Egoism and Freedom Movements: On the Anthropology of the Bourgeois Era

I

A contradiction in the conception of human nature that has great significance for the political literature of the bourgeois era came to light in two brilliant works at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Although Machiavelli's instructions for statesmen are not based on as pessimistic an anthropology as implied by the familiar statement in chapter 18 of *The Prince* that all men "are bad and would not observe their faith,"[1] subsequent centuries understood him essentially in that manner. In fact, Machiavelli found so many followers in this direction that Treitschke could state that "all truly great political thinkers reveal a trace of cynical contempt for man, and even if it is not too strong it always has a strong basis."[2] Thomas More's *Utopia* expresses a different view. This vision of a rational society proclaims the conviction of an originally happier constitution of human nature by the mere fact that its realization, according to the fable, is not separated temporally from the present but only spatially. More does not cite bestial instincts as constraints to the association of free people who regulate their lives according to plans that respect the claims of each member equally. Unlike Machiavelli, More does not describe a cycle of state forms in which every tolerable condition is necessarily followed by the same confusion and misery out of which society emerged after a long and arduous process.[3] Nor was More the only one to hold this view. Rousseau did not need to invoke More in his attacks on the Hobbesian doctrine of the dangerous aggressiveness of human nature, because

he could cite a whole series of bourgeois theoreticians who held the same view.[4]

These representative writers of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment were sparing in applying the attributes "good" and "bad" to human nature. Aspects of their work not only evince points of view that reject such characterizations—Machiavelli's concept of *virtù* comes to mind here—but as modern thinkers they strive to exclude value judgments as much as possible. In contrast to the medieval view, which understood human beings mainly in reference to a norm, and in which nature, as opposed to the unnatural, connoted the divinely ordained constitution of human beings within all creation, early modern thought began to regard as human those traits which proved to be so in terms of historical, political, and psychological analysis. Human nature was no longer to be derived from biblical exegesis or other authorities, but ultimately from directly accessible facts. Knowledge of human beings becomes a specialized problem of natural science. To the extent that the basic natural-scientific categories contain any pervasive value judgment, it is based on the view that for everything in nature, and thus for the body and its indwelling soul, to perish represents the greatest evil, while self-preservation and all actions toward that end constitute the highest good. This simple naturalism, which drew upon the doctrines of antiquity, found expression in the Renaissance doctrine of emotions, especially as formulated by Cardano and Telesio, and was systematically elaborated in the philosophies of Hobbes and Spinoza.[5] This seemingly unprejudiced concept of nature was in reality individualistic in that it maintained each being's self-preservation to be its law and standard, corresponding to the social existence of the bourgeois individual. What starts as a conception of nonhuman nature, one lacking any conscious relation to this social origin, is eventually projected back onto human beings.

Yet, although philosophy and science were convinced of their own value neutrality, the spirit of the times imbued not only the effect but the very composition and implementation of their models: not just in the sense of the unquestioned individualistic principle that regulated the relationships of owners to one another, but also by the mental and instinctive barriers caused by the combination of this principle with the fact of the increasing differentiation of social classes. The nature of the isolated individual is itself a dubious topic for anthropology. This isolated individual is not the same as human beings in general,

which is supposed to be anthropology's frame of reference. But due to the contradictions of the bourgeois order, especially the constant need for the physical and psychic repression of the masses, the analysis of this abstract subject is further obscured and constricted by unconscious considerations. With or without the author's intention, anthropological ideas take on moral significance; confidence or disgust, indifference or sympathy contaminate the descriptions of psychic structures as well as ideas about the nature and course of the emotions and all other impulses. The individual, which under the simplified rubric of Man constitutes the major theme of the anthropological ideas of this epoch, has in turn been considered by this epoch's philosophers in a manner that is fragmentary in many respects.

The explanation for this state of affairs seems obvious. The sociological attribution of thoughts and feelings to social groups and historical movements has an especially easy task in this instance. The anthropological contradiction corresponds to a political one. Historians have tried to explain the contradiction between Machiavelli and More psychologically by pointing to "differences in their mental attitude and ethical disposition," or politically by contrasting a divided Italy, always threatened by invasions, with England, an administratively united island, practically safe from all enemies.[6] Yet sociological analysis teaches us that in the subsequent development of anthropology, the emphasis placed on the aggressive "bestial" drives of human beings indicated an interest in oppression, whereas the emphasis placed on educability, or simply the moral indifference in the judgment of instinctual life, was an expression of emancipatory tendencies. Those philosophers of history differ not so much in anthropology as in politics. Had politics not separated them, they could have concurred on anthropology. Only the circumstance that anthropology was used to support political goals widened the gap between the two ways of thinking. The task of applying this theory to the anthropological ideas of modern history and of tracing the changes, reversals, and complications of this model is not just a historical problem. It is of systematic and scientific interest: the instructional content of the great bourgeois anthropological doctrines will be uncovered and appropriated by psychological knowledge.

But this obvious connection with politics will not be treated in the following pages when we speak of how anthropological thoughts are permeated with ideas about value. Rather, a closer look at the

optimistic and pessimistic trends reveals a trait common to the two ways of thinking as they developed in history, one which drastically diverted and weakened the intention shared by Machiavelli and the Enlightenment to establish knowledge about human beings: the condemnation of egoism, indeed of pleasure itself. Not only in the cynical proclamation of the dangerous wickedness of human nature which must be kept in check by a strong governmental apparatus, and in the corresponding Puritanical doctrine of the sinfulness of the individual, who had to suppress his own desires with iron discipline and in absolute subjection to the law of duty, but also in the contrary assertion of man's originally pure and harmonious nature which is disturbed only by the restrictive and corrupt present conditions—in all of these, the absolute renunciation of every egoistic urge is the self-evident premise. This appears as a contradiction to practice. As the dominance of bourgeois society grows more undiluted and its influence less restricted, people come to view one another with increasing hostility and indifference as individuals, families, economic groups, and classes. In the context of sharpened economic and social contradictions, the originally progressive principle of free competition takes on the character of a permanent state of war, internally and externally. All who are drawn into this world develop the egoistic, exclusionary, hostile sides of their being in order to survive in this harsh reality. In the historically effective grand anthropological notions of the bourgeoisie, however, any emotions or drives which do not contribute directly to concord, love, and sociability are despised, distorted, or denied.

When Machiavelli states in his *Discorsi* "that men act right only under compulsion, but from the moment that they have the option and liberty to commit wrong with impunity, they never fail to carry confusion and disorder everywhere,"[7] while in the introduction claiming for himself an inborn "desire . . . to do what may prove for the common benefit of all,"[8] it becomes clear that he does not observe the natural instincts of most human beings simply in a natural-scientific light, but regards them as bad and reprehensible. However distant and unprejudiced his conscious stance toward Christianity may be, on this point he is substantially in agreement with Luther and Calvin. As exponents of similar historical interests, they all break with the Catholic tolerance toward certain modes of human reaction that interfere with the establishment of the new economic order. At the outset of

this form of society, as well as in its latest phases, the wretchedness of the individual is asserted. "Luther sees in all clarity," a German treatise states, "that man's will is evil, and this means not that something in man is evil, but that man himself is evil right to the root, that evil is the corrupted nature itself."[9] In contrast with Catholicism, there is here no neutral sphere of instinctual life; on the contrary, the essence of human beings as such is evil and rotten. Similarly, Calvin teaches: "Original sin is the inherited perversion and corruption of our nature in all its parts. . . . Cognitive reason and the heart's will are possessed by sin. From head to foot man is immersed in this flood so that no part of his whole being remains free of sin. Everything he does must be counted as sin, as Paul says (Romans 8:7) that all desires and thoughts of the flesh are enmity to God, and hence death."[10] Rousseau's sharp opposition to this does not refer at all to the condemnation of the "bad" drives and the pleasure in prohibited instinctual goals, but to their ubiquity, their origin and possible change. But it is not only Rousseau and the enthusiasm for everything natural and primitive connected with his name (always evident in a heartfelt style regardless of content), nor only harmony philosophers such as Cumberland and Shaftesbury who, contrary to Hobbes's anthropology, teach an innate morality—the whole tradition of thought that glorifies the natural proves to be identical with its misanthropic counterpart, since it does not at all attack the legitimacy of condemning the allegedly corrupt instincts but only the views on their development and extent.

Turning to the figure of Robespierre, the orthodox disciple of Rousseau, makes sufficiently clear the moral rigorism inherent in this sentimental theory of human beings. His concept of virtue agreed very closely with the Puritan view; condemnation was changed into real persecution under his reign. Political and moral opposition cannot be separated in him. He speaks of the sad consequences of Epicurean thought with the same disgust as a militant theologian.[11] There are two kinds of human behavior according to him: virtue and vice. "Depending on the direction he gives to his passions, Man rises as high as heaven or he plunges into the murky abyss."[12] This separation is exclusive; on the one hand, base, reprehensible pleasure, synonymous with crass selfishness—the doctrines of materialism and atheism run in this direction—and on the other, love of country and self-denial. There are "two kinds of egoism: the one base and cruel,

which separates man from his own kind and strives for a solitary well-being purchased with the hardships of others; the other magnanimous and beneficial, which dissolves our personal happiness into the welfare of all while linking our reputation with the fatherland's."[13] Human beings are comprehended in terms of the behavior which society expects of them, and this means that an instinctual disposition that contradicts the principles actually governing social reality is proclaimed as so-called virtue. Religion, metaphysics, and moral declamation fulfilled the task of measuring people by the opposite of what these factors in part led them to necessarily become in the underlying historical world. Apart from the works of a few undaunted writers, the analysis of human beings in the bourgeois epoch was impeded and falsified by this contradiction.

The need for an idealistic morality follows from the bourgeoisie's economic situation. The ever-increasing unleashing of free competition needed certain inhibitions, even according to its own advocates and defenders (apart from a few cynical economists of the last century). Private and criminal law see to it that this play of forces attains a balance, however unstable, guaranteeing a relatively constant functioning of society. In addition, habits and customs likewise keep competition within certain forms and restrict it. But even insofar as the liberal principle is restricted only by these kind of juridical and traditional limits, as was the case during part of the nineteenth century in England, its rule is a special case in economic history. Before and afterward, far-reaching state measures were needed for the social whole to be able to reproduce itself in the given form at all. Social interests that go beyond the horizon of the individual economic subject were recognized, apart from juridical, political-economic, and various other state institutions, by church and private organizations as well as by a philosophically grounded morality. One of the causes of bourgeois morality lies in the social need to restrain the principle of competition that dominated the epoch. Thus, the moralistic view of man contains a rational principle, albeit in mystified, idealistic form.[14] Furthermore, the rejection of antisocial drives is understandable from the severity of social domination. It was less necessary to preach moderation in mutual competition to the poor of recent centuries. For them, morality was supposed to mean submissiveness, resignation, discipline and sacrifice for the whole, i.e., simply the repression of their material

claims. Their competition with one another, on the contrary, was desired, and its mitigation through the formation of economic and political associations was made more difficult. The expression of their material interests that morality sought to restrict at this point was not private enterprise but common action: this was fought against ideologically by disparaging those interests.

