitiful results of the cultures of domination. Yes, "love", this debauched word, *amour*, *amur*, *amor*: "The disposition favorable to will and the affections in regard to what is felt or recognized as good..." , love is consciousness alive.

I do not think it is possible to gather into oneself the authority necessary for social action unless the attentive consciousness has had the time to transform itself into love. I am not speaking of sentimentality, of that emotion pursued to counter emptiness, I am speaking of that permanent and sometimes excruciatingly painful state of a consciousness that refuses to break any of its interior anchorages or any of its exterior anchorages. I am speaking of happiness suffering to stay in connection with the self, with its primordial values, and in connection with reality.

To mention just one excess among so many others, let us speak of the state of writing. In the carousels of this world, the poet's labor, his or her poems, are no more than an object of enjoyment, just as much as the carpets that are the labor of child weavers. Readers are supposed to slide their eyes over a book like a sultan slides his toes over the velvet of his carpet. If they sometimes feel the wetness of a drop of blood, it's there to add to their pleasure. Not for a single moment does it break the wall that divides their consciousness. For them, beauty will always be what protects them from suffering, their own and that of others. They avoid compassion in beauty. How tempting it is then for the poet to serve them up a harmless text with no authority, an elegant easy-to-read flattery, a tour de force of soft and surprising words!

When you come to think about it, a single danger threatens the ethical ripening that leads to authority: breaking a connection, that is, weakening the state of love that is the essence of consciousness. Whether it is breaking the connection with goodness, breaking the connection with beauty, breaking the connection with truth, breaking the

connection with nature, with the body, with the scandal of an unjust world. No sooner is a connection cut, than life is easier, much easier, as easy as advancing in a void with no resistance, so easy that the feeling of wandering in absurdity prevails.

There is a form of facility that proves by itself that one of the anchors of consciousness has just been broken. The boat, loosed from the dock of consciousness, no longer rubs against reality. It slips into the hyperfluidity of dreams. With time, this facility creates in a still-living consciousness a feeling of disgust, an intolerable bitterness, and yet society's praises are plentiful. This form of success makes one blasé. The welcome extended to all the consciousnesses that have given in completes the work of enlistment in the world of domination and submission.

Some young people came to my farm to get rid of the oppressive emptiness of their lives! At the end of a month they were happy, working, and well-connected. But they didn't know anything about struggle. They didn't realize all the difficulty of maintaining all these ties. At a certain point, a cable gave way. The first sign of drifting is facility: the second sign, the bitter taste that this facility leaves. They returned to the land of normality, of money, of consumerism and of those long funerals of nature that the cortege of cars on freeways represent.

A time comes when we feel the desire to return and stay where we were when we first truly wanted the world and consciousness. When for the first time we wanted reality to be there, different from our will, enigmatic, in complete contradiction with our aspirations, but potentially capable of keeping us in truth, in connection, in tension and in love; on that day, we would have wanted to prolong it eternally. So we keep the lantern ready. No longer do we want it to go out. As Kierkegaard said: "It is not the road that is difficult; the difficult is the road". This moment of love, for this is what we really need to call it, we keep in a state of resonance, taut as a drumskin. I think then that, inevitably, the heart begins to cry out for justice. Ethics is a result of consciousness, an interaction of light. Ethics will always be as photosynthetic as a green vegetable. It is not constructed; it is cultivated.

We remember Sophocles. If the world does not hear the cry for justice, it advances toward catastrophe, since the salvation of all life is in the development of solidarities, increasingly broad and universal. If the world does not hear the cry for justice, then the riders of famine, war, plague, and deserts are at work, free of all resistance. The suffering of the world strikes the drum. Love puts us in tune with reality. As a result we want this reality to be a little more itself. A harmony resembles a bow planted on one side in the primordial values and on the other, in the reality of the world. The bow resonates in harmony with the difference, with the vertiginous difference in altitude between what the world must become and what it refuses to become. At that very moment, we become an author, an *auctor*, an authority. And there will be nothing indulgent in the acts of this poet who wants to sign a new alliance between the nature of the human being and the nature of the world. It is certain that the poet will not be well received. Prophets are bound and stoned, and today they have become the nothingness of our society. We drop a few coins in their box, and the urban noise drowns out their voices. Nonetheless, one or two persons are occasionally stirred. This is tremendous, for in centuries past, one alone was always enough to overturn the whole.

Almost everyone has at one time or another been at the beginning of themselves, ready to start themselves off on a foundation of truth; there was a moment of love, an ethical moment, and then the carousel began to turn again and all was swept away. But if truth is primordial, why does the false always end up winning?

Perhaps it is because truth demands a salary, a price to pay. I would not for a single

moment cradle anyone with illusions. There is a price and a high price to enter and remain in the kingdom of consciousness. To remain in the will to truth and, in consequence, to know that truth is never a possession, nor even a knowledge, but a state of relationship to oneself, to the world, and to others--- this is paid for in two currencies: attention and detachment. Attention consists of keeping oneself in that light which casts into nothingness all that constitutes the glory of society. Society constructs its world against the grain of biological nature and of spiritual nature. Detachment consists of no longer wanting to eat anything except what nourishes and of throwing out of our plates whatever starves us.

We have reached the point where certain privileged workers are no longer compensated by anything other than a circle of things whose function is to starve us, to provoke a hunger for everything that nips our true desires in the bud. Almost all consumer goods maintain the thirst for all that has the precise function of making us thirsty. And as for the true thirst, it dies of thirst. The major symbolism is that of soft drinks or hard liquor that make us die of thirst. A keg is not sufficient. Satellite television, cellular phones, and high-speed internet give us a thirst to communicate in all the modes of communication that increase solitude. Virtual sex exacerbates rather than satisfies. The functions of pleasure no longer give pleasure. This new way of making wage-earners bourgeois creates individuals convinced that they deserve to be isolated from the poverty of others. In a society forty percent composed of these island-dwellers with two cars, three televisions, a spa and a chalet, it is impossible to be an *author*, an authority, except on the margins. A drugged world cannot be startled even in the face of terror. They are not awakened even when a plane plunges into an office tower; they only think of doing a little more of the thing that caused the disaster.

I think it is no longer possible to like and consume these kinds of media and advertising drugs; we must make a choice. The rich young man must leave the vicious circle of answers that kill desires. To live on the margins is almost a necessary condition for the growth of consciousness. The way of doing it can vary infinitely. I have seen poor people in palaces and rich people in dumps. There are all sorts of ways of laughing about what we possess. It doesn't matter, consciousness can only live in the open air, outside of closed circles, closed systems. It wants to get out of the place where the state of the world disturbs no one.

The basic condition, shall we say, is the poetic condition, that is, the state of the eyeball filled with darkness which begins to see. Poetry is "the abyss endowed with sight". It is, I believe, the place where death is converted into life. I think that only mortals, I mean persons absolutely shaken by their vulnerability, their transience and the transience of all forms, can feel love. And what is love but death transmuted into life, a fear that goes forward, an anxiety that searches, a desire that wills to be... When desire, which is the very foundation of consciousness, really wills to be, a certain amount of death, of fear and anxiety is in the process of being transmuted into the will to live. A drop of authority is born. A beginning of change.

And what is love's first task? To accept the destiny of the loved being, to accept her or his freedom struggling within her or his destiny. So what if the world before us is a little bit too big, a little too mysterious, a little too cruel for our taste, but it is there, it is our destiny. Even more unavoidable is this: we ourselves are the destiny of this world. When Nature looks at us, she says to herself: "There is my destiny".

Do I truly want this alliance? Yes, I do want it! In this "Yes, I do want it!", there is Nature that wants us to be better and we who want Nature to be better. Love is another word for saying "connected" one to the other for better or worse. It is, I think, the very foundation of the human being: not to want something, but to desire to live with Nature an adventure turned toward life, that is to say, turned toward a life that

accepts death, the permanent changing of forms.

Creation calls for a perpetual resurrection. It dies at each step to be reborn differently. But creation also calls for a redemption, not a redeeming of sins, but an ascent toward the axis of goodness creation points to at each level of solidarity forming a being more complex than isolated beings. Each time that life made a leap forward, it made it by connecting, in a complex social function, a group of individual atoms, molecules, cells, or multicellular organisms. "Love is creative arrangement".... It is not a matter of drawing what I want to on the blackboard when I am no longer connected to anything. It is about entering into relationship in order to advance along the very axis of reality. I do not believe in a poetic state that would not maintain a sincere scientific effort. Inflating feelings by dramatizing life leads nowhere. The way of authority consists of hanging on to reality with all our will to truth.

A science exists which has earned authority by the rigor of its will to meet reality. It is not a question here of idolizing this science, but of giving it an attentive reading. Quite simply, all the paths of thought that refuse this obligatory meeting can only be ideologies, balloons that explode at the slightest contact with harsh experience. We cannot make a viable world with ideologies, not with religious ideologies, not with dietary ideologies, not with sexist ideologies, not with ecological ideologies. If there is an eye we must keep open in order to develop an ethic of power, it is certainly that of science. This eye is insufficient, to be sure, but it is unavoidable. No ideology, no religion will ever survive their rebellion against reason and against the will to truth of consciousness. To build a thought outside the requirements of science is to build on sand; the future will have none of it.

It is, then, through being anchored that a human being grows in quality and in authority. This can only take place in some form of distancing in relation to the ordinary conditionings appropriate for a culture based on domination and accordingly on submission. A day arrives, a third day when, after years of transformation, the apron must be thrown on the ground. It is time to go to Jerusalem to shake the columns of the Temple. When the time for public life has begun, not before and not after, the important thing is to follow the movement for, if not, we risk aborting the self. For public life as for everything else, all the ways of acting are possible, but the humblest are almost always preferable. Nevertheless, we must pay the third price necessary for liberation: courage is not optional. Courage is love accepting death in order to combat it.

When the day for public life has arrived, two questions arise:

- * What is my destiny in the destiny of the collective, what is my symbolic function?
- * How do I exercise my authority and so grow in public esteem without getting stuck in the labyrinths that are characteristic of the culture of domination?

These two questions form a single question: how is authority assumed when I decide to go to the limit of my powers? How do I grow in authority and in wisdom until the end, until death?

CHAPTER 18: PUBLIC LIFE

We cultivate consciousness sheltered from the world, at the distance necessary for observation. It is to a place protected from the artificial light of the urban world that astronomers go to watch their cherished stars. In a society centered on domination, it is still only on the margins that consciousness can read the texts implicit in the imperial constitutions....

The *author*, the authority, develops in all sorts of deserts. And then comes the time for thorough engagement. The artist can no longer be satisfied with writing, composing, painting, and singing, the scientist can no longer just experiment and publish, social workers no longer want to simply "pick up the pieces", the doctor leaves the operating room, the mystic climbs down from his mountain; whatever the roads may be, it is necessary to return to Jerusalem, New York, Las Vegas, Istanbul, Geneva, Peking, Montreal, to the multiple centers of causes. For most of us, this center of causes is no more distant than the neighborhood, the village, the office, or the family residence. Compassion for individuals is coupled with a compassion for the family, the group, the city, the people, the world. The size of the sphere to which we are called matters little; authority must assume a human collective, an ecosystem, a particular strand of humanity.

In a society centered on domination, the arrival of an authority great or small inevitably appears as a shock and nearly always concludes with a ritual sacrifice. Rarely does the authority in question get out of it alive; they are lynched or coopted, they fade away into indifference or provoke anger, they immediately appear incompatible with the grand game of domination. They attack domination at its roots: fear, dependence, and ignorance.