Both themes, universal social interest and class interest, pervade the critique of egoism. The contradiction contained in morality, stemming from this dual root, gives the bourgeois concept of virtue, as it appears even among progressive thinkers and politicians, its vagueness and ambiguity. Anthropology either sets egoism against a nobler human nature or simply brands it as bestiality. Basically, the charge of egoism does not apply to the striving of the mighty for power, prosperity within sight of misery, or the maintenance of anachronistic and unjust forms of society. Since the bourgeoisie's victory, philosophical morality has devoted ever greater acumen toward maintaining impartiality on this point. The majority of humanity would be better off if it just became accustomed to restraining its own demand for happiness, and to repressing its wish to live as well as that small minority which was quite willing to have its existence be condemned by this useful moral verdict. This sense of bourgeois virtue as a means of domination became increasingly important. In the totalitarian states of the present, where all intellectual life is understood solely from the viewpoint of manipulating the masses, the broader and humanistic elements of morality are intentionally stripped away, and the individual's purposes are declared to be wholly subordinate to whatever the government designates as a common goal. In a few currents of utilitarianism, particularly in liberal political economy, self-interest is proclaimed to be the legitimate root of action, and then reconciled by farfetched constructions and obvious sophistries with the unselfish behavior required of the masses. But those authors who did not merely advocate egoism within conventional bounds—purely "theoretically" and with a knowing wink, as it were[15]—but proclaimed and recommended it openly as the essence of this form of social existence, were suspect and detested. The critique of egoism fits better into this system of egoistic reality than its open defense, for it is based increasingly on the denial of its own nature. Public acceptance of its rule would simultaneously mean its end. However little the average

member of the ruling strata may be able, in private, to conceive of any interests except those that are egoistic in the narrowest sense, openly propagating such interests nevertheless evokes the indignation of these very same people. The egoism that has recently been sanctified, the "sacro egoismo" of military states, is for the individuals of the mass rather the exact opposite of self-interest, inducing them to renounce prosperity, security, and freedom. It designates the aggressive tendencies of small groups of society and has nothing to do with the happiness of most individuals. With moral indignation Frederick II of Prussia defended his unprejudiced, egoistic policy against Machiavelli, in spite of the fact that it was first established by the latter; and Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees,* in which the author establishes and propagates egoism as the foundation of present society under the motto "private vices, public benefits," was specifically refuted, characteristically enough, by one of the most representative philosophers of the ascending bourgeoisie.[16] Mandeville himself well knew that the open advocacy of egoism is unwelcome precisely to those who embody it most strongly. Each of them "would have us believe that the pomp and luxury he is served with are as many tiresome plagues to him, and all the grandeur he appears in is an ungrateful burden, which, to his sorrow, is inseparable from the high sphere he moves in, that his noble mind, so much elevated above vulgar capacities, aims at higher ends, and cannot relish such worthless enjoyments, that the highest of his ambition is to promote the public welfare, and his greatest pleasure to see his country flourish, and everybody in it made happy."[17]

What is expressed in philosophy as contempt for instinctual desires turns out in real life to be the practice of their suppression. Every instinct that did not move in predesignated channels, along with every unconditional desire for happiness, was persecuted and repressed in favor of "moral" endeavors related to the "common good." Insofar as this common good contradicted the most immediate interests of most people, the transference of psychic energies into socially permitted forms lacked any rational explanation; consequently, in order to domesticate the masses, society needed education dominated by religion and metaphysics in addition to physical force. In all of history, even in periods which proved to be relatively progressive, excessive self-denial has been demanded of the vast majority. Self-discipline and a

conciliatory spirit, both among themselves and toward the rulers, were instilled in them by all means of coercion and persuasion. Individuals were subdued; after all, in official consciousness as well as in their own immediate consciousness, they ultimately were moral beings. Bad desires and passions might slumber at the bottom of their souls, but only those of weak and depraved character fell prey to them. The rulers themselves were forced to act ruthlessly in the hard struggle for existence, but that was one of life's bitter necessities. A real specimen of the privileged bourgeoisie is so strongly indoctrinated with the moral propaganda his class directs at the rest of society that his own ideology does not permit him to enjoy the exploitation and control over people and things, which must instead appear as a duty to the whole, a social accomplishment, the fulfillment of a predesignated career, whereby they may be acknowledged and affirmed. The Renaissance paintings in which wealthy donors with unmerciful and sly faces kneel as humble saints under the cross can be regarded as symbols of this epoch of unchained self-interest.

The struggle against egoism encompasses more than just individual impulses; it applies to emotional life as a whole and ultimately turns against unrationalized, free pleasure which is sought without justification. The assertion of its harmfulness is merely incidental to the arguments made against it. Man as he should be, the model underlying bourgeois anthropology everywhere, has a limited relation to pleasure, because he is oriented toward "higher" values. In the life of the exemplary man, there is little place for pleasure in its most direct form as sexual or, more extensively, material pleasure. The work done by the individual for himself and others is done for the sake of higher ideals that are connected only loosely, if at all, with pleasure. Duty, honor, community, etc., determine the true man and set him apart from animals. In all activity that claims to have cultural value, the greatest emphasis is placed on the absence of pleasure as a motive. This does not mean that joy is rejected openly and fully. On the contrary: in the darkest workplaces, in the most monotonous procedures, under the saddest conditions of existence in a life marked with deprivation, humiliation, and dangers, without prospects of tasting improvement, men are, at all costs, not supposed to be depressed. The more religious consolation loses credibility, the more the cultural apparatus meant to create joy in the common man is refined and

expanded. The tavern and festival of the past, the sports and political mass exhibitions of the present, the fostering of a cheerful family life and the modern entertainment industries, both light and serious radio broadcasts—all are designed to evoke a satisfied mood. Nothing makes a person more suspect than the lack of an inner harmony with life as it happens to be. The prescribed joyous temperament, however, is wholly different from orientation toward the pleasures of life or the joy that stems from real satisfaction. In the bourgeois type, happiness does not radiate from pleasurable moments to life as a whole, brightly coloring even those aspects that are not inherently delightful. On the contrary, the capacity for direct pleasure is weakened, coarsened, and in many cases completely lost through the idealistic preaching of improvement and self-denial. The absence of blows of fate and conflicts of conscience—i.e., a relative freedom from external and internal pains and fears, a neutral, often very dismal state in which the soul tends to oscillate between extreme activity and stolid impassivity—is confused with happiness. The tabooing of "common" pleasure has succeeded so well that the average citizen who allows himself any becomes shabby instead of free, crude instead of grateful, stupid instead of clever. In marriage, pleasure retreats before duty, but the social state to which pleasure was always ascribed as its profession has sunk so low and become so despised that it is almost on a level with crime. Pleasure has been banished from the light of cultural consciousness to the sad refuge of small-minded obscenity and prostitution. The individual attained abstract consciousness of itself within a historical process that, in abolishing slavery, ended one form of class society, but not classes themselves; hence this process not only emancipated human beings, it enslaved them internally at the same time.

In the modern age, domination is concealed economically by the superficial independence of economic subjects, as well as philosophically by the idealistic concept of an absolute human freedom; it is internalized by subduing and mortifying all claims to pleasure. This process of civilization admittedly began long before the bourgeois era; nevertheless, this is when the process first gave rise to the formation and consolidation of representative character types and gave social life its stamp.

II

In the quieter periods of the last centuries, it might appear at first glance that people had adjusted to the moral ideal of love and helpfulness, or at least were beginning to draw closer to it. The antagonistic mode of production, in which the principle of coldness and enmity necessarily dominated reality because everyone encountered each other as competitors, developed positive aspects in comparison to earlier forms of society. Every further step of realization, even expansion of competition, brought improvements and provided stronger evidence that social life could be kept running on the basis of the new principle of uncontrolled economic activity. But these calmer times, which on closer inspection were really quite turbulent, were interrupted not just by wars, famines, and economic crises but also by revolutions and counterrevolutions, and all these events provide historical material for the connection between the morality and the practices of the bourgeois individual. This relationship is more clearly apparent in the revolutions than in the counterrevolutions. The temporarily victorious counterattacks of Catholicism in seventeenth-century England, the rule of the Bourbons after the fall of Napoleon, and the crushing of the Paris Commune all took place so exclusively under the sign of revenge that the contradiction under consideration—that between the morality and the reality of the bourgeois individual, between social existence and its ideological reflection—cannot come fully into focus. In the counterrevolutions, reactionary groups of the bourgeoisie triumphed together with the remnants of feudalism. The kind of historical mechanisms that more typically reproduce the bourgeois character, rather, are movements that are evaluated, at least by more progressive historians of the bourgeoisie, as positive, i.e., as coinciding with the goals of their class. The smaller revolts of this kind pervade the whole history of Europe: the civil wars in the Italian cities in the sixteenth century, the Dutch sectarian wars in the seventeenth, the Spanish uprising in the eighteenth, as well as the small uprisings in Germany and France led in part by university students during the first half of the nineteenth century. These examples show that the major revolutionary events of every country emerge from a background of incessant struggles. The miserable situation of the impoverished population was their cause, and the urban bourgeoisie played

the leading role. The focus here shall be on only a few historical actions that show especially clearly how the peculiar disposition of socially important groups of the bourgeoisie stood in contradiction to their own morality. In the everyday life, trade, and commerce spanning the history of modernity, the particular kind of wickedness and cruelty at work in this epoch is often hidden from those strata that do not experience it personally. During periods in which the social order loosens, however, the causes and essential traits of such phenomena become more clearly visible. The following pages attempt to describe the common structural features of familiar events of modern history. Although the significance of these events for humanity's progress varied greatly—a few are completely local, a few more religious than political—still, at these exceptional moments, the social constellation becomes recognizable together with its most important mediations: the idealistic hierarchy of values, the theoretical condemnation of egoism, and the brutal and cruel streak in the bourgeois type's disposition. Both real human existence and contradictory moral consciousness, as well as their dynamic interaction, result from the social basis. At this juncture, it is necessary to develop a few typical categories in terms of the historical material.

From the episode in which the Romans, under the leadership of Cola di Rienzo, made the untimely attempt to unite Italy under a democratically disguised dictatorship, up to its modern realization on the same soil, the awakening and spread of bourgeois forms of life has been marked with popular revolts. Despite all of the differences in their historical character and of their consequences for social progress, they show common social-psychological features that are especially significant from the vantage point of the present. Savonarola's rise and brief glory in Florence is symptomatic of a whole series of similar tendencies of the century. The struggle against the archaic state of ecclesiastical organization is taken up by clerical leaders who personify the interest of the rising individualistic society. The Reformers, as successors to a series of militant religious figures, achieved the changes that were necessary in the ecclesiastical domain. The English and French revolutions of the next centuries brought about the political form required by the economy. Corresponding tendencies developed in Germany in connection with the wars of liberation and the resistance to the subsequent reaction. The typical course of these

bourgeois movements is being repeated in the present; the form is now grotesquely distorted because the progressive function which those past efforts filled in regard to the possible elimination of the prevailing contradictory state of society is today no longer linked with the bourgeoisie's activity, but has passed over to groups dominated by the latter. As the horror at the murderous practices of Chinese and Indian medicine, which had formerly been productive, becomes intensified in light of modern surgery, and the stupid superstition of the native patient who rejects modern medicine only to submit himself to a more primitive one becomes all the more shocking as the gap between the two widens and the disparity becomes increasingly obvious, so the present movements—from the perspective of the interests of the whole society, not those of the national power groups—bear the stamp of futile and ridiculous fanaticism. And as those medical practices, looked at in isolation, have remained the same despite this change, the social movements have maintained their key features, despite the radical change of function.

Their foundation displays a typical structure. The urban bourgeoisie has its particular economic interests; it requires the abolition of all conditions and laws which restrict its industry, whether they be feudal prerogatives, excessively ponderous forms of administration, or social protective measures. It further requires the establishment of large, centrally administered, sovereign economic territories, disciplined armies, the subordination of the whole cultural life under national authorities, the disappearance of all opposing powers, a system of justice oriented toward its needs, and safe and rapid transportation. The proletarianized urban and rural masses always had farther-reaching interests. While the social inequality in those historical stages was a precondition for social progress, the miserable condition of the oppressed corresponded to the utopian wish for equality and justice. The interests of the bourgeoisie regarding the system of ownership did not agree with those of the masses; despite the progressiveness of the system which the bourgeoisie was trying to establish, from the very start it implied a gap between the owners and the majority of society which grew increasingly wide. The spread of this system ultimately meant an improvement for humanity, but by no means for all people living at any particular time. The bourgeoisie's efforts to push through its own demands for a more rational administration against

the feudal powers with the help of the desperate popular masses, while simultaneously consolidating its own rule over the masses, combine to account for the peculiar way the struggle for "the people" is carried on in these movements. The people are supposed to recognize that the national movement will, in the long run, bring advantages for them too. Of course no fully carefree existence could commence with the disappearance of the wretched administration whose abuses they previously suffered, as some might have dreamed in mistaken reminiscence of the Mother Church's welfare system; rather, the new freedoms mean greater responsibility of each individual for himself and his family, a responsibility to which each is to be held by educational efforts. A conscience must be made for all. By fighting for bourgeois freedoms, each must at the same time learn to fight against himself. The bourgeois revolution did not lead the masses to the lasting state of joyful existence and universal equality they longed for, but to the hard reality of an individualistic social order instead.

This historical situation determines the character of the bourgeois leader. While his actions conform directly to the interests of particular groups of owners, his behavior and pathos are always vibrant with the misery of the masses. Because he cannot offer them the real satisfaction of their needs and must instead seek to win them over to a policy which stands in variance to their own interests, he can go only so far in winning his followers' allegiance by rational arguments for his goals; an emotional belief in his genius, which inspires exultant enthusiasm, must be at least as strong as reason. The less the policy of the bourgeois leader coincides with the immediate interests of the masses, the more exclusively his greatness must fill the public consciousness, and the more his character must be magnified into a "personality." Formal greatness, greatness regardless of its content, is in general the fetish of the modern concept of history. The pathos of justice accompanied by ascetic severity, the demand for general happiness along with hostility to carefree pleasure, justice embracing rich and poor with the same love, vacillation between partisanship for the upper and for the lower class, rhetorical spite against the benefactors of his own policy, and real blows against the masses that are to help him to victory—all these peculiarities of the leader follow from his historical function in the bourgeois world.

Particular historical phenomena are based on his role, defined by the tension between the interests of the decision makers and those of the masses. To the extent that the leader cannot himself directly influence the masses, he needs subordinate leaders. In the absence of a clear constellation of interests, arguments alone rarely suffice; constantly renewed emotional ties are necessary. The psychological factor in the relationship of leader and followers becomes crucial in these uprisings. The subleaders must in turn idolize the person of the highest leader, for the vagueness of the goals, which results from the divergent interests, extends into the leader's consciousness and limits the significance of substantial political principles to which the subleaders could adhere. In the course of these movements, therefore, personal friendships and rivalries play an outstanding role; important conflicts between social groups are concealed even from their own representatives behind indignation over the personal reprehensibility of competing leaders and their followers. Even the great importance placed on symbols, ceremonies, uniforms, and phrases, which attain the same sanctity as flags and coats-of-arms, follows from the necessity of an irrational bond tying the masses to a policy which is not their own. As crucial as enlightenment and the intellectual education of the masses are to liberating society from obsolete feudal forms, particularly in times of an upward-striving bourgeoisie, it is equally true that the effort to set up a stock of idols, be it in the form of "personalities," things, or concepts, corresponds to the necessity of constantly reconciling the masses to the policies of certain social groups. The more the special interests of these groups become consolidated and at variance with the possibility of a more rational form of society, the more strongly do irrationalist influences on the public consciousness emerge and the less does the effort to raise the public's theoretical level play a role. Whereas, for instance, the concept of nation could stand up to intensive scrutiny at the time of the French Revolution and the subsequent Napoleonic wars due to the general constellation of interests, with the intensification of internal contradictions during the following century such scrutiny took on a more critical function; therefore the category of "nation" has become largely taboo. Even the early bourgeois movements show a vacillating relation and often a strong antipathy toward spirit and reason; only in more recent history does this antihumanistic

and barbarizing moment, which lowers the attained intellectual level, become clearly predominant.

The modern uprisings mentioned above clearly display the structural similarities alluded to earlier on. Rienzo's regime obviously asserted the bourgeois demands current at the time. His modern biographer recalls expressly that his tribunate was motivated by the ideas of the reconciliation of nations and world peace, which we associate with names like Leibniz, Rousseau, Kant, Lessing, and Schiller.[18] Freedom, peace, and justice were his slogans.[19] His appointment as papal rector was an act directed against the feudal regime of the Roman barons,[20] and his entire program centered on the struggle against these "tyrants" and for the national Roman-Italian idea. "For I will continue to act impartially as I have done all my life, I am working for the peace and prosperity of all Tuscany and Italy."[21] There is no doubt that the notary public Rienzo came to power essentially due to the support of the property-owning strata in Rome. Gregorovius describes how "citizens of the second estate including prosperous merchants zealously participated"[22] in the conspiracy he led. "The guard he organized was comprised of 390 *cavalerotti,* magnificently equipped burghers on horseback, and a foot militia of thirteen platoons of 100 men each."[23] The "class of *cavalerotti,* i.e., of rich burghers of old patrician houses" represented, according to Gregorovius,[24] the bourgeois upper stratum, a "new nobility" which took up the struggle against the old nobility in Rome together with the various other bourgeois groups, craftsmen, and peasants. Rienzo's first decrees concerned themselves with strict justice against disturbers of public order, the establishment of a people's army, the uniform regulation of pensions and subsidies, state control of tariffs, the protection of merchants and of all transportation, a central administration, and so forth. He stated from the first that he "was willing to sacrifice his life for love of the Pope and to save the people."[25] The Roman bourgeoisie looked to the Pope as the representative of a centralist counterauthority to the arbitrary rule of the aristocrats, and papal power tried to carry out their demands in the centuries following Rienzo's fall, though with extremely varying success. Not long after Rienzo's fall, the Emperor and the Pope in Avignon consulted on how to purge France and Italy of the robbers and companies of freebooters that roamed the countryside threatening trade and traffic. The same cardinal (Albornoz)

who years before had brought Cola out of exile back to Rome was assigned to convince the feudal captains to leave Italy and to move instead against the Turks.[26]

Cola's relation to the property owners is clear: he directly represented their interests. His contradictory relation to the masses becomes clear with his fall. The popular uprising to which he falls prey was certainly stirred up by hostile aristocratic families. But the objective cause was "Rienzo's oppressive taxes and unscrupulous financial measures."[27] He needed a great deal of money for the services he rendered to the Pope and the Roman citizens, and it became hard for him to get it. After his banishment, when Roman citizens invited him to return to Rome to rule again, Rienzo asked them to supply him with financial means. "The rich merchants refused,"[28] and their "Tribune" had to obtain funds otherwise. His rule in their interest became more and more clearly a general oppression. The practices on which he had to rely caused the dictatorship to be hated. It was widely known that financial reasons were behind his betrayal of Monreal, whom he ordered executed. The upstart plebeian needed the gang leader's money in order to pay his militia.[29] The Pope and the bourgeoisie benefited from it, but it was Rienzo who fell into general contempt and who became increasingly regarded as a tyrant. Besides the "violent financial exploitation of rich and mighty persons,"[30] he had to rely on all possible methods of financing. His move to increase mandatory taxes on consumer goods (although he had previously reduced others), acceptance of money for the release of prisoners, and terrorist acts of various kinds forced him to take increasingly extensive security measures to protect his own life. "Death to the traitor who introduced the taxes!" was the cry with which the people stormed the Capitol to murder him.[31] The necessity of pleasing the rich citizens and giving more or less ambiguous assurances of devotion and loyalty to their acknowledged patron, the Pope[32] (then far away in Avignon), amounted to subjecting the masses to bourgeois authority. Consequently his rule, despite its great and progressive ideas, assumed an increasingly sinister and servile character. The ambivalent feelings of the masses for such leaders, whom they at first follow enthusiastically, have repeatedly been in evidence in subsequent history. Especially in situations in which the bourgeois goals pursued by such leaders definitely went beyond whatever might be attainable in light of the social

powers at the time, it was an easy matter to separate the masses from their leader, since their loyalty on the whole was more emotional than intellectual. As soon as failure became distinctly noticeable—something which a dictatorial apparatus obviously makes extremely difficult—it quickly dispelled the magic surrounding the successful personality who had been magnified to superhuman proportions. The behavior of the masses at the fall of Rienzo, Savonarola, the de Witt brothers, Robespierre, and many other idolized popular leaders is itself part of the cruelty at work in history that is at issue here.

The importance of symbols is clearly evident in Rienzo's early-bourgeois revolt. The importance he set on his own clothing and pageantry is typical.