1. The example of Jesus

Here I will take an example that is paradigmatic for the Judeo-Christian West. When Jesus undertook his public life, he already knew that his own character existed in the social imagination. He had already been proclaimed and designated Messiah before he had even entered Jerusalem.

Let me explain. In a society where a supreme domination, that of Rome, for example, subjugates a local domination, the Jewish "establishment" for example, all sorts of compromises are necessary on the part of the Jewish representatives in order to avoid genocide. The forces are unequal, asymmetrical, and unless there is compromise, a massacre regularly swoops down like a meteor on the enslaved people. The populace feels the cold war engaged in by the unequal forces in place, the imperial forces against the national forces, the national forces against the regional forces, the secular forces against the religious forces. It instinctively knows that, without compromise, without "arrangements", all hope of autonomy collapses. But, with the same breath, the people cannot bear the sight of these "accommodations"; they hate these concessions, for they go counter to their identity. In brief, they above all do not want to see concrete evidence of their submission.

Such a people find themselves wedged between, on the one hand, the mechanism of complaint, complaining against the "establishment" which lives and grows rich from compromises and, on the other hand, the mechanism of sour submission (the opposite of peaceful resistance) by which a bent back infallibly accumulates a deep resentment.

Trapped in this paradox, it dreams of a messiah, that is to say, an authority from which it awaits the resolution of the conflict without which it would have to confront its own paradox, its own truth. It dreams of being saved rather than of saving itself.

Subsequently, whenever an authority comes down from the mountain to assume public life, he or she is preceded by an accursed expectation: there exists already in the public imagination a character who is the object of hope. The new authority is very likely to end up in the skin of a very old messiah, chiseled out by prophecies, a very old way of holding the future hostage.

Let's transpose this on to Quebec culture, a satellite culture, a vassal dependent on a global economic empire. This economic empire invades the market, determines supply, demand, price and profits. It throws away huge portions of the national, regional, and local economy and levels wages by making them lower. It imposes its neoconservative style on the government in power. IT erodes the language and marginalizes the culture.... The forces are totally asymmetrical and every international right gives way when the "empire" leans on it.

The national or regional political "establishment" attempts all sorts of compromises without ever exposing or even stating the basic paradox: it is impossible to profit from submission and enjoy independence at the same time. Everyone feels the weight: if the empire sees us as resisting, the economy might catch a cold. Yet few will dare to look squarely at this "arrangement" where we barter our cultural identity and economic autonomy for a totally relative assurance of being spared financial ruin by the economic giant. In brief, if an authority were ever to arise, he or she would immediately be placed in the position of messiah: "Give us independence, but please don't make us pay the price". In vain would the unfortunate authority defend him or herself, saying that his or her "kingdom" has nothing to do with this hypocrisy, that it would be preferable to spend more time strengthening ourselves, acknowledging the true situation, developing our identity, etc. No one would listen to her or him. If she or he finally advised us to render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, we would turn away from her or him (**who would dare put all their dollars in the banks? If everyone did this, however, it would bankrupt the banks). If he or she encouraged us to promote the local economy, people would let it chatter on endlessly in a void. It would be lost.

To assume public life is to be compelled to encounter the character culture has prefabricated for us specifically, for a destiny with a dead-end as its goal. Those who have assumed public life have seen this immediately. They have even realized that their destiny was inexorably "pre-destined", that it preceded them in the very mythology of the family, the village, the people. Who has ever assumed any kind of authority in his or her family without confronting this character that has, sometimes, been prefabricated over several generations! Who has ever succeeded in becoming mayor of a city or a village without encountering his or her imaginary double! Who has ever been able to attain an important decision-making position without using a messiah's power of attraction, if only to get rid of it at the proper moment!

In certain circumstances, a prudent and attentive authority can clear a way out of the myth and free him or herself from the skin of the messiah in which he or she has been dressed. In other circumstances, this is impossible; the messiah is welded to the authority's fate. The more a collectivity is imprisoned in the paradox of the slave who hates his submission but loves his (wholly apparent) security, the less easy it is to assume an authority without ending up at the heart of the paradox, in danger of paying its price, of assuming all its weight alone. A weight that no one wants to carry, multiplied by the number of the population, will end up on the authority's back like a ton of lead. People sense that at any moment the authority can end up like a plumbline exactly between the idol and the pariah, in the vertical axis, suspended like a symbol in

order to be torn between the glory of the idol and the hatred of the pariah, between a Sunday of glory and a tragic finish.

As we have explained at length, all domination requires a vertical dimension. In Heaven as on earth. The gods of power resemble the men of power. What takes place on the idol's side, on the side of the gods who are masters of guilt?

A major distinctive trait of the Judeo-Christian culture consists of making Yahweh depend on humans as much as humans depend on Yahweh. Because of this, the history of the "Chosen People" is not a destiny, but an adventure. Humans can break the Covenant through their own fault and Yahweh can lose patience because of them. Humans can make Yahweh's plan fail. In brief, it is about a relationship between two beings, subject to the moods of their love (in all the projective meaning that the term has here).

In spite of their reciprocity, the relationship remains clearly asymmetrical. Yahweh, like Caesar, occupies the supreme role. Must we fear betraying Rome more than we fear betraying God?---- the question is not decided. The national "establishment", we must admit, confronts a dangerous situation. As for all minority peoples in a great empire, it is preferable to depend on the priests (the ideologues) rather than on the warriors to correctly suck up to the powers-that-be in New York while preserving a minimum of dignity in Quebec. The priest is a good manager of insoluble ambiguities. It could even be said that in Jesus's time, ambiguity was the salvation of Israel and this salvation depended precisely on the insolubility of the paradox, for the more insoluble a paradox is, the lighter the guilt of those who make compromises.

If a mediator appears, an authority who would be delegated the mission of leading the people out of ambiguity, this mediator must above all fail. He or she must be transformed, even, into a supreme symbol of the insolubility of the political paradox: profit from submission to the maximum extent without losing one's feeling of dignity and identity. The mediator's mission will consist of failing, that is to say, of almost succeeding, or, if you like, of becoming the symbol of the guilt-absolving statement *par excellence*: "We did everything, but nothing worked because nothing could work." Would that he or she fail, and the people be satisfied for having tried, be freed from the weight of their cowardice, and, above all, be relieved that the danger is removed a bit, postponed in fact.

What is the danger? There are two dangers: the danger of Rome's vengeance and the danger of Yahweh's vengeance. The role of the Messiah is to remove, by his failure, the double danger which would normally arise after the people's double betrayal. In the case of a people held in submission, the national idol (the projected god) cannot be reconciled with the actual dominator (Rome, the empire). Either the people betrays its culture, or it betrays the empire. The priest manages the ambivalence necessary for survival, and fabricates the small double betrayals essential for the nation's preservation. Yes indeed, in order to survive it is necessary to preserve one's identity, which presupposes betraying Rome a bit, and it is necessary to preserve life, economic life at least, which presupposes betraying national autonomy a little, or a lot. The people thus expect a messiah for a great sacrificial ritual, highly guilt-removing, that allows these two treasons to be placed back-to-back.

The hope for a reconciliation with one's own national identity is endlessly postponed into the future, since such a reconciliation is equivalent to a suicide, an economic one at least. The messiah must, then, return to where he came from, the future, the place where the prophets took great care to place him. Given that, in the real world, the relation with Rome cannot change, it must be the relation with Yahweh that changes, it must be it then that increases in ambiguity. Judeo-Christian culture is peculiar,

however: in Jewish culture the relationship between Yahweh and humans is reciprocal and thus no relationship of domination can be permanently sanctioned. Yahweh cannot obtain an absolute fidelity from his people and the people cannot be completely reconciled with Yahweh. The relation is condemned to passionate love, that is to say, to the fight between two creative freedoms as dangerous to one as to the other.

In this context, every mediator, every messiah, will be relegated to a thankless task, and will have to fulfill his or her mediation on the symbolic plane without destabilizing the precarious equilibrium between the colonizer and the colonized. It has to do with ridding the people of their guilt, of raising up a symbol that recalls the fidelity of the people to its ideals of identity, to act in such a way that this symbol becomes a vanishing point for the rest of history, a horizon which will, by essence, never be able to be reached. It is all about returning the messiah to the future, where the prophetic past has nailed him.

From Jan Hus to Rene Levesque, and including the Patriotes*, we could cite a large number of these messiahs characteristic of colonized nations. Of what symbol are we speaking? A symbol of fidelity, we might say, a symbol which could be stated as follows: "There, God, we are serving you. We are faithful to our culture. So give us the feeling of autonomy we need to endure our servility." Above all, a symbol of reciprocal dependence: "Don't forget, God, that the success of your creation depends on us at least as much as we depend on your creation. We could abandon you forever." Now, for an idol, to be abandoned by humans is quite simply to cease to exist. There is reciprocity between Yahweh and humans because they are a projection one of the other. The messiah is the sign of this reciprocity, above all he is the place where, with all the necessary rage, the sacrificial ritual will be carried out, the ritual appropriate to appease Yahweh and above all to liberate humanity from its betrayal complex. This game is entirely applicable to a secular idol such as "the courage and independence of the patriots who, in the past, sacrificed their lives for the nation."

This projection is highly complex. There is a divine All of which we are obviously the projections, and we do not succeed in knowing this All sufficiently to know what it is: matter, form, mind, thought, person. It is, for the moment, nameless. This Nameless does not depend on us; it is we who depend on It for our concrete existence. This Divine is theologically associated, for all sorts of reasons too lengthy to enumerate here, with all the primordial values that inhabit the depths of consciousness. These values must not be confused with Plato's "ideas", nor with any predefined form; they have nothing to do with exclusive values. Besides this ineffable god, at once All and buried in consciousness, there is a god who is our projection, who is the idol and who depends on us completely for its existence. The constant superposition of these two gods is part of the ambiguity proper to all theology which remains attached to the idol in spite of its affirmation of an ineffable and immanent god.

Let us summarize: at the moment when Jesus arrived on the public arena, the Old Covenant, based on the relationship of maximal domination between humans and Yahweh, retained some reciprocity despite Yahweh's domination. The negotiation is not ruined, but close to the breaking point, for the "religious establishment" is at the crisis of compromise, at a level of compromise where it is truly no longer possible to escape from guilt. In brief, the people still adore Yahweh, but they adore as well, in the most concrete of economic relations, Tiberius, the Romans' Caesar. There was electricity in the air. One spark and the guilt of the people would turn against the national leaders, the people would massacre them or overthrow them one by one in order to loudly and forcefully affirm their faithfulness to the national god. This would inevitably lead to a reaction by Rome who would massacre the rebels (and when Rome massacres it always adds a little more!).

Let us imagine then the young man Jesus in this troubled context of a Jerusalem subjugated under Rome. Let us imagine that he had acquired, in the desert or otherwise, the personal authority necessary for action and that he had decided to undertake a public life out of compassion for his people. Touched by his people's misery, he wants to raise them up, he wants them to regain confidence and escape from the black cloud where they lie prostrate, blind, paralyzed, and unhappy, submissive, in other words. He knows very well what awaits him. He is already a messiah in the symbolic universe of his culture. He is already prophetically crucified.

If we investigate a little what the messiah is, we quickly see that he represents consciousness in the middle of the struggle between Heaven and earth, between God and humankind, between the national idol and the will of the people to survive their colonizer. Let's not oversimplify, however. The messiah himself is twofold, both the mediator between the idol and humans, and the mediator between "God the ineffable" and humans. The idol is the projection of humans. "God the ineffable" refers to the great whole of which we are the projections.