> When going to the cathedral on the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, he sat on a high battle horse, in green and yellow velvet clothing, a shining steel scepter in his hand, with an escort of fifty spearmen; a Roman held the flag with his coat-of-arms over his head; another carried the sword of justice before him; a knight scattered gold among the people, while a solemn procession of *cavalerotti* and Capitol officials, of commoners and nobility, preceded or followed. Trumpeters blared from silver instruments and musicians played silver hand drums. On the steps of St. Peter's the cardinals greeted Rome's dictator by singing the *Veni Creator Spiritus.*[33]

Drawing on the first biography, later portrayals describe how he returned to Rome in order to meet the papal legates after his campaign against the barons. He "rode with his retinue to St. Peter's, got from the sacristy the precious, pearl-embroidered dalmatic with which the German Emperors were crowned, and put it on over his armor. So with the silver crown of a tribune on his head and scepter in hand, while the trumpets blasted, he entered the papal palace like a Caesar, presenting a half-frightening, half-fantastic sight before the astonished legates, and he scared them into silence with grim, curt questions."[34] The Pope wrote with indignation to the Emperor about Rienzo's pagan inclinations. "Not satisfied with the office of rector, he insolently and unashamedly usurps various titles. . . . In contrast with the mores of the Christian religion and in accordance to pagan customs, he has worn various crowns and diadems and undertaken to pass foolish and illegal laws in the manner of the Caesars."[35] The ceremony on August 1, 1347, in which he had himself knighted and, in the presence of many dignitaries including the papal vicar, cleansed

himself of all sins in the ancient bathtub of the Emperor Constantine, certainly had its origins in medieval customs. But on the other hand, Cola presented himself as a man of the people: as a democratic measure he abolished the use of the titles Don and Dominus, which he reserved for the Pope, prohibited the use of aristocratic coats-of-arms on houses, and the like.[36] The tremendous emphasis he placed on symbolism in connection with his own person can therefore not be explained solely in terms of tradition. It was based on the necessity of establishing himself as the new, emotionally recognized authority. Similarly, the handing of flags to delegations was essential to this leader: "On August 2, Cola celebrated the Feast of Italian Unity or the alliance of the cities, at the Capitol. He handed the envoys large and small flags with symbols and put gold rings on their fingers to signify their marriage with Rome."[37]

This symbolism is connected with the endeavor to reintroduce old customs and to refurbish the glory of antiquity in general. However much such leaders portray themselves as revolutionaries and innovators, it is not in their nature to rebel against the existing order and to squeeze from the situation whatever is historically possible for human happiness. They experience themselves as executors of a higher ancient power, and the image that inspires them bears more features of the past than those of a better future. The psychic structure underlying this behavior among leaders and followers has been extensively described by Fromm. "In the name of God, the past, the course of nature, or duty, activity is possible [for this type of character], not for the sake of the unborn, the future, the still powerless, or simply happiness. The authoritarian personality draws his strength for active behavior from reliance on higher powers."[38] The masses which those leaders particularly relied upon due to their miserable situation and their lack of integration into a rational work process evinced a chronically underdeveloped psychological state that was both authoritarian and rebellious,[39] and that bore hardly a trace of independent class consciousness.[40] Despite the leader's efforts to incite the people to rebel against the prevailing conditions, he never intended to destroy the masses' disposition toward mental dependency or their blind faith in authority. The propaganda of the leader does not combine the critique of the authorities that must be toppled with any tendency toward unrestricted rationality. While the old system contained the masses

with the help of irrational ties, it is not immediately replaced by a society that truly represents the general interest, though bourgeois ideology asserts as much. The more legitimate authorities are toppled or at least attacked by the spread of freedom, the more strongly the need is felt to glorify the authority of the new rulers with reference to older powers that are untainted by the present dissatisfaction. The living "conjure up anxiously the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from their names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time honored disguise and this borrowed language."[41]

From an early age Cola was attracted to the idea of the old Romans. It is reported how, long before taking power, "a fantastic smile used to play" around his mouth "when he explained ancient statues or reliefs or read inscriptions from marble tablets scattered all around Rome."[42] Later he justified himself to the Pope by asking what harm could be done to faith by his revival of the Roman titles together with the ancient rites.[43] His choice of holidays is based on old dates and celebrations; his entire behavior is guided by the idea of restoring the Roman Empire. He speaks of "Rome's sacred soil,"[44] and seeks to place his entire program, as it were, under the aegis of his nation's glorious past. By thus surrounding himself with the aura of ancient forces, he places himself under the protection of a strong present power. "He feels that he is executer, renewer, deepener, carrier of Boniface VIII's imperial tendencies, and yet—as Clement VI writes—he wants to be just a servant and helper of the Pope and declares himself ready to abdicate immediately, if the Pope so wishes."[45] Cola always professed his loyalty to the Pope and acted in his name. Of course, he also regards himself as commissioned not only by these old and present forces, but directly by God as well. "He believes God has, by calling him, led the Roman people out of the darkness of tyranny, i.e., of the barons, into the light of freedom, peace and justice, and delivered Rome, the *domina gentium, sanctissima urbium* (mistress of the nations, most holy of cities) . . . from tribute, transforming it from a robbers' nest to its original nature."[46] "The people regarded him as a man chosen by God."[47] Although he and his like seek to offer the masses the spectacle of a freedom movement, at the same time they adopt the pathos of absolute obedience to higher truths and thus pre-

sent the example of a submissiveness which is to be emulated by their followers' loyalty to the leaders and to the bourgeois forms of life. As much as the whole world must tremble before them in fear, they themselves display the image of fear of still higher and supreme beings. Their role in society is revealed in their psychology: they defend the strata of property owners both against old, restrictive privileges that are burdensome to the whole society and against the lower class's demands on the new system. Consequently, their desire for freedom is both abstract and relative. Dependency is merely changed, not abolished. The progressive moment is expressed with greater purity and less restraint in the works of writers who represented the age than among political leaders. Philosophy and poetry reflect both the critique of the present and the more radical desire for a society without oppression; the ambivalent and idolatrous speeches of the politicians evince the brutality of the bourgeois order.

Similarly, Savonarola represented bourgeois demands which brought him into conflict with the masses in the course of the revolt he unleashed. The call for just administration, honest officials, political acumen, respect for privacy, punishment of national unreliability, and above all juridical reform and the conscientious fulfillment of civic duties generally[48]—these are all demands that mark the genuine bourgeois politician. His proposal for the Florentine constitution, which he himself expressly characterized as not just a rehashing but as the product of his own convictions, was drafted on the model of the Venetian Republic.[49] The real enemies against which his proposed political innovations were directed were the great noble families, especially the Medicis, who had attained well-nigh regal privileges and had come into conflict with the very middle classes which had gained strength under their rule. In Florence, unlike Venice, no old aristocracy with a solidly established administration developed gradually into a commercial oligarchy; instead, individual houses which had risen rapidly through the expansion of trade in commodities and money aspired to exclusive dominion. Siding with the majority of the ascending bourgeois and craftsmen meant an antiaristocratic struggle which bore many petit bourgeois traits. Just as Cola 150 years earlier had ranted against the barons, Savonarola assailed the "tyrants." While his treatise on Florence's constitution and government[50] addressed mainly

religious reforms, the hatred with which the feudal nobility and its system is discussed recalls Rienzo's drastic style in such matters and occasionally even the literature of the French Revolution.

In the course of the decisive disputes about an oligarchic or democratic form of government, Savonarola advocated popular rule before meetings of 13,000 to 14,000 people;[51] all his life he fought for an orderly bourgeois government. Like Cola, he too was especially concerned that the poor, widows, and orphans should receive assistance, but only insofar as they could not work. "Whoever lets himself be supported, although he can himself take care of his own support, is stealing bread from the poor and is obligated to give back everything he has received beyond his need. Ultimately the poor must prove themselves worthy of the benefits given them by honorable behavior, otherwise they are unworthy of the water they drink."[52] Savonarola spoke up against feudalism and for civil liberties. He spoke for the people. He both maintained and blurred the opposition between the privileged bourgeois groups and the lower strata. He deeply hated riots. "Savonarola pleaded for mercy not only for the small and lowly, but also for the great and prominent. Hardly had he returned from Pisa, when the first word he exclaimed to those burning for revenge against the followers of the fallen government was the exhortation for peace: *Misericordia.* And he repeated this admonition untiringly in the following period." When the people asked whether the wrongdoers should not be punished, he explained: "If God wanted to deal with you according to the justice you are shouting for, not ten of you would be spared. If you ask me however, 'Good, monk, how then do you understand this peace?' I answer you, 'Give up all hatred and resentment and forget and forgive everything that happened before the most recent revolution, but from now on whoever errs against the republic shall be punished.' "[53] In the constitution itself, upon which he had some influence, the bourgeoisie's double front found clear expression: "The lower classes, who did not belong to the guilds, had as little share in the governmental power as the noble families."[54] Membership in the great council was limited according to age and social position. In taxation "precisely the nobility, the large landowners not represented in the guilds, were the ones who . . . were most heavily affected, no less however the lowest circles, since the most

necessary foods such as grain, oil, and wine were made considerably more expensive by such taxes."[55]

The differing levels of specificity between Savonarola's and Rienzo's language is due in large measure to the much more developed social conditions that account for the Dominican's efficacy. Although the Florentine citizens could by no means confront the Pope with the same self-assurance as the Venetians they modeled themselves after, the traits of the contemporary ecclesiastical hierarchy that ran counter to bourgeois interests were so fully embodied by Alexander Borgia's court that Savonarola for a time could dare to oppose Borgia openly and not simply behind ambivalent phrases.[56] Although he could not risk a total break with the Pope since Church sanctions would have seriously damaged the city's trade, the enmity between the Florentine bourgeoisie and the corrupt higher and lower clergy including their leader was open and mutual.[57] Savonarola himself appealed not to the current Pope but to the genuine Papacy, the genuine Church, and to Christ himself. He considered Alexander an unbeliever, indeed not even a Christian. Nonetheless, he could not forego protecting his actions by appealing to this most recognized power of the time. He always regarded himself as a representative of higher powers.

Although Savonarola seems to be more clear-headed and rational than Rienzo, he regarded himself as a prophet, or at least as a man gifted with supernatural intuition. As for a series of mystical saints and founders, "the mystical love of God was for the *Frate* too the lofty school of the apostolate and of the ardent love for the Church, the mystical bride of the Savior, which animated him with holy candor to reprimand with relentless severity the undutiful pastors who had surrendered their flock to the rending wolves. The mystic Savonarola was the father of the prophet Savonarola."[58] The description, in his work on the triumph of the cross, of the triumphal carriage pulled by the apostles and preachers, on which Christ with his crown of thorns and stigmata is enthroned, the Holy Scriptures in his right hand and instruments of martyry in his left, with chalice, host, and other objects of worship at his feet—this enthusiastically composed picture[59] recalls Cola's fantastic dreams and allegories. In the case against him, Savonarola was accused of having spoken of his journey to Paradise for his

own magnification, and no doubt he had fostered belief in the magical power of his person. Shortly before his fall he had "before an innumerable crowd of people evoked the Redeemer present in the host which he held in his hands to send down fire from heaven and wipe him from the face of the earth if he did not walk in full truth. Never had he left any doubt that God would, if necessary, prove the rightness of his prophetic mission, even by supernatural means." He threatened to his opponent, "You have not yet forced me to perform a miracle; but if I am compelled to, then God will open his hand if his honor demands it, although you have already seen so many miracles that you need no further miracle."[60] But whether he accepted the trial by fire, whose failure marked the beginning of his end, more at the urging of his followers than out of conviction is uncertain. The magnifications of his person by his closest followers and by his own speeches was an indispensable means for his influence upon the masses. This magnification of the personality of the monastic people's tribune has been noted repeatedly in historiography as a principal instrument of his policy. "I find that when Savonarola is spoken of," writes H. Grimm, "his fall is depicted excessively as the result of efforts of his enemies and of papal anger. The most compelling cause for his fall was the decline of his personal power. The people grew tired. He had to stir up their spirits more and more strongly. He succeeded for a time in reviving their slumbering enthusiasm. But while from the outside it seemed to grow, it was really consuming its last energies."[61] Of course, if the petit bourgeois groups that stood behind Savonarola had been capable of establishing an enduring government of their own, then the disproportion between his real qualities and the superhuman image his followers promulgated would not have led to his downfall. The endowment of the leader with magical qualities was a condition for his influence on the masses. His fall resulted from the differences between the ruling groups themselves.

In Savonarola an essential aspect of bourgeois revolts becomes evident. The needs of the mobilized masses are utilized as a motor for the dynamics of the revolutionary process, but the condition toward which the movement tends in terms of the historically attainable balance, i.e., the consolidation of the bourgeois order, can satisfy them only to a very limited degree. This is why it is crucial that the unleashed forces be redirected inwardly and spiritualized [*spiritualisiert*],

as it were, and that this deflection already begin in the course of the movement. The process of "internalization" [*Verinnerlichung*], which began as early as the Middle Ages, has one of its roots here. Thode has interpreted the work of the great founders of orders at the beginning of the thirteenth century in this manner. "No power, however great," he writes in the introduction to his book on St. Francis, "can silence the just demands of the third estate which was awakening to self-consciousness, although its goals were too indefinite for the movement to have become unified, independent, and self-regulating. Then, called forth by the eternal laws of logical historical development, Francis of Assisi, in his genial capacity to make and carry out intuitive decisions, found the conciliatory words! He led the impetuous progressive stream into a delimited riverbed and hence rendered the service of having preserved it from an untimely division, gathered its forces, and directed it toward a unified goal. The goal is the spiritualization [*Verinnerlichung*] of the human being."[62] Thode sees Christian doctrine as the "blessedly restrictive riverbed," and he regards the new art as the first product of this process of sublimation. With the development of the contradiction between bourgeois and masses in the centuries after St. Francis, this internalization of social interests changes from an expression of the immaturity of the "third estate" compared to the powers that ruled the world into a practice of this class itself toward the people it dominates. The historical movements we are speaking of here thus increasingly show the translation of individuals' demands on society into moral and religious demands on the dissatisfied individuals themselves. The bourgeois leader tries to idealize and spiritualize the brutal wishes for a better life, the abolition of differences of wealth and the introduction of real community—ideas which have been represented in those centuries by religious populists and theological utopians. Not so much revolt as spiritual renewal, not so much the struggle against the wealth of the privileged as against universal wickedness, not so much external as internal satisfaction are preached to the masses in the course of the revolutionary process. The German reformer hated rioting even when it was directed against the Pope, the devil in human form. As Savonarola had called the people's revolt against the Medici "pharisaic justice . . . that stems from vengefulness"[63] and wished the people would look at their own sins, Luther said of the peasants "that they wanted to punish the

authorities for their sins; as if they themselves were completely pure and innocent. Therefore God had to show them the beam in their own eye so that they might forget the splinter in another's."[64]

The common man's temper must be calmed and he must be told to refrain from inordinate desires and words that lead to revolt, and to undertake nothing without command of the authorities or action of the governmental power. . . . But if you say: "What should we then do if the authorities want to do nothing? Should we then endure longer and strengthen their malice?" The answer: "No, you should do none of this: you should do three things. First: recognize your sins, which God's strict justice has inflicted with such ultimate Christian authority. Second: humbly pray against the papal authority. Thirdly: let your mouth be one mouth with the spirit of Christ, of whom St. Paul said: Our Lord will slay him with the mouth of his spirit."[65]

The extremely progressive character of this transformation process is not at issue here. The disciplining of all strata of the population, which resulted from the need to incorporate the masses into the bourgeois mode of production, was affected in turn by the development of this economic form. Without the process of spiritualization and internalization, it is impossible to imagine not only the astonishing development of technology and the simplification of the work process—in short, the increase of human power over nature—but also the human prerequisites for a higher form of society. This cultural process, as well as other aspects of the ideological process that dominate spiritual life in so-called normal times, is merely brought out with particular clarity in the activity of the leaders promoting morality and religiosity. Savonarola's Florence is permeated with a wave of religious and moral enthusiasm, similar to the way cities and countries were gripped by Protestantism. While in the later uprisings the idealistic heroism is expressed mainly as sacrificial zeal for the nation, in the earlier ones religious excitement predominates. "A religious spirit penetrated the redeemed people," Gregorovius states in describing Rienzo's revolt, "like that of the British in Cromwell's time."[66] These centuries witnessed the hypostatization of the belief in a higher freedom and justice: the ideological diremption from the muffled common interests of the masses out of which this belief emerged. Only in later phases of the bourgeois age is this idealistic alienation abolished as the belief in the conscious solidarity of struggling humanity is reasserted. The loud-mouthed and empty heroism that still presumes to

be the heir of that formerly progressive idealism has lost all cultural importance and sinks into a vain pose, a common lie.

The leadership which channels the people to particular goals and achieves the internalization of the drives which cannot be satisfied in this period employs a specific instrument: the speech at the mass meeting. The politician in the Greek city-state was also mainly an orator and at times exercised functions very similar to those of the modern leader. But in Greek antiquity the speech is presented in the assembly of freemen; the slaves comprise an element that must merely be dominated, not addressed. As much as these speeches also have enthusiastic traits, they largely lack the internalizing, spiritualizing tendency and the call to turn inward that belongs to the essence of modern rhetoric. Antiquity's rationality is admittedly rigid and constrained. Its logic corresponds to a fixed, self-confident upper class; it aims to convey a particular opinion on the state of affairs, not transform the listening public. The change of function of rhetoric that begins with Socrates already heralds the decline of the city-state. In antiquity and to a great extent in the Middle Ages, the lower class is kept under control by physical coercion and command, by the deterrent example of terrible earthly punishments and, moreover, by the threat of hell. The popular address of modern times, which is half rational argumentation, half an irrational means of domination, belongs to the essence of bourgeois leadership, despite its long prehistory.

The sermon owes its decisive place in religious life to the aforementioned function of the word in the new society. As early as the heresy movements of the twelfth century in Cologne and southern France, the sermon is addressed to the entire people but is promoted mainly by the property-owning classes. Contrary to interpretations that view these early preachers as stemming mainly from the lowest social strata, it turns out "that nobles, rich bourgeois, priests, and monks have often joined the ranks of the wandering heretical preachers and that, at least to their contemporaries, it was precisely this active participation of clergymen, of prominent and wealthy persons in the heretical movement, that was noteworthy."[67] Even in the oldest Franciscan association of preachers, "as far as we know, the very same strata of society are represented, who were everywhere the bearers of the religious poverty movement: rich bourgeois, noblemen, and clergymen."[68] The

urban bourgeoisie, from which the new order stemmed, conditioned the development of the sermon as a result of its particular interests. Contrary to theories that are today, though only with relative accuracy, associated with the name of Max Weber, the religious spirit of the modern age, which finds its first expression in the sermonizing popular leaders, is not a primary and independent entity. Humanism and the Reformation are connected with the rise of the bourgeois class, "which with its new views of nature and religion also creates new forms of social life and of ecclesiastical cult."[69] This is clearly expressed in the relation of the mendicant preaching orders to the cities: "The two go . . . hand in hand: The cities became the home of the preaching monks, and the popular religion of the latter becomes the religion of the cities. Each part gives, and each receives."[70] The monks themselves, however, come mostly from the higher social strata, which were beginning to run into conflict with the hierarchy. The religious ideas living in the sermon were as such nothing new. A primary role in the origin of the bourgeois world cannot be ascribed to them; their momentous development through and with the sermon can be understood only in connection with the economically conditioned rise of the bourgeoisie.[71] The internalization of needs and drives of the masses forms an important mediation in this dialectical process. At the beginning of the thirteenth century the Catholic Church itself could not close itself off from the demands of the age; in the Fourth Lateran Council it expressly recognized the necessity of developing the sermon.

Savonarola was a precursor to the Reformers. He was the first to make the church the site of mass meetings, as Cola had similarly done at the Capitol. His magnificent eloquence cannot be praised enough by his contemporaries. "Often he had to leave the chancellery ahead of time, because the people had broken out in tears and loud sobbing and were pleading with God for mercy in deepest contrition; often the scribes, overcome by emotion, could no longer follow his words."[72] The Dominican instructed that a supernatural fire should burn in the preacher. He must be ready to suffer a martyr's death himself. "If, despite the preaching, everything remains the same, and vices grow as luxuriantly as weeds, that is an unmistakable sign that the sermon, like a painted fire, does not ignite."[73] The masses should turn inward, they should become more moral, more unassuming, more resigned.

They should learn to fear God, and the preacher is—this surely applies to Savonarola[74]—the interpreter of the divine will, God's spokesman, his servant, his prophet. The bourgeois virtues, respect for the laws, peaceableness, love of work, obedience to the authorities, willingness to sacrifice for the nation, and the like, are drummed into the people together with fear of God. The language of the sermon is democratic, it is addressed to all, but part of its message is that individuals and whole groups in principle remain outside as the wicked and the obdurate. The appeal to the masses to deny themselves the adequate satisfaction of their drives and turn them inward is accompanied, as a sort of consolation, with the oft-repeated conviction that those who cannot achieve renunciation and exertion are damned and will not escape their terrible penalty. As cruelly and sternly as the clergyman or worldly leader may treat his followers, his brutality does not harm but rather heightens his reputation, since the crowd at least can pretend that they, unlike strangers and enemies, are loved by him. The Reformers' contempt for human beings extended even to their own followers in a manner that was wholly unambiguous. A prominent follower of Calvin, Chauvet, shouts at the end of a sermon: "May the plague, war and famine come over you."[75] Another addresses his listeners as devils.[76] Luther himself spoke the proverb: "Secretly, townspeople and peasants, man and woman, child and servant, princes, officials, and vassals, all are the devil's."[77] This contempt for the masses, which is peculiar to many bourgeois leaders, does not in the least decrease their popularity as long as there are others on the outside who are radically lost. "As friendly, however, and sweet as this sermon is for Christians, who are its pupils, so annoying and intolerable it is for the Jews and their great holy men."[78] There must be such a thing as Jews, Turks, and Papists, who stand outside the community.