In Judeo-Christian culture, these two gods will never be disentangled, but neither will they be merged. And if the messiah attempts to dissociate himself from the idol in order to claim to represent the ineffability of God-the-Creator-of-all, he will be called to order, since what is expected of him is not a theological treatise, but an affirmation that the national idol has not been betrayed and that the people's identity has accordingly been maintained in spite of their submission. And even more difficult, but essential to understanding the authority, is this: God-the-Creator-of-all, ineffable and unnameable, is much more than an all, and is being itself. We could even say that he (she) (it) is immunized against non-existence, for he (she) (it) is not the concept of being, or any concept, but being itself; he (she) (it) is the concrete "Reality is what is". "God the ineffable" is what is. "God the ineffable" is a word without antonym that by its very definition designates reality, so "God the ineffable" exists as soon as something is beyond being dependent on humans. The only possible way of eliminating "God the ineffable" is to demonstrate that reality is without mystery, that is to say, able to be dominated by humans and thus inferior to them. What domination is really about is the attempt to make being disappear by subordinating it to ourselves, and this inevitably leads to death since from this consists from the starting point of eradicating all the reciprocities necessary for being and for life.

Even more than this, this "ineffable God" who is nothing other than reality inasmuch as this reality surpasses us is also the consciousness of this reality (since, for reality, the smallest possible totality is inevitably a particle of reality in a particle of consciousness). Yes, without consciousness, reality itself is not real and without reality, consciousness is nothing.

Consciousness and being are, in consequence, infinitely intimate one with the other. It follows that God-the-Creator-of-all is also the ineffable intimacy of consciousness. The maximum joins the minimum, the macrocosm joins the microcosm, for if not, the cosmos loses its original binding of reality. Such is the theological background that becomes apparent behind all the games of power. No game of power has ever succeeded in doing without one or more idols and so every game of power takes shape against a theological background. The essence of domination is idolatry, that is to say the art of immolating "God the ineffable" on the altar of an idol.

In sum, the word "God" is seriously, dangerously and probably fatally contaminated by an ambiguity: it represents the idol and it represents reality inasmuch as it is not subjected to human domination. What escapes humanity and hangs over it is just this "God the ineffable". Every society based on domination tends to kill the reality that cannot be dominated, God the ineffable, in consequence. The execution of "God the

ineffable" is carried out to allow the idol to reign alone. The elimination of "God-the-invisible-reality" gives humans the feeling of dominating the cosmos. This is how we must interpret the "death of God" in industrial modernity. It is not humankind that has killed God; the idol has eclipsed God.

An authority leading a public life does the opposite; he or she tries to make the idol disappear for to benefit ineffable reality. She or he has no choice but to do this work since authority has as its foundation the intimate relationship between consciousness and reality, in other words, the truth. Without this relationship, authority quite simply has no reality. Without consciousness and without effective consciousness, that is to say, capable of lucidity when faced with reality, only domination can exercise power. Without consciousness, authority has no meaning. Conversely, an authority can overthrow domination only by subordinating itself to ineffable reality, to the intrinsic and consubstantial relationship between consciousness and reality.

Every messiah has tried to save his mission and his skin by claiming to represent the intimate, intrinsic, essential, and necessary relationship between consciousness and reality. This is unavoidable, for this relationship is the basis of authority. But the messiah's message: "Let us follow our consciousness and survive culturally, as long as the empire is collapsing", is fatally inaudible. It is the nature of every submissive people to discard "God the ineffable" in order to better embrace the intensified duel between the national idol and the imperial idol. Quebec's Quiet Revolution is one example among many others: have feeling for the national idol (the fatherland) in order to better adore the imperial idol (money). In a dominated culture, the "death of God" can never be anything but a mutation of the national idol, a way of abstracting it, of making it folkloric and secular so as to better survive the guilt of submission to the imperial idol (money)

Jesus was without a doubt a real authority. Accordingly, he was aware of his own consciousness really, existentially, and corporally living in and through the relation it maintains with truth, with beauty, with goodness, and with reality. Jesus knows that he is a mediator between "God the ineffable" and humankind, between consciousness and humanity. He is the authority, he is the intimate relationship between consciousness, the giver of values and reality, the receiver of values. He wants this authority. But people glue to his body the role of messiah, mediator between the idol and humans. He refuses this role. And even though he refuses it with all his might, they graft it to his skin like a tattoo.

In summary, the young man Jesus knows two things:

- he will be, whether he wills it or not, the Messiah, the mediator between the idol and the people (the servile producers);
- he is, like every enlightened consciousness, the mediator between truth, beauty, and goodness and the miserable state the world is in when it embraces the ideology of domination.

This young man then perceives his consciousness and he sees his consciousness in the middle of the war between Heaven and earth (not simply somewhere between the two, but exactly in the middle like a plumbline). On the social plane, the war will occur within the triangle of Rome - "establishment" - people. On the metaphysical plane, the war engages the primordial values and reality. In brief, his consciousness became aware that it was the Covenant itself in its political version (of social authority) and in its metaphysical version (existential).

If we were inside Jesus's consciousness, it is possible that something like the essence of the relation humans - reality - values would appear to us as the ultimate foundation.

The cosmos seen in its beauty and in its call to goodness might very well appear to us as the presence of the divine in the tangible reality of Nature. It might even be that "God" could then be perceived as something quite other than an idol, radically different, not a truth of knowledge, but a truth of consciousness. And if the young man Jesus saw his consciousness as being that essence and saw the decline of humanity as being domination, that is to say idolatry, the transformation of God into an idol, then the young man Jesus is the paradigmatic figure of authority.

Can we imagine what compassion becomes in this case? Let's try to borrow his eyes. We see a people completely subjected, not to Rome, but to slavery itself, a people that washes its hands of its responsibilities by transferring them to an "establishment" to which it delegates the impossible mission of reconciling the idol of Rome with the idol of Israel. But it doesn't want this. The young man sees what, in truth, "God the ineffable" is, and perceives, as a consequence, what idolatry (whether it be Roman or Jewish) is as the first instrument of domination, and he does not want to play the role of Messiah. In any case, he refuses this role completely at first.

Let us explain further. In his own culture, Jewish culture, there are two gods:

- A god who has taken up all the space, the god of omnipotence, of wrath, of guilt, of sin, a god who serves to designate the pariahs. He is most often called El-Shaddai. This god is opposed to Rome as one idol is opposed to another idol. He wants fidelity in the name of a national identity which rests on the structure of power as we have defined it in the first part of our work.

- And there is another God whose essence fills consciousness with a desire for truth which never can be translated into knowledge, but which nonetheless allows consciousness to found itself on beauty in order to will the good. This is the ineffable God, ineffable reality.

El-Shaddai (God of wrath, human projection) proposes a covenant, a sort of contract that the Christians will call the "Old Covenant". He promises this, and he promises that. Nothing very precise, and no deadlines. In return, men and women must, starting from now, respect laws that are precise, even picayune. As much as El-Shaddai's promises are evasive, just that much are his laws inflexible and demanding. "Conform to all my rules. Afterwards, I will probably give you something...." There is obviously never a question of immortality except for the people, for the collectivity, the national "us". The recompense is to rule on earth more or less like Rome rules on earth. Obviously, it is not about ruling with Rome's social values, but about ruling with other values, but exclusive values nonetheless, values which serve domination. It clearly has to do with a god of guilt, of a collective national superego. El-Shaddai is the direct competitor of Jupiter-Caesar. He is weaker than Caesar, for he remains an idol dissociated from the caste of rulers and dissociated from the caste of high priests. He is much better protected than Caesar who, for his part, risked the fusion of idol, priest, warrior, and ruler.

But El-Shaddai shows a weak spot; his promises are not as clear as Caesar's. With El-Shaddai, one must always wait till later, one is never perfect enough to enjoy domination. Rome brings bread and a kind of flippancy in regard to the gods. Rome doesn't demand a great deal, just a collaboration that is always well-defined, and duties of state that do not disturb the bedroom and the dinner table. Consequently, people are no longer certain that they do prefer El-Shaddai, and yet it is by him, in him, and with him that the national identity has developed since Abraham. He holds on to us then by pride, by cultural roots, by a vision of the future where it is we who hold the reins, where it is we who are the dominators. Oh! If only it were possible to serve Rome while remaining faithful to El-Shaddai. Oh! If only it were possible to serve

Rome without feeling guilty because of our national ideals. Oh! If only we could celebrate Quebec by going out to take advantage of the low prices at Wal-Mart and the other big-box stores!

Here is what the national dream is: the Messiah comes and mobilizes us around El-Shaddai. He raises an army. He leads us to victory. But nobody really believes this. They only want him to pretend so that, after a catharsis, they will be able to say, we tried, we did everything, but this messiah wasn't the right one.... El-Shaddai will offer us another, stronger and, above all, more distant.

So, when Jesus comes down from his mountain and begins to speak of a Kingdom with comparisons that have nothing to do with a kingdom: sowing, a coin lost in a kitchen, a treasure buried in a field, an ethic of poverty, a universal love that goes so far as to pardon enemies, and an interiorization of consciousness, they will have none of it.

The young man does dispose of a real authority, however. He speaks, and it is like wine. He puts us on our feet, and it is like bread. He walks on soft ground, and we seem to be walking on solid ground. He asks us not to act too hastily, and we seem to be emerging from a long paralysis. He sits down on a stone and we begin to see the beauty of Lake Tiberias. He has only to put one foot ahead of the other, and it seems to us we are coming out of a tomb. It is as if an old man abandoned by his mother since early childhood were to suddenly feel himself touched by his Mama, enveloped by her, her smile drawing out of him tears a thousand times suppressed. He no longer knows if he is at the beginning of his life or at the end; time has lost its arrow, and it is as if he were suspended in an intemporal and exquisite delight. This was the way that the people sought Jesus's presence. They were satisfied to their profoundest depths, so satisfied that they no longer felt the slightest concern for themselves. As a result, their eyes were freed, and this drew them to reality as if reality were good. It was then that all Jerusalem appeared tremendously wretched. All this, the good, the bad, the Torah, the Temple, the sacrifices, the Romans, so serious in their ridiculous armor, the Pharisees scandalized by the most trivial feminine behavior, all this was only wretchedness, nothing but wretchedness, a social disease which had become a norm. And everyone suffered from it and yet it rested on nothing, a puddle of fear, that was all.

This Jesus changed the whole perspective; people suddenly felt it was possible to live happily even though they were poor, even under the yoke of the Romans and Pharisees. All that was needed was to connect with one's own consciousness, to develop small communities with some degree of autonomy, for some to live an ideal of simplicity, to freely live what humanity would be compelled to live someday. This seemed so elementary. You only had to look at Jesus. It was so easy for him to accomplish what he said! It was like watching a high-jumper at the Olympics, he did it with such ease! People said to themselves: "It's easy". As a result, everyone followed, everyone who was not too close to the "establishment", in any case, for the "establishment" certainly did have to keep on with its role, and so much the better, for people didn't know whether this strange society of love would really work so smoothly after all. People felt that if this young man were to leave them, they would fall back into the darkness again.