While in more peaceful times the school and other educational institutions, together with mass meetings, transmit the internalization effectively and constantly to the successive generations, in revolutionary periods the mass meeting takes on exclusive significance. It is the characteristic form of the manipulation of dangerous social strata and is permeated with irrational elements. In these situations it is crucial to treat the soul of the people mechanically, as is shown by the value set on external format, the songs before and after the speech, and the

speaker's solemn appearance. The speech itself is not geared essentially to the rational forces of consciousness, but uses them only to evoke certain reactions. On the other hand, in instances where the real interests of the masses determine a leader, the opposite relation emerges. The speaker's goal then is for the masses to grasp the situation with their own consciousness; the action to be taken then follows from this as a rational consequence. What matters is that things are made clear, for no other interests enter in except those of the audience, and the leader's personality can recede, since it is not itself supposed to act as a directly influencing factor. And like the leader, the masses also change their character. The mass meeting is suitable for the purpose of exerting irrational influence; small groups of individuals with common interests are appropriate for discussions of theory, the analysis of a given historical situation, and the resulting considerations on the policy that should be followed. Movements striving to transcend the bourgeois order can therefore not use the mass meeting with the same exclusiveness and the same success. In the dynamics of history, masses are not simply identical with one another, even if they should in part consist of the same individuals. The appreciable extent to which the mass meeting in the bourgeois revolts must be understood as a psycho-physical influence, as a treatment or cure, is already apparent from its frequency and its compulsory character. Attendance is considered a duty, people are commanded to go, indeed sometimes they are detained there by force. This coercion is reflected clearly in the church regulations passed in the decades after the Reformation. The Saxon General Articles of 1557 state: "Thus, those who miss the sermon on holidays and Sunday morning and afternoon (but especially in the villages) and do not first excuse themselves to the pastors and judges of that place because of necessary business they must perform, shall be punished with a considerable fine, or if they have no fortune, with the pillory at the church or other prison."[79] When under Calvin the Geneva suburb of Gervais did not appear to be entirely reliable at one point, the measures taken went so far as "to station a bailiff and two officers as guards during religious service, so that no member of the congregation could leave the church before the appointed time."[80] Where knowledge is the real concern, assemblies display a completely different structure. Discussions

and intellectual progress characterize their course, the analysis of the situation and of practical solutions remains in continuous connection with the developing conscious interests of the participants. No matter how the content of the speeches at the mass meetings may change, it only fulfills a mechanical function by suggesting a certain behavior. The religious as well as the political mass speakers of the bourgeoisie choose their words not so much for their appropriateness to the object as for effect. Any development during the speech itself, or any rational interaction between speaker and participant that goes beyond the purely instinctual, tends not to occur. Subsequent discussions have the same character: they lack the dialectical element. Mass movements do play a role even in nonbourgeois movements. Despite the undeveloped, chaotic nature of their movements, the leaders of the Roman slave uprisings and of rebellious peasants at the beginning of the modern age called their people together, consulted with them, and roused them in tumultuous assemblies. Modern proletarian leaders not only have prepared individual demonstrations in small groups, but have also presented their views and proffered solutions before the masses. But though such gatherings may bear some of the traits just described, just as on the other hand the bourgeois mass meetings at times showed revolutionary features, especially in times of intensified struggle between the third estate and the feudal powers, the fact remains that the irrational, the solemn, and the authoritarian are still predominantly marks of the bourgeois leader's speech.

Despite the differences in social position between Luther and Calvin as reflective of the circumstances in Germany and Geneva, and despite their contrasting personalities as reflective of their origin and educational background, their behavior and even their character display astonishing similarities in virtue of their function as leaders of the masses in the bourgeois era. In the first decades of the sixteenth century "the favored groups of social development" are "the bourgeois patriciate and the territorial princes, the aristocratic strata, the new particular authorities of city and country; the oppressed include the vassals, the masses, the urban proletariat, the peasants, and the small rural nobility, which is connected with the peasants' fate and displays democratic tendencies in its views and its position relative to the newly developed high nobility of the princes."[81] The politics of

the property-owning bourgeois circles in Germany, who were the bearers of development at that time, were entirely at the behest of the territorial princes. That Luther subjected himself completely to these princes follows from the nature of his whole life's work. He himself, "with whatever right he called himself a peasant's son, is equally much a product of the city, the mines, and his urban education as a mendicant monk. . . . He certainly did call farming a divine profession and the only livelihood that comes straight from heaven: 'the dear patriarchs also had it.' But he nonetheless wrote the terrible tracts against the peasants and disapproved of the nobility's revolt. Certainly he never hid his antipathy toward the immoral aspects of patrician commercial activities, and to a certain extent he supported the canonical prohibition of usury, but that did not prevent his understanding approval of the quest for capital as business capital; it was just the idea of purely personal credit that he reproved. And certainly he called the princes murderous rascals and God's torturers"; but based on his entire situation, he had to end up "assigning a higher place to the authorities than they had ever occupied in the Christian world."[82]

Originally, the popular leaders [*Volksführer*] made little distinction between the goals of the general public and those of prosperous groups. Only in the course of the movement do the lower classes discover the darker side, and the tension between them and the leader begins. This is true of Calvin in his second reign in Geneva and of the great politicians of the French Revolution. Engels throws this situation into sharp relief in his treatise on the German Peasants' War:

> Between 1517 and 1525, Luther had gone through the same transformation as the German constitutionalists between 1846 and 1849. This has been the case with every middle-class party which, having marched for a while at the head of the movement, has been overwhelmed by the plebeian-proletarian party pressing from the rear. When in 1517 opposition against the dogmas and the organization of the Catholic church was first raised by Luther, it still had no definite character. Not exceeding the demands of the earlier middle-class heresy, it did not exclude any trend of opinion which went further. It could not do so because the first movement of the struggle demanded that all opposing elements be united, the most aggressive revolutionary energy be utilized, and the totality of the existing heresies fighting the Catholic orthodoxy be represented. . . . This revolutionary order did not last long. . . . The parties became separate from each other, and each found a different spokesman. Luther had to choose between the two. . . . He dropped the popular

elements of the movement and joined the train of the middle class, the nobility, and the princes.[83]

In practically no other outstanding popular leader of the bourgeoisie is the moral and religious pathos of the nuances of the various interests he represents as sharply expressed as in Luther's magnificent language. When the Gospel and the real bourgeois interests run into conflict with one another, there can be for Luther no doubt as to what place he concedes to the Gospel on earth.

> [What] is needed in the world is a strict, hard, worldly power to force and compel the wicked not to take, nor rob, and to return what they borrow, although a Christian should neither demand it back nor hope to get it back; so that the world not be devastated, peace perish, and the people's commerce and community be destroyed, all of which would happen if one were to rule the world according to the Gospel and not impel and coerce the wicked with laws and might to do and suffer what is right. Therefore, one must keep the streets clean, create peace in the cities and enforce law in the country, and hack away with the sword at violators, as St. Paul teaches in Romans 13:4. . . . No one must think that the world can be ruled without bloodshed; the secular sword should and must be red and bloodthirsty.[84]

However much he may rage against the rebelling peasants, wish that they be "stabbed, struck, and strangled,"[85] castigate mercy toward them as a sin, counsel only that "such mouths have to be answered with the fist so that sweat runs out their nose," and even call for the executioner[86]—still, he is sincerely concerned that among these peasants, who otherwise should and must be mowed down indiscriminately, "there may well be some who went along unwillingly, especially those who were once prosperous." Toward these "fairness must . . . outweigh law. . . . For the rebellion was against the rich as well as against the rulers, and in fairness it can be suspected that no rich person favored the rebellion."[87] And although Luther, for the sake of those elements of the nobility with which he was allied, at times even defended the nobility against the complaints of the merchants they robbed,[88] he nevertheless spoke out unmistakably against those noblemen who, doubtless out of entirely selfish motives, refused to spare the wealthy from the "stabbing and strangling" visited upon peasants. He employs some rather strong language against these "noble people": "Filth also comes from the nobility and it may boast that it comes out of the eagle's body, yet it stinks and is useless. So these too may

well be of the nobility. We Germans are Germans and remain Germans, that is, sows and unreasonable beasts."[89] Luther's relation to the parties of his time stands out clearly enough.

Although Calvin in republican Geneva reminds the king of France, protector of the hated Catholic Church, of the avengers "appointed by God's rightful calling to do great deeds and raise the weapons against kings,"[90] we should not believe that this vengeance is assigned to us as private persons: "Nothing is commanded unto us but obedience and suffering."[91] On the other hand, representatives of the people, i.e., the representatives of the upper and prosperous strata, are under certain circumstances thoroughly justified in "restricting the arbitrariness of kings, like the people's tribunes among the Romans, or the estates in our monarchies."[92] He considered an aristocratic and oligarchic form of government to be the best one; like Luther he never tires of repeating that "the civil authority exercises not only its rightful, but exceedingly holy calling, which deserves the highest honor in the whole life of mortals."[93] His love for prominent and wealthy families is well known. "He therefore had to endure hostility and sharp criticism from his enemies for this; he was accused of flattering the rich, and much worse. But such attacks made little impression on him and were the least suited to unnerve him in his principles. And his friends, disciples, and helpers walked in their master's footsteps."[94] He approved the oligarchic constitution of Bern, which moreover varied greatly from Geneva's, as Savonarola had approved Venice's, trying, like his medieval predecessor, to make his and his friends' influence dominant while preserving the aristocratic forms. All these leaders endeavor to anchor their clique in the life of the state and society, if possible for all eternity.

The Reformers' great spiritual achievement consists in the articulation of the idea that salvation does not depend on the sacramental performances of a priestly caste, but on the attitude of the individual's soul. In Calvin, this idea is further strengthened by the doctrine of election, i.e., that each person's eternal destiny is completely separate from the Church's practices. The Reformers thus bestowed upon individuals the independence in ideology to which they were destined by the transformation of reality—an independence, however, that turned out to be abstract and largely imaginary, curtailed in practice by the economy which is kept up but not kept under control by hu-

man beings, and in theory by the acts of grace of an inscrutable God who is designed by human beings but regarded as autonomous. The cultural progress of the masses initiated by the Reformers was directly connected with a much more active shaping of individuals than was usual with the old clergy. In light of the new economic tasks, the bourgeoisie had to raise its members to a completely different level of self-discipline, responsibility, and zeal for work than they were accustomed to in the old times of a relatively undynamic economy operating according to fixed rules. Of course, its outstanding representatives such as the old Jacob Fugger embodied the modern attitude toward life even without the Reformation. "It is a very different matter," he replied to his friend who advised him to retire; "he wanted to earn profit as long as he could."[95] The characterological preconditions of this mentality required by the new economy, of being bound to activity and not its content, had to be transmitted universally and continuously to the successive generations of various strata of the bourgeoisie and, with corresponding nuances, also to the ruling classes. This required more than just individual reformers, who were already the first representatives of a new bureaucracy.

Here we come upon another common trait of these historical events. Unlike social revolutions, they do not directly affect the economic base, but tend to develop and enhance the bourgeoisie's position already secured in the economy by opportune changes in the military, political, juridical, religious, and artistic spheres. The most bitter struggles are fought to renew the body of functionaries in these realms, to replace an earlier "elite," an old stratum of bureaucrats and intellectuals, with one better suited to the new tasks and to create more appropriate institutions. Whereas profitable economic activity, the accumulation of wealth by bourgeois economic subjects, is already achieved before and after the uprising and needs only to be freed from the hindering regulations of the old regime, the cultural superstructure must undergo a reorganization. This requires new personnel who are equal to the qualitatively different demands. With the consolidation of a small stratum of monopolists brought about by concentration and centralization, cultural activity takes form more and more exclusively as domination of the masses. Although the culture is addressed just as much to the rulers and is held in especially high esteem by them, they sometimes sense very well that this is its main

function in their system. In contradiction to the great artistic and philosophical productions of its own history, therefore, deep contempt and indifference to the spirit is a trait of the ideal type of the modern bourgeois, although this is manifested more in their behavior and instincts than in their views and consciousness, where the opposite scale of values generally prevails. They make religion, ideal values, and sacrifice for the nation into the highest goods of humanity, praise the success of the giants of art and science without any reference to the content of their accomplishments, and characteristically remain atheistic out of intellectual prudery, vulgar materialists incapable of any real pleasure. Pareto blurs the distinction between the key economic groups and their cultural functionaries and replaces it with secondary distinctions such as those between political and nonpolitical functionaries,[96] and in so doing ruins his concept of conflicts among elite groups (which is unhistorically developed in any case) as a potential instrument for understanding the whole age; were it not for this failing, this concept would have otherwise quite usefully lent itself to characterizing these cultural agents of the bourgeoisie and their doings.

While the bourgeoisie itself grows increasingly insensitive toward spiritual existence, at the same time its social situation requires of it an ongoing cultural agility, both in view of the clerical and feudal reaction and in order to incorporate the entire population into its system. The powerful call for inner renewal, into which at certain times the material demands of the masses are transformed, can therefore regularly be drawn into the struggle of the old bureaucracy and intellectuals against one or several competing groups attempting to supplant it. One of the reasons why the princes and the bourgeoisie supported the Reformation, apart from the timely dispatching of cultural issues, was the recognition that the Protestant church organization would not merely halt the flow of money to Rome but would also organize matters with greater thrift. The Catholic clergy had recognized the danger of the heretical preachers' poverty propaganda early on, and its first great advocate, Arnold of Brescia, predecessor of Cola and the Reformers, had fallen victim to an agreement between the Pope and the Emperor at the end of the twelfth century. Since the operation of these reliable and economically efficient new bureaucracies depends on "personalities" to a far higher degree than in the

feudal system, in times of transition we see embittered fighting on the part of the leaders and leader cliques who want to rule in the future, not just against the old powers but amongst themselves. Under the growing domination of the performance principle, which applies even to the highest officials and functionaries, they strive with all means available to prove the worth of themselves and the validity of their principles.

Those who did not themselves participate could only be repelled by the quarrels, personal enmities, and unchained passions of domination and revenge which characterize the leading strata of the bourgeoisie in the Renaissance, the Reformation, the French Revolution, and the later bourgeois uprisings. Giordano Bruno formulated well the feeling of a great part of the educated classes of the sixteenth century toward the Reformation. One should just see, he writes,

> what a miserable kind of peace and harmony it is that these Reformers preach to the poor people, apparently seeking zealously for nothing more than to have the whole world agree with their sanctimonious and conceited stupidity and concur in their evil, degenerate conscience, while they themselves do not agree on any law, any point of justice, on any doctrine, and everywhere in the rest of the world and in all earlier centuries there never has been such disunity and strife as among them, for among a thousand such pedants hardly one is found who would not have invented his own catechism and, if he has not yet published it, would desire to do so, not one who could bring himself to approve any arrangement other than his own, none who finds anything else in others except what he believes he may condemn, reject, and doubt. Indeed, a great part of them is at odds with themselves, since today they cross out and recant what they wrote and stated yesterday. Let him see what kind of consequences their teachings have, what kind of practical conduct they produce as regards the works of justice and pity, the preservation and increase of the common good, whether among their people and leadership universities, temples, hospitals, schools, and academies of art are founded, or whether these, wherever they have installed themselves, are even simply preserved in the same condition in which they found them, and not instead fallen to ruin or disrepair through their neglect.[97]

To understand the Italian philosopher's repugnance for the Reformation's rule, one need look no further than to the streak of anti-intellectualism which it has in common with many bourgeois uprisings. Even though Catholicism always made a distinction between reason before and after the fall from grace, and even though

it was held in even less regard by nominalism, which already displays bourgeois traits in any case, their greatest philosophers nevertheless viewed reason as the pride of humanity. Calvin, however, stresses that "all our effort, our insight, and our understanding is so wrong that in God's sight we can think and plan nothing rightly." The Holy Ghost knows "that all thoughts of the wise are vain, and proclaims clearly that the human heart's every thought and desire is completely evil."[98] In contrast to St. Thomas and his successors, Calvin holds it to be "an indubitable truth which can be shaken by no arts. Man's reason is so completely alienated from God's justice that everything he desires and thinks is impious, wrong, ugly, impure, and sinful; the heart is so deeply immersed in the poison of sin that only a rotten stench can come from it."[99] Luther knows no limits to his obscene denunciations of reason. The doctrine he has received through divine grace, he says, must be preserved in a determined struggle against "the devil's bride, reason, the beautiful strumpet"; for "it is the highest whore the devil has." Luther senses the deep connection between pleasure and intellect and he persecutes both with the same hatred: "What I say of lust, which is a crude sin, must also be understood of reason, for it dishonors and offends God with intellectual offerings, and has far worse whorish ailments than a whore."[100] Though the Reformers personally, within certain limits, esteemed art and science, these were severely hindered as a result of the battle waged against graven images and against the doctrine of good works in the areas under Protestant influence. Above all, there was hostility against everything in art that ran counter to the ethical notions connected with internalization, upon every trace of the erotic, indeed upon luxury in general.

Whoever reads the descriptions of those tumultuous periods of religious and national enthusiasm repeatedly finds references to a wave of bourgeois virtue and morality which, encouraged by the authorities, gripped the people. "A strict police force punished adulterers and gamblers," Gregorovius writes about the Rome of the popular tribunes. Under Savonarola a whole system of informants was organized in order to make all kinds of moral transgressions impossible. The burning of "frivolities" is known. Under his influence and that of his followers, items incompatible with the conversion of the masses were burned: powder boxes, make-up and other cosmetics, as well as chess and other games, harps, etc. On a great bonfire before the Signoria, undesirable books also found a place: "The works of Boccaccio

and Petrarch, Morgante and other battle descriptions, as well as magic and other superstitious writings; finally immodest statues and paintings, the pictures of beautiful Florentine ladies from the hand of excellent painters and sculptors and precious foreign fabrics with unchaste depictions."[101] An anti-intellectual tendency asserts itself in all these popular uprisings. This tendency is closely connected with the fact that the masses were not yet capable of an independent political stance that aimed to meet their own interests and had to internalize their wishes by the roundabout way of fetishized persons and ideas. Max Weber stressed the rationalistic trait of the bourgeois mind, but irrationalism is from the start no less associated with its history.

A further phenomenon connected with this irrationalism can be mentioned just briefly. Youth, even children, play a peculiar role in these movements. On the one hand, whenever development is fettered by the powers that be, individual young people side with the oppressed and risk their lives in the struggle against the ruling powers; on the other hand, it was an easy matter in these bourgeois uprisings to get swarms of boys and girls to take the lead in committing acts of violence and denunciations. As yet anther magical element, the so-called purity and idealism of youth promotes the leader's goals and the power of his personality. Farel, Calvin's predecessor and friend, had been mildly reprimanded by the city council on the occasion of the storming of a church. "The Protestant who recorded the incident said that it was none other than God who despised the advice of the wise and who roused the tender youths against the adults' notions. On the afternoon of the very same day 'little children' unexpectedly stormed into the cathedral . . . filling the church with wild shouting. The 'awakening of the children' was the signal for the adults. . . . There followed scenes of the crudest vandalism, incidents such as did not often occur even during the Reformation."[102] Savonarola even had "police children" who helped him exercise moral discipline and carried the conflicts right into individual families.[103] The proletarian children, however, distanced themselves from these moral functions. "The children of the lowest classes of people not only did not belong to Savonarola's groups but on the contrary they showed open hostility toward them and missed no opportunity to play malicious tricks on them. They also vented their spleen on the *Frate* whenever they could."[104] The sentimental glorification of the child as a symbol of

purity is one of those expressions of the bourgeois spirit that are both a means and an expression of the compulsory internalization of instinctual desires. One ascribes to children a freedom from desires in which is effortlessly realized the difficult self-denial expected of oneself.[105] The ideal that youth represents in the bourgeois age is neither as a bearer of theoretical and practical strength nor as a guarantee of the infinite possibilities of humanity, but as a symbol of "purity," "innocence," and "childlikeness." The mechanisms alluded to are closely connected with the ideological relation this society has managed to establish not only to children but to nature in general, i.e., the idealization of primitiveness, of "unspoiled" nature, and of the soil and the peasant.