For the time being, the people did follow, and even got excited. Yet one day he would have to play for keeps, he would have to go to Jerusalem and confront the powers-that-be. And there, in the powderkeg of Jerusalem, the people had grown afraid. The messiah was all right for healing the sick, but when it came down to killing, they were dealing with an incompetent.... So what assurance do we have that he will drive out the Romans? He's not a clever negotiator either. From seeing how he dealt with the

Jewish "establishment", we can surmise what he would do faced with a Roman governor. "So, get ourselves slaughtered, no thanks, that's no fun! He insults the powers-that-be in every way, and Rome doesn't worry him any more than a fly. It's not sure, not sure at all that he'll get out of this alive! We had probably better leave the young poet to his fate." Obviously "his fate" was that one die in the name of all, since this was the law of the empire. In one short week, the Messiah had become the pariah *par excellence*, an innocent perfectly guilty of making us dream.

And then, after much blood and passion, even so the ambiguity itself had to be consecrated, since this is what ensures the survival of all conquered peoples. Thus Jesus became salvation for some and the false messiah for others. He became above all the symbol of the removal of guilt through the sacrifice of an innocent. It is like rejecting a Rene Levesque again and again, and at the same time producing a film which enshrines his immortality. Hurrah for the king on the donkey, long live the Messiah returned to the idols.

This thesis has become classic, but one question remains: why, in the end, did Jesus choose to assume this fate? It is very clear that he knew about this trap. More than that, he knew that this would leave the structure of domination intact and even contribute to its perpetuation. So, why perpetuate this crazy game that is just the opposite of his message?

2. The liberating scapegoat

Let us return first of all to Sophocles' idea: history is consciousness in action. What humans don't listen to, they "tragedize" in history. And here is where the drama is: there are some moments in history when Sophocles can do nothing. People won't go to the theater to see themselves in a mirror. The people have chosen to abandon their powers. Domination is left to its own vicious circle. The economy and politics live outside of reality in a virtual world. Thus, every person who might want to really become an authority will necessarily be transformed into a living torch. They will themselves become the scene where the tragedy will be enacted. Their bodies will become the tragic theater. Art will not be mediatized on a stage, no, the life of a man or a woman will form the only possible stage, for all the other stages have become simply places of distraction.

From youth on, our young man Jesus was overwhelmed by this awareness that he is the relation of humans to God, of humans to primordial values, that he is the light itself that connects the parts to the whole. Our young man has the awareness that he is consciousness. He says to himself: "There is not one star, not one mountain, not one tree, not the smallest blade of grass that is not turned toward beauty. If I find this beautiful, it is because the "I know not what" that creates the cosmos is exactly who created me. We have the same mother. And this creative source lives in me, since I enjoy this beauty. If it inhabits me, I feel it within me wanting to make a leap toward a better brother and sisterhood. It wants, in me, the goodness essential for true collaboration among all humans. And I am going to assume, to the very end, this consciousness that I am."

It is legitimate to call this way of seeing "love". One might even go as far as this point: when consciousness identifies with love, it realizes that it is the place where intelligence can correct itself, regain the sense of proportion and continue its way on a different route, a route of collaboration and not a route of mutilation. The young man Jesus does not doubt and never will doubt that the incorruptible core that lives in him, the center of primordial values living in him, that this spark is divine and that this divinity has no meaning if it does not become incarnate in him by loving and by providing life, breath, and imagination.

"Only the love that I am can grind into dust the suffering created by the relation of power, El-Shaddai's power as much as Caesar's", Jesus says to himself. And regardless of what the nation thinks, it is its national god that subjects it to Rome. It is because we wander aimlessly in national guilt that we end up at Wal-Mart buying what nauseates us. And if we are the champions of guilt, it is not because of taboos, the taboos we transgress so lightly, but because we like to be dominated -- this is our only security. We find our security in accelerating death through the destruction of resources. We prefer death to the adventure that love inevitably is. Certainly we long for our liberation, but the soup given to the slave is so sweet, so laced with sleeping-potions, that we gladly go and get ourselves drunk on it;;;

Jesus came down from the mountain to do the work of Sophocles in a society which did not trust its consciousness enough to go to the theater. He assumed the only role possible for authority in such a society: to become the locus of all the projections. All this rests on an act of faith: consciousness is the sole possible guarantee of our humanity. Consciousness will win, for if it does not win, we are an animal truly too stupid to survive our instruments of power. This is the act of faith that Jesus seems to have accomplished every second of his public life.

Inevitably, as soon as he approaches the first village, he meets an ordinary human soul, in other words, a soul that doubts its dignity, a woman, for example, with a pitcher on her head, making her way toward the well.... There then happened what happens each time a pole emitting electricity encounters a pole receiving it ---- an electric arc explodes. That soul is transformed. This is the most ordinary thing in the world, as ordinary as it is rare in the dessicated cavern of our human collectivity. Authority makes us stand up as much as it opens our eyelids; this is its very essence.

Let us summarize: the young man Jesus comes down from the mountain. He is full of that life that brings life to the smallest blades of grass. He is brimming with confidence. He is the image of light. He is, in brief, an authority and he descends into a world without authority, a world moved by domination. Let us imagine plants in the shade, withered, pale, and dying. Suddenly the plywood is removed from the window, light enters, and the plants stand up straight. He is the image of water. Imagine people dying of thirst in a scorching desert. Along comes a woman with a jar of water on her head. The people stand up.... In short, when a surplus meets a lack, a concrete energy transfer takes place, one that has always been named "life".

So our young man comes down from the mountain with this surplus. Inevitably, no sooner has he approached the first village than he meets an ordinary human soul, that is to say, a soul which doubts its dignity, its value, its consciousness, and its power, a soul which does not think itself worthy of the starry heavens hanging above its head. He meets a deprived soul, a miserable soul, perhaps a woman who is going to the well while watching for a lover who no longer comes.... Then there happens what happens each time a photon meets an electron: a mutation of orbit, a rise in energy. This soul's thirst is assuaged. The tree dying for lack of water, light, and food, and that suddenly finds a supply of these things.... this tree straightens up. And because we live in the shade, we call this a miracle (even though the anomaly is to survive despite the lack of light and water). It suffices, then, for this man to meet two or three

other famished souls and he is designated as the Messiah, the savior, the supernatural agent. What confusion! And as for him, he decides to lay himself open unreservedly and fully alive to both the relation between humanity and the idol and the relation between humanity and "God the ineffable". He lays himself open to this ambiguity in order to become the mirror of that ambiguity.

Let us reflect even more concretely on the logic of his decision. Let us imagine a child caught between mother and father. Neither of the two parents is willing to stop their struggle for domination for a single moment: "No! I, Yahweh, am your god; No! I, Caesar, am your god". And all this takes place against a background where consciousness is seeking the truth of the ineffable God-the-invincible-Reality. Each of the two remains completely imprisoned in his and her closed systems; there is no truce and the child doesn't know what to do. Let us imagine that this child senses that deep down, his parents do love each other. But that's just it, their passionate love provides the enormous amount of fuel for their duel, a duel all the more cruel for the possibility of its being transformed into a true pleasure in living. Everything that the child says to its parents: to be well-behaved, to discuss things reasonably, to treat each other as equals, that at a deep level they love each other with a love that is real.... all this is of no use. Let us even imagine that the child perceives that what it is all about is an essential love, and that without that love, its parents would lose their lives. As a result, the child inevitably decides to become itself the site of the war. It decides that this war will take place at its expense. It says to itself: "If they fight at my expense, they will see their madness, for I am the very sign of their love and they will see their bloody combat with their own eyes, they will see this combat against a background of love, against the background of love that I am, me. It's my only way of loving them."

What was supposed to have happened, happened. One day, both the father and the mother lit into the child, the mother telling the child: "You're a disgrace!"; the father, "I'm leaving you!". The child is silent, taking the blows and choking back the tears. It waits for their hatred to shed its blood. It waits for the blood to speak. It hopes that its wounds will call its parents to another life....

Could this child do better? I don't know. Has this changed anything? Apparently not. Yet if this child's act were ever to leave indifferent all consciousness that sees human misery, then we could say: "Humanity does not exist and never has existed, it was not and never will be anything but a concept as upsetting as it is inappropriate". In such a case, it is inevitable that the cerebral animal which has taken over the idea of human society should hasten its own extinction....

I for my part believe that the act, even the desperate act, of an authority who goes as far as is practically possible in his or her time every day lights a spark that bursts into flames in at least one consciousness, and this is enough to give me the hope necessary to assume, one day after the other, my granule of personal authority. Certainly, from the point of view of large numbers, Jesus's martyrdom only added fuel to the machine of power, but from the point of view of a small number, this sometimes breaks the scales from eyes. Now, in this particular case, the small number is much more important than the large number, for it is consciousness in gestation. In a desert, a baobab seed is more useful than a sandstorm.

The young man Jesus perhaps achieved a double success: he accelerated the process of domination so that the empire would rush as swiftly as possible at the wall of its contradictions (the quicker an empire falls, the less damage there is); he awakened a few people to the idea of a brother-and-sisterhood bound together by the authority of consciousness.

If I took the example of Jesus rather than that, equally legitimate, of Buddha, Socrates, Lao-tse, or Gandhi, it is because Judeo-Christian society appears to me the sickest and most murderous and thus probably the most capable of carrying, in secret, the antidote for domination. The story of an isolated authority plunged into the maelstrom of a society centered on domination is necessarily the story of a failure that saves.

The dramatic life of the child of violent parents I just spoke of, when we apply it to a

people imprisoned by two idols (the idol of the empire and the idol of the nation), but intuitively sensitive to "God the ineffable", becomes a very, very long story. There was a need for a whole lot of blood and for an almost infinitely long time. A messiah's sacrifice brings little change. But can an authority who has seen the extreme of human misery do otherwise than go as far as he or she possibly can in their time? A moment arrives when the destiny of consciousness meets the destiny of humanity itself; its fate is ordained in advance. What is not ordained is the way in which this authority will assume his or her impossible mission. Why would an intelligent man or woman expose her or himself to death? And why should she or he do it while adding to the act what is necessary for it to appear as an "inevitable act of love"? I believe it is because there is no other way of saying:

- "Look, you human, at what you are doing to humans. Why are you treating yourself this way? For I too am a human and you are treating me like a dog."

- "Look: your relation with the true 'ineffable God' is love. It is its essence. My face proves it, I am love, and you have made it a relation of fear."

The stories of the life of Jesus can be envisaged as the possible, and perhaps necessary, expression of an ethic of authority. Symbolically, Jesus appeared in the West, precisely as the poetic function that produces in the people the redemption of Nature. He transfers hostility (which the structure of domination projects on Nature) to the human heart: it is the perverted human heart that subjects men and women to the whip and to blows, not Nature. He appears as reciprocity, relation, the image of relation, and if the relation is disfigured, he will be disfigured. It is the only card left to him. Afterwards and only afterwards can he transfigure this image, make it appear that, at a profound level, the primordial relation remains love, that the aspiration toward goodness is primal. His mirroring act proves it.

To put it briefly, yes! We exhaust every way of making ourselves suffer, but we cannot indefinitely postpone the task of living together and in peace. An authority will always be this principle of humanity shown to humanity. Every ethic of authority begins with a hope and ends with an act of faith.

CONCLUSION

We have based our reflection on consciousness, on the second level of thought. There are two levels of thought: at the first level, thought is organized to exercise and justify domination, and this leads to death; at the second level, consciousness is organized to facilitate the will for truth and collaboration, and this leads to life.

What does a person at the first level see? To him (or to her), human society appears busy at some great work. Like a swarm of bees, it multiplies, feeds itself, builds, cultivates, stores its surplus, explores, enlarges its territory... Active and febrile, it responds to an instinct of growth, development, and invention.

When he (or she) stays at that distance and, objective and optimistic, observes the activity of women and men, a satisfied smile forms on his (or her) lips. The human herd assumes its place, like the other species, but with so much more effectiveness: it struggles against death, sickness, suffering, sorrow. It follows the logic of its salvation. "In our society, men behave as in the other animal societies, some serve their betters; hierarchies confront, reinforce, and replace each other; less well-adapted individuals end up at the bottom of the heap. That's the way life ordinarily is," the first-level observer will tell me.

At this "zoological" distance, the human species appears more or less normal, simply better armed against Nature, that is to say, against famine, misery, and premature death. Observed from this altitude, power appears as what it is: the driving force of a collective organization of efforts for survival, nothing other than the necessary link between natural selection, favoring the strong, and social organization, penalizing the weak. It is ridiculous to go on about this. It is a simple biological fact that can be observed, but not modified. If such a fact were, by accident, to turn against the human species and cause its disappearance, we could do no more than describe the process by which an exaggerated outburst of thought led, by the selection of species, to the death of a biped incompatible with the materiality of life. Like a light returning to darkness, the red line of human intelligence will be nothing more than a particularly thin stratum in the sedimentary layers of the upper Holocene.

At what distance is this naturalistic vision formed? What is the mental location of the man or woman who has just described human society in this way? The question can be formulated thus: starting from what values does human society appear to us healthy, following the normal course of its life, fulfilling its destiny?

There is a way of being happy that never fails: to embrace the values that allow me to see, appreciate, and accept the facts without having to seriously modify them. This way, nothing is ugly, repugnant or shocking in life, death, conquest, war, and collective massacres. The power of force is simply a given. In this place where I see the events of human life from the values that justify them, I grow calm, enter the serene tranquillity of Alexander the Great. Peace and conflagration, the famine of some and the opulence of others, desertification here and planting there, problems and solutions are nothing more than processes among the thousands of others that form the world of the living. The man or woman

reassured in this way has no other duty than to spout this ever-more glorious history of Homo sapiens' escape from the necessities of Nature. If I correctly settle into this

place, if I indefinitely prolong my sojourn in this logic, I find in it a kind of Nirvana, a sort of tautological agreement with myself that allows me to float above pity. There is no better refuge. I am in the logic of a world fighting against a stubborn Nature. It is understandable that, almost to a man (and woman), the intellectual, political, economic, and artistic classes hold to this, sustaining by this very fact the logic of a world in ruins.

Alas! Three times alas! In regard to this peace of mind another level of perception exists, another distance from which this allegedly neutral and rational way of looking at things appears as one of the most pernicious and perilous ideologies in the history of thought. When, from a good distance, we observe these "logical" observers yield their power to political and economic interests which, in order to justify their actions, seize upon it like a religion, we feel hot under the collar and ask ourselves: but to what frozen condition, what deadly state has thought fallen? If neutralizing the values of their consciousness in order to arrive at a certain degree of personal satisfaction is enough for great numbers of people, this does not render collective human conduct any less morbid and dangerous. We have embarked upon a logic that is the ruin of the world.

From this other distance, we see unjustifiable deaths and suffering, the endangering of Nature's most delicate balances, and above all we see the course of thought hesitate in the face of the future, unable to master or even predict the distortions of the ecosphere engendered by human action.

At this distance, nothing seems any more pitiful than the mass mania sweeping us away: in a kind of male obsession to attain positions of dominance, acts of unusual violence are orchestrated using every possible technical resource. The art of making great masses of people suffer and die has reached levels that would have made medieval executioners shudder. On the other side, the number and variety of ideological refuges have multiplied in an extraordinary manner. The greatest part of the economy is devoted to the manufacture of drugs, analgesics, tranquilizers, to the production of everything that can keep us far from the cry of the starving, the tortured, the dying. We can also desensitize people with the help of overeating eased by gastrointestinal medications. We can divert, distract, and impound children's imagination, turning it away toward parallel and virtual worlds. It is even possible to put the most hyperactive brains to work on hyperspecialized problems. As for those souls excessively drawn toward compassion, all that is required is to enlist them in a tradition, a sect, a pacifying philanthropy. Whatever the procedures may be, what we observe at this altitude and distance is the abandonment, the abdication of conscious thought in face of the war of economic, political, and military titans that is tearing the planet apart like meat.

What is this distance, what is this altitude that immediately makes the most gifted person unhappy, torn, and anxious? Here, the world is seen from the standpoint of an aspiration for justice, from a premonition of goodness which can never lay claim to the truth of facts, nor even to the truth of thought, but simply to the truth of aspirations, to the truth of consciousness. Everywhere else, no one sees why it might be necessary to embrace such aspirations which render scandalous and unacceptable the facts of human existence. They do not see why it might be necessary to embrace aspirations which render human consciousness so unsatisfied. More seriously, they mistrust this because it is in the name of such ideals, they think, that the worst wars have been waged.

Drawing inspiration from Abellio, Bergson, Broch and many others, I have devoted several pages of this book to the hope of showing the difference, the enormous difference, between the closed values of justice and the open values of justice, between exclusive values and integrative values, between closed systems and open

systems. For this reason, I could do nothing other than turn all the worlds of refuge against me. I am writing for readers who belong to no school, fashion, or current of thought. I am writing for almost no one. I am writing then for those who are asking themselves, if they see human society so dangerously disoriented, if it is not they themselves who are completely insane.

The position from which I have analyzed power and attempted to define its ethic is not just any position, but a place chosen from among the most painful and difficult. Nothing has meaning in what I have said or affirmed if we do not hold to be true the aspiration to justice. The one and only way of advancing on the road I have outlined consists of feeling that the aspiration to justice is true, of feeling that the link between truth and justice is not just one possible link among all the links imaginable, but a necessary bond, as necessary as the bond between consciousness and reality.

At the end of all these pages, as I finish this meditation, how can I classify this book? Is it one ideology among so many others? A kind of dusted-off Neoplatonism? Where should it be filed on library shelves? It might be best to leave it on my desk.

It may be that after reading this, the link between reality and consciousness, truth and justice will seem to the reader to be the actual state of her or his own human interiority, a rather accurate description of the human person. There is, I hope, believe and feel, a real place where thought verifies itself. This is my basic postulate. I think that this place is as real as the Andromeda galaxy and that, just as each person has access to the light emitted by Andromeda, each person has access to the place of truth that shows her or him all the falsehood in which humanity is entangled.

Obviously, my analysis of domination is incomplete, even sketchy, but nonetheless a collective madness does endanger us, a madness whose complex but definite structure can be analyzed. In brief, a mechanism has gotten hold of human destiny. All the fragments of abandoned freedom have found their way into a few hands which act according to automatism that can be described and which it is possible to escape.

However, this mechanism is not just neutral; it creates suffering because injustice will remain eternally incompatible with consciousness and thus with social life. As long as consciousness exists, it will be infuriated by lies and by evil. There is an indestructible bond between suffering and consciousness. The more suffering increases, the more consciousness will awaken in certain people. Then it becomes necessary to expend more and more energy in order to drug, in every way that chemistry or the media makes possible, the consciousness of the subjugated and those who have dropped out of society. There follows from this, and this is my hope, a division of human history into two dialectical branches: a world turning toward death and a consciousness straightened and sharpened by the suffering of human beings. One of these branches leads toward death, the other, toward life.

The numbers are not distributed equally between these two branches. On the contrary, consciousness accumulates in the smallest possible number: a few "I's" who hurt and want to do something. Consciousness's feeling of solitude is immense. Nonetheless, because consciousness has deserted large numbers of people, because it has entrenched itself in a few uneasy individuals, it has reached an unprecedented level of necessity. "The world won't make it without me." This statement, extraordinarily pretentious in a normal context, has become a necessity in a context of peril. The only one who sees a burning ship, one who is certain that he or she is the only one or almost the only one to see this drama, such a person cannot transfer his or her personal power to others. "If I do not cry out, no one will cry out." Consciousness's moment of extreme solitude is approaching. "Soon, the darkness will be so deep that I will cry out and not ask myself, 'Am I crazy?'"

This deepening of the "I", this birth of personal responsibility, this deliverance from the social self is nothing other than ethics. Moved by this necessity, I wanted to share my point of view on ethics. Ethics is certainly not the place where we reflect, discuss, and equivocate on the best thing to do when an old man wants to die and the medical profession doesn't want this. This is only another refuge, another way of withdrawing from the struggle, another way of collaborating with domination's games. Ethics, I have proposed, is the primordial feeling in action, in an urgent need to act. As it was with the fireman, it is truth in action, surging ahead of unhappiness without thinking of its own life, without even considering whether its life might have more value than that of the other. No, in consciousness there is a proximity to the truth which impulsively attributes equality in dignity to all beings. There is in this place, this place where consciousness rests, a reflex of truth and justice, an equality of living and thinking beings, that is ethics itself.

But what, precisely, is my primordial feeling? Humans are perverted as soon as they doubt their own goodness. Consequently, they project on the cosmos the fear and hostility they have fabricated in themselves. This fear and this hostility lead them to war or to withdrawal. In both cases, power serves a machine that tests itself, feeds itself, and itself creates the death that it fears. Confidence goes in the opposite direction. The essence of confidence is to want life, experience, and the future. Confidence is not measured by ourselves, but by the other. It drives a person to jump into the fire for the life of another.

It is possible that what drives women is closer to our instinctive fireman than are men. It is possible that in the present state of our culture, women recognize the value of life more readily than do men. A woman does not find it comfortable, I imagine, to think that an idea can win out over a life. Sophocles was not wrong perhaps in attributing a feminine role to consciousness and a masculine role to the tyrant. However, if such is the case, there is a new chapter to write: what have we done to fail, over thousands of years, at educating men? What have we done to manufacture men who prefer war and cars to the play of love and life?

However it may be, the essential lies in the inevitable hope lucidity procures. If every moment of lucidity makes one a pessimist, it is in the name of a founding value of consciousness. And this sets optimism on a solid foundation. Truth and justice inhabit the depths of consciousness and because of this, the insanity of the world will always be unmasked. It follows that there is every reason to hope that the just consciousness will, in the end, dissolve the world's madness.

In summary, the big branch of domination, big in number, will have to spend a great deal to kill the truth that lodges in the tiny branch of consciousness. Humanity cannot be anything other than the accomplishment of our innermost aspirations. I am betting on the fact that consciousness is within thought from the beginning, that it encompasses thought and that it always gives birth in the end to an ethical thought, that is, to a thought bristling against injustice.

Finally, viewing ethics as the natural development of consciousness, I wanted to point out another necessary connection: consciousness and authority call one another. To assume authority is to assume consciousness. There is no human development without ethical development and all ethical development is transformed into social authority. If domination resembles an enormous fungus parasitical on our abandoned authority, there is only one cure: to regain, each one of us, our own authority, to maximize it, put it in gear, and take it as far as it will go.

One day public life will come. I confess that I falter here, for the examples of those

who have gone to the front make me afraid. I don't have a martyr's vocation. Certain mornings, though, the rooster's crow at first light seems so glorious. The pink light that obliquely colors the farm's fields, the blue sea extending to the horizon, the garden's bouquets, the cool air's serenity, the harmony of colors, sounds, and odors awaken in me such a feeling of belonging that the millennial madness of humans seems to me so infinitely distant, a thistle barely visible on the acres of golden grain. To see all the galaxies that turn their billions of stars above my head, to feel the thorough penetration of rays that assess every moment the sidereal adventure, when I imagine the source of all that illuminates me or simply keeps me out of absolute darkness, I feel so comfortable in my outrageously grand and mysterious abode, that it seems to me that nothing bad can happen to me. For years I tended my garden without worrying too much about what is beyond my strength. I clearly saw the thistle in the grain field and even the blood on the thistle; the suffering of others did reach me, but everything dissolved in the splendor of vast expanses of mountains, sea and sky. I told myself: "Beauty will win, beauty will win us over."

I did not leave this place. I am here now. From the place where I am on the shore of the Saint Lawrence estuary, I must make an effort to hear the cries of suffering of unfortunate people and that of the planet itself. The horizon doesn't let me see that the oceans are warming, that the fish are disappearing and that billions of people, this very morning, are hungry and thirsty. We must become informed in order to feel the sorrow. In that single sentence is an entire drama. For what might be capable of driving a quiet, happy, serene individual to read, study, and inform himself about distant tragedies he can do nothing about? Isn't it preferable to tend to your own inner peace? What might the call to public life set loose? Why would a happy individual harness himself to the world's misfortune as if it were a mountain?

As for me, I have taken a very long time to react. I had to perceive death nibbling here and there at my joints, stiffening my muscles, creasing my features, slowing down my memory. I am getting old. In a few years my children and my friends will escort my corpse to the cemetery. My grandchildren will make faces, there will be bursts of giggles and the parents will fight. I see this cortege. I smile. It is just as certain as the present beating of my heart. I had a few anxious nights and then, this relieved me. Imagine that you have quite a big bank account, a sum sufficient to fulfill all your reasonable dreams. But suddenly you learn that the bank can fail at any moment. What do you do? You don't wait any longer. At any moment, I can leave this earth. This considerably lightens my duty of prudence and self-preservation. I can cheerfully burn my calories. And then, I don't really believe in the end, the terminus. There is such a density of stars, of planets, of spheres around me and everything is moving, transforming, widening, rising in complexity and in intelligence, that I am no longer much afraid of metamorphoses. I was born of the greatest mystery, so I feel ready to abandon myself to it with the greatest of hopes.

This meditation on death was only the preamble. The determining factor was that once I was relieved by the world's beauty and the conviction that I would experience a favorable metamorphosis, I was seized by an uncontrollable desire to encounter people's poverty, not to suffer from it, but to cultivate my joy in it. Certainly, I have been acquainted with people's poverty for a long time; I practiced philosophy in the social work profession, that says it all. I liked the poorest environments because they seemed to me to be the truest. I had been educated in marshy ground, between needs and dead ends. But I had never consciously dedicated myself to a "public life". I worked. I did my best. I needed to draw my water for a long time before I could give it. I did not allow my will to get ahead of my consciousness. I did not, then, wear myself out. On the contrary, I quietly sorted out my thoughts and slowly measured my actions. And then it was as if peace reached a saturation point. Suddenly, happiness was found somewhere else. Like the fireman who hears a cry of distress, with a

charge of new energy I felt myself transported toward

a house on fire, the unhappy house of humanity. In a way, I realized that I was already in this fire, that the child I heard screaming was me. Since I came to understand that the cosmos I am in and will be in is well and truly my home, nothing is completely foreign to my interest. No one can suffer without it being in my interest that her or his situation be improved. It is a simple question of the integrity of my universal person. I decided two things, then: to politicize my books and my words, and to develop, with young people, a farm where philosophical education would be conducted.... It is a question of seeking with others ways of living that are more ecological, communitarian, and democratic, ways of resisting and combatting in daily life.

Obviously mine is a very small public life. But what difference does that make! I don't believe any longer in large numbers, in explosions and the noises of crowds. I live with a wonderful woman between a noisy highway and a silent ocean, between the minor miseries of daily life and the grandeur of a vast cosmos; here I weave my webs of writing and plow my fields. From time to time, I take a break and leave for a big city with the firm intention of shaking the columns of the temple. Every time, I am classified as outmoded, obscure, alarmist, a savior, a poet, a strange phenomenon, an idealist, an intellectual and lots of other things! Nevertheless, each time, a man, a woman, a young person or an old person leaves with the desire to get down to doing something about his or her own life. This is enough for me; this is my own small public life.

To do a little is infinitely better than to do nothing. This truism is enormously significant. At the present time, the cosmos is on average scarcely 2.7 C. degrees above absolute zero on a scale which can reach billions and billions of degrees (10¹⁰ K): the tiniest bit of heat is enough to keep the universe alive, creative, and capable of rebounding from its own ashes. Suppose that one planet out of a hundred thousand billion is able to harbor consciousness; this is sufficient to give a meaning to all the rest. Yes, my poor little granule of light truly is worth a whole lifetime of work, for its liberation can keep the whole world in hope. Strictly speaking there is just as much difference between nothing and one as between one and infinity. One is infinitely greater than zero. When, one fine morning, this purely logical commonplace takes hold of a person, a grain of a new world begins to take root. I am, I alone am, all the being needed to lead this world away from death. So much the better if there are others. If, however, in the infinity of solitary space, there were only this grain of consciousness that is mine, this would be sufficient to keep the mind above zero, above the absurd, in other words. This I owe to myself and I owe it to all this grand cosmos that looks me in the eye with its enormous eye.

Nothingness is an absolute that needs almost nothing in order to unfold. I want this almost nothing that is everything, in the end. It is my happiness and this happiness makes all the difference, particularly if there is much unhappiness. There was a time when the community prevailed, there was a time when the individual prevailed, and there will be a time when the community of individuals will prevail. No unconsciousness can extinguish the light of this beginning which is, inevitably, my own "I". It was a woman, bless her, who prophesied: "They came to trust what surpasses them" .

I have presented in this work only one philosophical reflection among other possibilities. I would now like to receive the thoughts of readers, for the debate has only begun. Every year, I organize a seminar of philosophy with the aim of stimulating action.

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GLOSSARY

Abandonment of power: The act of blindly entrusting a power to another person, an organization, an institution, or a government.

Abuse of non-power: If the result of my passivity permits a domination or a subjection.

Abuse of power: There is abuse of power if the result leads to domination or subjection, that is to say, if it diminishes another's condition of subject so as to make him or her similar to an object. Power can be abused by imposing an image of a predefined future, by imposing what the other does not want, does not desire, by reducing or inhibiting the creative energies of others, by scrutinizing the private lives of others, by interpreting their behavior, by treating them like children, or by reducing their areas of free choice, or by weakening their ability to defend themselves.

Adherent consciousness: Perception of the relative harmony and the relative disharmony between a form and the informal ideal (aspiration) proceeding from the core self. It permits the development of identity. It bears within it the question: is it really me, do I see myself in this behavior, this work, this action? It mobilizes the critical intelligence.

Antidote value: These are the values that a value system tends to reject just as a diseased body rejects what can keep it healthy and in balance. Every system of values tends to reduce the number of exclusive values which make it a system distinct from other value systems. Because of this, this system rejects the values that would allow it to see itself in perspective. It becomes self-referencing. The antidote values, the rejected values have the property of restoring sight to the blind, and perspective to a value system.

Aporia: An aporia is a problem which has no solution because the "knowledge" that would allow for a solution is inaccessible to reason. A number of ethical problems lead to an aporia. For example, the problem of abortion cannot have a definitive solution because it is impossible to perfectly define what is meant by a human person and this is not possible because it is a question of a developmental reality. Thus there is not a specific moment before which there is not a human person and after which it is a human person. Death is also a developmental reality impossible to perfectly discern.

Art: Expression of thought where beauty and truth combine to encourage the development of consciousness.

Aspirations: Integrative values or open values inasmuch as these values are desired. We do not aspire to exclusive values; we want them.

Authority: Authority stimulates persons to freely engage their consciousness, their intelligence, their judgment, and their actions in a common direction (which is not a goal, but a purpose). Authority rests on personal, professional and relational qualities. We say that a person exercises authority because she or he does not use force (dissuasive, manipulative or retributive) to attain a goal. In another context, the authority is the person who mainly bears the responsibility for a decision; he or she has to answer for that decision. We also speak of delegated authority in a democratic society.

Beauty: Certain phenomenologists say that there is no beauty in the cosmos, and suppose that beauty is purely cultural, that it is humans who project beauty into Nature. The phenomenology we are employing is certainly in agreement on this point, but it deems that what we are dealing with here is only a first level of projection. If we remained at this one level of projection, there would be symmetry between beauty and goodness (why wouldn't goodness be projected in the same way?). Now all cultures are in practice founded on the contradiction between the beauty and the cruelty of the world (the absence of goodness). It is because the projection of human thought on Nature is a second projection preceded by a first projection, that of Nature on humans. In this regard mathematics (Nature projected into reason) recall to us notions such as the harmony, symmetry, simplicity, and complexity that we associate with beauty. There is no equivalent on the side of goodness. Every attempt to develop a mathematical approach to goodness has failed (there have been several). Nature has not, it seems, projected goodness into our "reason"; it is inscribed in desire alone. It is the presence of "God" in desire. Such is the viewpoint of most of the great religious traditions.

Belief: It has to do with representations not confirmed by experience but which do constitute options for thought. For example, we can believe in extraterrestrials not because we have had any experience of them but because their existence constitutes a choice (a greater probability, an ideological choice...)

Bond of solidarity: This has to do with the social bond to the degree that it tends to maintain the solidarity of the members of a society.

Closed religion: Dimension of a religion that represents a closed system and which, because of this, contradicts its own origin, its own access to the state of faith that founded it.

Closed values: The term that Bergson uses to designate exclusive values.

Closed value system: A value system that sees itself as a totality sufficient to explain the world. It is essentially formed of exclusive values.

Commerce: The totality of interactions in a reality where resources are limited.

Confidence: We are referring here to an attitude which consists of giving reality a chance to prove itself compatible with human aspirations before thought judges that reality hostile. In the case of an irrational perception of a danger: go ahead. This makes experience possible. It is not reality that bears the burden of proof, but thought and judgement.

Consciousness: Light and transparency that allow thought to stand at a distance from reality and thus perform acts of thought and reflection. Consciousness remains inseparable from the informal values starting from which any distance from reality constitutes a form of judgement. Truth is doubtless the principal informal value of consciousness since consciousness seems to be able to sacrifice everything for the truth. It is in fact in the name of this value of truth that "the truth" is often contested as a universal value.

Core self: Source of consciousness, intelligence, judgement, and creativity. It is considered to be incorruptible, capable of new beginnings, capable of changing the relationship to memory, of escaping determinism and of using constraints in order to attain personal and collective growth. It bears informal universal values. It is thus a source of open and integrative values. In addition, it seeks the most direct possible

relationship with reality.

Desire: This is the movement of the aspirations of consciousness. These aspirations form imperatives for consciousness. They are informal ideals in movement and in the process of being accomplished. The instincts of life (needs) form the symbolic matrix of desire, so it is impossible to know if it is the instincts of life that command the informal aspirations or the opposite. There are not two sources of desire.

Dissuasion: Every means whose aim is to break a contrary will by imposing fears upon it.

Dominating ruler: One who consciously or unconsciously reclaims the powers abandoned by servile producers so as to enlarge his or her domination over them. Dominating rulers are habitually motivated by the incapacity to see themselves as subjects among other subjects. For them, collaborating with subjects adds too much uncertainty to time.

Domination: Domination is the idea that it is legitimate for a given person, business or organization to arbitrarily project a goal on the future, without taking into account either the living totality that is Nature, or the fundamental needs of living beings (humans included). It is a matter of "planning", that is to say of finding the shortest path for reaching the goal. Time becomes a succession of actions essential to the goal. Nothing in this time should serve to ripen desire. Everything and everybody are only means for attaining the goal. There is a utilization of what Galbraith defined as the three instruments of power: dissuasion, retribution (in the sense of rewards), and manipulation.

Emotion: When thought splits off from experience, it divides phenomena into two components: a conceptualization and an emotion. Emotion is often ephemeral because it has lost the thread that connects it to the experience and to the intellectual dimension of the experience. Emotion should be discriminated from feeling which is something quite different.

Empire: Tendency toward expansion and domination. When this tendency is no longer measured but unbridled, it is stopped only by a similar but contrary force.

Entropy: According to the physicist Brian Greene (*The Elegant Universe*, New York, Norton, 1999), "entropy is a measure of disorder [negative entropy, a measure of order]. For example, when your desk is a mountain in shambles, [..], it is in a state of great disorder, of great entropy [complicated but not complex]. On the contrary, when you organize it methodically, and the articles are filed [..] then, your desk is in an ordered state or, in other words, a state of weak entropy [complex but not complicated]. This example illustrates the essence of the idea, but physicists have a complete quantitative definition of entropy. This allows us to describe the entropy of a system with the aid of a precise numerical value: the larger the number is, the higher the entropy is. [..] This magnitude counts the number of possible rearrangements of the ingredients of a given physical system which would leave its overall appearance intact. When your desk is orderly and structured, almost any rearrangement [..] would disturb its organization. This reflects the fact that it has weak entropy. Conversely, when your desk resembles a battlefield, there are a great number of rearrangements of journals, articles, and outdated mail that would leave it as disordered as before without modifying its general appearance. This expresses the fact that it has a large entropy."

Equality (as a value of consciousness): The idea that there is a point of view from which all beings are equivalent in dignity because all beings are "measureless". No measure is considered to be legitimate; no measure would allow us to judge that one

being is worth more than another. In other words, every measurable value and thus every comparative value is arbitrary, appropriate to a given society.

Ethic of being: An ethic centered on the value of being. It seeks the development of beings, their expression, their originality, their creativity.

Ethics: The state of a being inhabited by consciousness, that is to say, at a distance from reality that results, among other things, from the presence of values. An ethical being is a donor of values. For him or her, to see is to attribute values to the surrounding beings. Because of this, her or his thoughts and behaviors are moral, carriers of values.

Exclusion: It has to do with excluding persons or groups from certain rights. This is rarely done officially; it is in actual behavior that exclusion is practiced. The phenomenon of social and economic isolation that results from this causes poverty, among other things.

Exclusive values: Exclusive values are precise, definite, and closed forms that make it possible to technically separate, by outward signs, the good and the bad. Because of this, it is seen as possible to set apart and eliminate evil (separate the tares from the good grain). For example: water is considered pure to the degree that all that it is not has been removed from it. Water that has this type of "purity" is obviously sterile; it does not engender what it is not, one can only reproduce it. In other words, it is non-historical. It is supposed that an exclusive value is a sort of prime element (like pure water), that it exists and that it is universal. Thus it is not cultural. Everyone can produce pure water and all pure waters are identical. It is homogeneous. There is not considered to be any internal contradiction in an exclusive value. If there are internal contradictions, they must be eliminated; one thing must be chosen and the other excluded. Justice, for example, when it is seen as an exclusive value is perceived as something that can be recognized through criteria definable in advance. We can know a priori what is just and what is unjust. This is impressed upon the mind by revelation (for the religious authorities) or by reason (for the secular authorities). It is then possible to combat injustice by telling ourselves that if we eliminate injustice, the world will become just.

Expansion: By expansion, I mean at least five things: colonization of territories, indoctrination about the past (the historical records are arranged in its favor) and the present (disinformation), mortgaging the future (debt and ecological destruction), squandering of energy and the sterilization of creative forces. This expansion is not only a contamination of thought leading to ecological and social imbalances, but it also casts these imbalances in tragic form, a tragedy that hopefully will awaken consciousness. Two antagonistic processes seem, then, to form the essence of the movement: the expansion of disequilibrium and the intensification of consciousness. Expansion is inevitably entropic, for it is the squandering of energy and the erosion of information. Conversely, intensification is "negatively entropic"; it is the concentration of information, intelligence and consciousness in a small number.

Faith: It is trust once it is tested, when experience leads it to think that the future presents no threat to its fundamental integrity. The state of faith is the normal state of transcendental consciousness which, for its part, rests on the transphenomenal point.

Feeling: A thought that is not separated from experience.

Finality: A finality is not a goal. For example: the finality of life can be described as a negatively entropic impetus. But it does not have to do with a projection into the future of a form defined in advance. This negative entropy may be the result of energy and

information in a given environment. If there is an "intelligence" in a finality, it is certainly not a linear intelligence.

Force: Force bends something or someone to an objective, a definite behavior, a form, a pre-established target (the goal must be reached). Force employs dissuasive, manipulative, and retributive means to reach a goal while getting the better of others' freedom.

Foreclosure: Psychological mechanism by which unacceptable thoughts and images are rejected even before they are felt and thus integrated to the subject. Foreclosure is at the origin of certain psychotic states. According to Laplanche and Pontalis, foreclosure is distinguished from repression in two ways: 1) The foreclosed signifiers are not perceived as internal to the subject; 2) They do not return to the interior, but "appear" as if coming from outside. The paranoiac is not attacked by his or her thoughts, but by others, so he/she does not fight him/herself, but others. It is a projection that has lost the thread connecting it to itself, the subject.

Formal ideal: An ideal is formal when its form is defined in advance, in the abstract, with the idea that this form is perfect, eternal, unchanging and that it is necessary to conform to it in order to be happy, that is to say, to be in accord with the supposedly predefined harmony of reality. These formal ideals have been attacked, and correctly so, by philosophers critical of "idealism". A formal ideal gives rise to exclusive values, closed values.

Goal: The will to attain a result defined in advance.

God: The presence of an intelligence in reality, an intelligence that by its very definition surpasses us and thus inevitably does not have the same characteristics as we do. Thus, God cannot be either personal or impersonal; He/She is inevitably more than personal. God must be distinguished from idols.

Goodness: Respect for the individual life of each and every human being.

Hostility: The projection on the outer world of an aggressive intent, of an idea that reality desires my suffering and death. When the "mechanism" is projected into reality, reality no longer has an intention, but is nonetheless hostile if its mechanism leads to death (entropy).

Identity: It is a person or a collectivity which develops in coherence with its integrating core. For there to be identity, the person must recognize him or herself in the realization of his or her work. This work is structured, oriented, and in movement around an integrating core. The person can say, this is really me, I recognize myself in this work. Above all, he or she can increasingly adjust the work to the integrating core that carries it.

Idol: A system of exclusive values which aim at attracting society toward formal ideals as it excludes and punishes (sacrificial rituals) the persons who appear to be in contradiction with the formal ideals.

Ineffable: Said of what cannot be expressed by words. All reality is ineffable since no word, no sentence, no speech can reveal the totality, the internal mystery of its being.

Informal ideal: These are aspirations, open values, integrative values. When we refer to the classical "transcendentals" (truth, goodness, beauty, unity), we must not see predefined forms, but aspirations that direct the dynamics of reality. Values deeply buried within consciousness we speak of as values of consciousness. The informal,

creative values are obviously poor in their content. An informal ideal can only be realized in dialogue. 1 - We can only speak of an informal ideal in the negative. I cannot define justice, but I perceive injustice. 2 - It takes all sorts of modes of expression. It tends to widen and diversify the self's forms of expression. All is not just, beautiful, good, and true, however. It does not lead to homogeneity but to heterogeneity. 3 - It is integrative, even of the past's stupidities. It does not exclude, it includes. It surpasses and assumes good and evil. It tends to integrate everything into the self. 4 - It is wisely-ignorant. It knows that something always eludes our knowledge (gap between the infinite and the definite). 5 - It is wisely-ignorant in another way: it knows that it cannot know itself directly. It happens to itself as it happens to another. 6 - The outer work does the inner work and vice-versa. To create is to be created by what we create. 7 - It keeps in reciprocal tension these two things: the indeterminate infinite wanting to determine itself in the finite and the determinate finite wanting to make itself indeterminate through the diversification of forms.

Integrating core: These are the values of consciousness and the integrative values to the degree that they are capable of assimilating the diversification of experience (the heterogeneous), so as to grow and not to divide or disintegrate. The integrating core is capable of maintaining a subject in its unity. It does this, not by excluding heterogeneous elements, but by integrating them in its own universe of thoughts, of feelings, and of actions, while profiting from their heterogeneous values.

Integrative value: Integrative values are aspirations that can be grasped only through the negative. I know in advance that the integrative value I desire has never existed, does not exist, and never will exist in a finished form. What exists will never be "conformed" to what I desire. An integrative value is not a precise form and I know as well that no precise form will be satisfactory. But this aspiration drives me nevertheless to produce, to invent, to create, along with others and in relation with Nature, forms that do approach it. I know that to the degree that I draw near to a precise form, I want to create another that is different. For example, water is pure (as an integrative value) when it is able to combine with something it isn't. It can then become fertile and give birth to a form which did not exist and was not even predictable. Water is pure if it produces, in conjunction with light and minerals, an amoeba, a plant, etc., with its own beauty. Integrative values are creative. We expect them to integrate heterogeneous elements in order to produce something new. In other words, they are historic and evolving like living beings. We can suppose that an integrative value is a kind of germinal and assembling driving force that integrates the concrete elements of existence in order to arrive at an invention that is worthwhile for a given time and place. If we draw near this aspiration, we have the desire not to reproduce it as it is, but to make something different. If I paint a magnificent picture, it stimulates me. And the more I have succeeded, the more I want to make another that is different and yet just as beautiful. Integrative values are cultural, then, in the sense that they create in another culture a result that is different and yet just as worthwhile. Justice, for example, as an integrative value is developed with people and with Nature. Each time it will yield different results that are more or less satisfactory. As an integrative value, justice doesn't so much serve to fight injustice, as to integrate what is unjust (as a painter integrates values that sometimes clash) in such a way as to produce a better justice. To forgive oneself is to integrate the past in such a way that the error serves to develop something better.

Intelligence: All that creates negative entropy in the process of reproduction (of the memory).

Intensification of consciousness: There is first of all an intensification of tragedy due to an uncoupling of thought from reality, an uncoupling which results from the process of domination. The tragedy leads to suffering. It is not those who profit from a

system who suffer from it the most, but those who are excluded from it. Every consciousness sees in it an increasingly great injustice. When this injustice strikes the values of consciousness, these values are highly aroused, and consciousness becomes intensely indignant. This is the principal factor in social change.

Intentional consciousness: Consciousness oriented by the subject's intentions. It constructs objects by reducing reality to a representation. It projects an image (intention) on the future and mobilizes the intelligence of means (and not the intelligence of ends) to reach this goal.

Justice: The informal idea of equality.

Manipulation: Any means of organizing information in such a way that others think or act in a predetermined direction.

Market value: Market value is an exclusive value and, more than that, a selective value that allows us to separate those we think can contribute to wealth from those who cannot contribute to it. For example, the market value of a diploma derives from the demand for labor and wages. I am worth something to the extent that I am in demand and can lay claim to a good salary. A system of education generally aims to raise the market value of young people who can be integrated into the production "machine". Strangely, market value is connected only weakly to functional value. A farmer possesses a very great functional value. He or she produces what is indispensable. But the structure of power can reduce this functional value to a very weak market value.

Memory: Any energy medium by which forms or information can be reproduced from one moment in time to another. The past no longer exists unless supported by memories (light, interactions, chemical processes, vital processes...).

Mind: Thought in the broader sense (all that transforms reality into phenomena) to the extent that it is in movement toward truth and reality.

Moral being: A moral being is aware of being connected from existence to existence to others and to Nature (anxiety of dependence); of creating the positive and the negative (anxiety of responsibility) and of being free and predetermined (anxiety of freedom, anxiety of destiny).

Nature: Reality.

Negative entropy: Is the reverse of entropy. Consequently it is a measure of increasing order.

Normative ethic: The search for means with the aim of making human behaviors conform, with certain social functions in view, such as civility, work, the exercise of power, etc.

Object: What is given by experience and exists independently of the mind. Object in opposition to subject which, for its part, thinks.

Open religion: Dimension of a religion that is in movement in human experience.

Open value system: A value system that rests on an integrating core composed of integrative values. It sees itself as insufficient and longs to enrich itself with other values.

Open values: The term that Bergson uses to speak of integrative values.

Paradox: Is said of a proposition that is true and false at the same time, like the proposition: "I am a liar". We can resolve paradoxes by passing from the absolute meaning (definition in itself) to the relative meaning of words (relation connecting a word to the reality it wishes to point out). For example, if I say that the light is dark, I am referring to the fact that the light travels well in the absence of light (the void), and that if there is too much light (this is the case during the day), this light interferes with fainter lights (for example, the stars).

Pariah: Person (or his or her symbol) in contradiction with the Idol and on which the aggression is turned that would normally be directed toward the dominator.

Phenomenal: What appears in thought when it acts on reality. The phenomenon is the projection of reality into the world of thought. Thought is here taken in its broad sense including in addition sensations, perceptions, emotions, feelings... When we say for example that criminality is a social phenomenon, we acknowledge that there is a reality that escapes us and that our visions of criminality can never perfectly match this reality. A phenomenon is an inevitable reduction due to the functioning of thought and the senses.

Possession: To possess is to have influence over a "sub-jected" being, that is to say, stripped partly or completely of his or her reality as a subject.

Power: The ability to influence a trajectory, to define a future. The idea of power does not include defining the future alone or defining the future for others. The less the "object" of power participates in the decision concerning her or him, the closer we are to the notion of dominance and possession. To possess is to have influence over a "sub-jected" being, that is to say, stripped of his or her reality as a subject. A subject is defined just by the fact of having power over him or herself and over others (without necessarily stripping the others of their power).

Power over power: The ability to master a power, to reflect on it and influence its direction, structure, purpose, mentality....

Predation: In the predation of a prey, interdependence and reciprocity disappear in the form of "me or you": the more I am, the less you are. This is surely what the cat feels when it looks at a mouse: if you disappear into my stomach, you are nothing anymore and I am a little fatter. Knowledge becomes a predation of reality when the representations of the world that are in thought are confused with the real world. In brief, when there is a loss of learned ignorance, there is predation of the world rather than true knowledge of the world.

Priest: Priests are the mediators of the invisible, the mediators of the idols (exclusive values). They preach the idol in whose name the sacrificial rituals are performed.

Primordial feeling: The state that thought experiences when it embraces in its totality the reality that is before it.

Psychosocial self: All the components of the psyche that are not the core self and because of this are strongly subject to the environment and thus are determined or at least influenced by it.

Reality: What gives life and death. Regardless of what our representations about it may be, something has given us life, is giving us life. Note that only life, in the broad sense (energy plus information in the direction of negative entropy), constitutes a

reality that can be experienced. If death (absolute termination of life) does exist, it is the reality of an absence of reality and it cannot be experienced. A death that can be experienced is only life that seems to be transformed.

Relational value: The value granted to a subject to the extent that it would be pleasant or profitable to enter a relationship with him or her. We judge that a relationship with her or him would be mutually profitable.

Religion: In consciousness, a state of faith that results from a primordial feeling face to face with the whole of reality. This state of faith is generally expressed in a work, and especially in a literary work. Later this literary work "devolves" (entropy) toward a more or less closed system of thoughts and values. Nevertheless, a religion keeps and preserves a way of access to the state of faith which is at its origin, for if not, it is not properly speaking a religion.

Retribution: Any means intended to make the thought and behavior of another conform, by means of anything which would seem to her or to him to be pleasant, flattering, economically necessary or interesting, or permitting the person to be seen as close to the idol (clothes, jewelry, luxury goods...)

Rupture of reciprocity: When a subject goes off the road of being to the point of confusing the object of his or her thought with the being-subject in front of him or her. Such a rupture is highly dangerous, for the death of a representation is confused with the death of a subject. Now, the former is insignificant (it is reversible) while the latter is tragic (irreversible).

Sacrificial ritual: Process of exclusion and devaluation allowing a system of domination to be kept in place by turning the forces of revolt in the direction of persons (or their symbol) designated as contradictory to the idol. Otherwise these forces of revolt would overthrow the dominating ruler.

Servile producer: One who has in part renounced the outer struggle, who abandons his power and, because of this, serves the common good or a dominating ruler without seeking to influence the course of decisions very much. He or she is usually satisfied with complaining, not realizing that complaints are an indirect apology for domination.

Social bond: The social bond seeks to preserve the community from dissolution. It consists of two contradictory sides. On one side, it seeks to make visible what isn't working by concentrating on the symptoms (among other things) of the poorest people. From another side, it seeks to trivialize these same symptoms, to contain them, to camouflage them in every way possible. The social bond is an electric current, polarized (+, --), ambivalent by nature. The networks are the wiring. The network is composed of persons who weave this social bond around each human being with that same ambivalence of showing and hiding the sorrows and deficiencies of human interdependence. Anyone who wishes to act on the network must decide if she or he is there to contain, disguise, or embellish poverty, or participate in the emergence of the social consciousness. Poverty, then, is part of the social bond, and perhaps is its most important symbolic constituent. For the poor person, it has to do with bearing his or her shame with dignity; for the emerging social consciousness, it has to do with making a certain number of symptoms visible in order to place the social bond itself in question.

Social distress: A poverty that is simultaneously economic, social (exclusion) and educative (weak social abilities) and which persists for a time sufficiently long as to engender a collapse of self-esteem. This poverty encourages others to designate these persons as bearers of social shame. Pariahs are often recruited from among

persons in a state of social distress.

Social network: The social network is composed of persons who weave a social bond around a human being with the ambivalence of showing and concealing the deficiencies of human solidarity.

Spirituality: Movement of thought that persists in extending itself toward the true search for reality.

State of maximal truth: Occurs in a closed system when a type of logic and/or a set of concepts, representations, and formulas appear sufficient to solve the problems of human life.

Subject: A being is a subject when he or she can think, express a creative power, in other words. She or he is all the more a subject if she or he does not exercise this power on objects, but, together with other subjects, on a future that concerns her or him and these other subjects. The more a subject acts on his or her environment as if it were composed of objects, the closer he or she is to an object, since he or she has less and less to do with subjects who contradict him or her.

Symbol: Two parts of one thing that has been separated artificially (like two shards of a pottery vessel) in such a way that their intrinsic unity is recognizable. For example: sexual instinct and the desire to love are only two when they are separated. At heart they form a single thing, and are symbols each of the other.

Tensional or encompassing consciousness: This is consciousness providing a watchful peripheral vision, consciousness perceiving the process of thought itself. Because of this, the way in which it sees is the reverse of the intentional consciousness: the other is a subject.

Theater of the world: The place where human action is performed, the place where this action is memorized in the form of archives, books, architectures, constructions, modifications of nature, the place of positive and negative consequences of human action.

Thought: The totality of the acts of a conscious intelligence.

Thought value: These are values defined in the abstract, conceptions of the good, the beautiful, the true, the just, etc. Thus they are values predestined to become exclusive values or closed values.

Transcendental consciousness: It embraces the point of view of the totality. It grasps the equality of beings and stands in a state of truth. Everything before it can collapse in the name of truth, its only peace. It intuits the beauty of truth. In the face of the dangers of time, it is confident, and thus it is in a state of faith. It mobilizes the contemplative intelligence.

Transfiguration: When consciousness engenders states of faith that fill a subject with joy.

Transphenomenal: Despite the fact that thought and the senses inevitably transform reality into phenomena, two subjects know that both thought and the senses themselves are reducible to the state of phenomena. They can understand and follow this, thanks to encompassing consciousness. They can then comprehend that they are subjects beyond phenomena, that, in principle, they are ineffable beings. As such, they commune through the same ineffability of their being.

Transphenomenal point: All realities taken as a whole necessarily form a unity, for if not, the universe would have no coherence; it would not be informed of what it is and, because of this, knowledge, scientific or other, would be impossible. There is, then, a "place" where everything is joined together so that information can be connected as a whole. Thought itself is inevitably connected to this "place"; it is informed and informable, because it is able to know. This "place" is the transphenomenal point which, for example, allows the laws of physics to be similar everywhere and to be knowable everywhere.

Truth (as a value of consciousness): Truth is without a doubt the principal informal value of consciousness, since the latter seems to be able to sacrifice everything for that informal and integrating value. It is also in the name of this value of truth that "truth" as an exclusive value is contested. To live in truth is to live in the explicit desire for that truth implicit in all consciousness.

Untearable consciousness: Consciousness cannot be torn. It can be folded, tied in knots, and darkened, but it is never completely divided in two. It dramatizes on the outside what it cannot make heard from the inside. As a result, psychoses based on the strongest cleavages of consciousness create meaningful tragedies and not simply a chaos of meaningless behaviors and this is true even of a mass psychosis. In this way, even the refusal of consciousness produces events which attempt to define the problem for consciousness.

Utility value: The functional value of a person. Market value is only weakly related to functional value. A farmer, for instance, possesses a very great utility value. What he or she produces is indispensable. But the distribution of power in a society can reduce this utility value to a very weak market value.

Value system: A value system is formed of a set of values whose essence is to preserve the system's integrity, that is to say, the fact of keeping itself the same over a long period of time (its continuity). Every value system has a tendency to reduce the number of values that make it a system distinct from other value systems. On this account this system loses the values that would allow it to see itself in perspective (what we call antidote values).

Value of being: This is the value of maximal integration, since every being has at least its own value. It is the opposite of market value. In a society centered on market value, the value of being is excluded as much as possible. Most excluded are those who have only their value of being. For example, if everything in a residential care center for the elderly were to be sold at auction, you can bet that an orthopedic bed would sell for more than a senile old man! Why? A poor senile old man has nothing but his value of being.

Values of consciousness: Informal ideals inasmuch as they are spontaneous in consciousness.

Warrior: War channels the surplus of force and violence toward the exterior. Warriors wound, kill, and pillage to avoid internal wars, to avoid the break in social solidarity that would come from too great a number of sacrificial rituals.

Will to: The seeking for a goal, for a representation of the future one wants to attain. If the desire is developmental in the sense that it rules over the development of living beings, the "will to" is not necessarily developmental, but more often draws a trajectory toward an object that one wants.

World: Reality and phenomena inasmuch as they are indissociable.