The French Revolution seems, at first sight, to deviate from the structural similarity of bourgeois uprisings sketched here. The bourgeoisie and the propertyless masses had a common interest in removing the ancien régime. Repeated mass uprisings preceded it, and the conditions brought about by the revolution, despite all setbacks, actually led to an improvement in the general situation in both urban and rural areas in the first half of the nineteenth century. In particular, the "democratization of the land" was achieved to a certain extent by the sale of nationalized properties.[106] Despite the relative community of interest between the wealthy bourgeoisie and the masses, however, contradictions in the overall course of the revolution made themselves felt. From the very beginning, neither the character nor the actions of the great leaders corresponded to a homogeneous interest of the general public, an interest that was not realizable at that time; rather, they corresponded to the interest of the bourgeoisie, and although this was a progressive interest, at the same time it led to the exploitation and oppression of large parts of the population. This contradiction is clearly evident in Mathiez's excellent works on the French Revolution, which explain and defend Robespierre's politics in great detail. He traces the economic difficulties at the time of the revolution essentially to the *assignat* economy. All social strata that could not match the declining purchasing power of the *assignats* by raising the price of their own wares fell victim to inflation. They took up the struggle "against the cruelty of 'laissez faire' and 'laissez passer.' " They opposed the right to property with the right to live. Though these urban and rural masses found no significant leaders, in the course

of the revolution they finally succeeded in forcing the imposition of general economic controls, most importantly the fixing of maximum prices for grain and other necessary consumer goods. But this regulation, which was wrung from the government only under the strongest mass pressure, also included a wage ceiling. After the bourgeois circles failed in their desperate efforts to maintain a free market situation that was impossible for the poor under inflation, or even a partial market economy, the government fell into a new contradiction with proletarian strata, since it had to impose maximum wages along with maximum prices. Under the given structure of society and the prevailing mode of production, even terror was not enough to foil all the evasions of the food laws. Even though in Paris, for example, at the time when the Hebertists dominated the revolutionary section committees and maximum wages were less rigorously maintained than the laws on food prices, this was out of the question in the cities of the north. "One would be very mistaken," writes Mathiez, "to imagine that the revolutionary offices showed the same zeal everywhere in applying the maximum food prices. Even in the middle of the terror, city administrations that seemed to be mostly Jacobin were in the hands of the owners."[107] But quite apart from these inequities, the government had to alienate the masses by the wage policy forced upon it by circumstances.

Robespierre discovered too late that he could not carry on his revolutionary policy without concessions to the lower classes.

> On the eve of his fall, supported by his friends Saint-Just and Couthon, he had convinced the welfare and social security committees in their sessions on 4 and 5 Thermidor finally to implement the Ventôse (February-March) regulations which had until then remained just on paper, through which Saint-Just wanted to expropriate the suspects (the internal enemies) and distribute their property among the poor sans-culottes. This would have created an entirely new class which owed everything to the revolution, because it owed its property to it, and which would defend the revolution. Robespierre had gone beyond democratic policy. He was on the road to a social revolution, and that was one of the reasons for his fall.[108]

These laws, which posed no threat to the bourgeois order in any case, were never implemented. Nevertheless, Robespierre's uneasiness, which led him to revoke them, was justified. He no longer had the workers' support against the wealthy, who were annoyed by the mandatory

price limits. In some cases, the authorities had to resort to prohibitions against workers changing their place of employment; in the countryside, people had to be commanded to work the harvest, and laws against association were passed.[109] "On 9 Thermidor, the Parisian workers, dissatisfied with the new tariffs announced by the city authorities in the preceding days, remained indifferent to the political struggle going on before their eyes. Precisely on 9 Thermidor they demonstrated against the wage limits. . . . When Robespierre and his friends were being led to execution, the workers shouted to them as they passed: the devil take the maximum!"[110]

Robespierre is a bourgeois leader. Objectively his policy has a progressive content; the principle of society he represented, however, comprises the contradiction to his idea of universal justice. Blindness to this contradiction stamps his character with an imprint of the fantastic, despite all passionate rationality. His teacher Rousseau was already caught in the same illusions. In Book II of *Emile*[111] he states that the first idea one must give to a child is "less that of freedom than of ownership." The praise of ownership is repeated in many passages. "It is certain," he writes in an article on political economy, "that the right of ownership is the most sacred of all a citizen's rights and in some regards more important than freedom itself."[112] And he deludes himself with the hope that a government without ownership of the means of production could "prevent excessive inequality of wealth,"[113] ward off poverty, or at least make it bearable. Robespierre thinks in exactly the same manner. It was historically impossible for him to understand the immanent laws of the bourgeois economy which were politically anchored in the revolution. Within the system advocated by Robespierre, no government could prevent the intensification of social conflicts against anonymous economic forces. Rousseau and Robespierre's personal world of ideas corresponded directly to the situation of the petite bourgeoisie. They strongly resented large fortunes. The principle of ownership showed them its dark side. For Rousseau, all humanity's unhappiness even begins with it. He nonetheless declares it sacred. "One did not need a revolution," Robespierre said in the National Assembly, when confronted with socialist tendencies, "to teach everyone that excessive inequality of wealth is the source of many evils and crimes, but we are, nevertheless, convinced that equality of property is a chimera."[114] The exclamation "la

propiété; que ce mot n'alarme personne" stands at the beginning of the same speech. But if ownership is, for the French Revolution, a human right, still it is part of Robespierre's practice to put his own moderation and poverty in the right light. In general, he surrounded his person with the halo of poverty and virtue as diligently as Cola and Savonarola did theirs with divine grace. When he asserts that he would rather be the son of Aristides who was raised in the Prytaneum at Athens's expense than heir to Xerxes's throne,[115] that is not at all so irrational. But affirmations such as his claim that superfluity was not merely the price of crime but also its punishment and that he wanted to be poor in order not to be unhappy[116] are just part of the bourgeois leader's necessary self-glorification. Such conscious display of his own ascetic virtues through his own words and way of life was one of the most important irrational means for magnifying Robespierre's person in the eyes of his followers. Most historians have portrayed his behavior as a purely psychological fact, without understanding it as one of those practices based on the social function of these politicians. "What is the secret of his power?" Michelet asks. "The opinion which he was able to convince everyone of: his incorruptible honesty and his immutability. With an admirable consistency and astonishing tactics, he succeeded in upholding his reputation for resolute integrity. In the end he maintained it simply by his own assurance. And his word carried such weight that in the end one denied the obvious facts in order to recognize Robespierre's assurance as the highest authority, contrary to reality. . . . Faith in the priest was back again, immediately after Voltaire. This priest denied nature and made a nature of his own by his word. And this one was hard compared with the other."[117] Indeed, Robespierre's ascetic attitude does possess a magical character. He uses it as a higher legitimation.

He was not able to do without symbols either. They are integral to his policy and his character. The cockades and flags play a major role in the revolution. It is reported that Marat, on the eve of the uprising on August 10, 1792, rode through the streets of Paris with a laurel wreath on his head,[118] which was certainly not to Robespierre's taste. He criticized all ostentatious behavior; the feasts of reason celebrated by the Hebertists, which were a sharp affront to positive religion, especially disgusted him.[119] But his role as bourgeois leader, which requires displays for the masses, forced him to attend the Feast of the

Supreme Being in June 1794, which he presided over and the plans for which he had drawn up with the painter David, or at least approved. When he saw the people in the Tuileries gardens, he cried out enthusiastically: "The whole world is gathered here!"[120] In the course of this ceremony he set fire to the statue of Atheism, which had been erected for this purpose. In the middle of the flame the statue of Wisdom appeared. This defined the symbolic meaning of the event for the organizers and their audience. In truth, the bourgeoisie's struggle against atheism is less indicative of wisdom as a whole than of the wisdom of the government. This society needs a religion as a means of domination because the general interest does not hold it together. The road to the military cemetery, where the National Convention was to listen to hymns[121] and national songs from a mountain built for that purpose, was passed in solemn procession. "The legislative assembly proceeded behind a group of old men, mothers, children, and young girls. Robespierre, in his capacity as President, led the way. He wore Nanking trousers, a cornflower-blue jacket, a belt with the national colors, on his head a hat decorated with a tricolor crest, and in his hand, like all his colleagues in office, a bouquet of grain-stalks, blossoms, and fruit."[122] What is distinctive of popular leaders here is not the strangeness of the procession, which is often wrongly stressed by portrayals hostile to the revolution, but the compulsion to have such impressive and symbolic rallies, which even Robespierre could not avoid. At the height of its revolutionary development of power the bourgeoisie recalls its earliest revolts. "The brotherhood festivals of the French Revolution in Paris appear truly to be an imitation of the August festival of the popular tribunes of Rome."[123] As a consequence of the very different political situations in which their class found itself, Rienzo and Robespierre are worlds apart—and yet something in their nature is identical, because the form of society on whose behalf their activity was ultimately brought to bear is one and the same.

Even historians' discussions of these figures display at times a remarkable concurrence. Thus, Cola's modern biographer accuses Gregorovius of "blunders" and "clumsy criticism" for his talk of pathological hypersensitivity, the classical carnival game, the "insane plebeian with his crown of flowers," and so on.[124] Similar statements about Robespierre have frequently provoked the critique of historians. Michelet

speaks of the incorruptible man's "pathological imagination,"[125] and has been just as harshly reproved as Gregorovius, with whom he may be compared in regard to his power of depiction and "theatrical pose," as Burdach says of Gregorovius.[126] Michelet and Gregorovius are partly right, partly wrong. Bourgeois leaders are prone to a trace of the fantastic, but this is based less on their psychology than on social conditions. For all of their fantasies, they remain as true to reality as is possible in this contradictory society. The fantastical is a symptom of their profession; almost all of them could have been considered to be manic, at the very least, before or after fulfilling their historical mission. The qualities that make them suited for their role—the oscillation between love for the people, strictness, and cruelty; the combination of a child's gentleness with the rage of a bloody avenger; the obstinacy of the freedom fighter and the submission to the will of higher powers; the intermingling of personal simplicity, bombastic concepts, pomp, and moral severity—whenever the right circumstances bring all of this into evidence, it can be only partly conscious on the leaders' part. This contradictory temperament must surely be inborn, i.e., their character is preformed for their achievement. All these contradictions are contained in the average bourgeois individual as well. The cautious and especially "calculating" businessman, a small-scale model of practicality, precision, and thrift, tends, at least secretly, toward improbable, romantic enterprises, and at times comes up with the most adventurous of ideas. The leader is just the magnified version of this type. His character structure corresponds to that of his followers. Contemporary popular literature contains the same unmediated mishmash of blood craze and virtue, boastfulness and modesty as is worshiped in the leader. In his person, this mixture is "natural." It is told that Prince Colonna at times used to like to invite the notary Rienzo to dinner and have him give a speech. "The prominent gentlemen broke out in laughter once when he said: 'WhenI have become ruler or emperor, I will hang this baron or have that one beheaded,' pointing his finger at the guests. He went about in Rome as a fool. . . . No one suspected that this fool would one day have the terrible power to lop the heads of prominent Romans from their shoulders."[127]

Robespierre shares the Reformers' hostility to erotic culture. The constant exhortations to moral purity and the associated mania to discover filth everywhere is inseparable from his politics. They see

physical and moral filth everywhere. They despise idleness, people of loose morals, and attitudes that favor pleasure and happiness. In his letter to d'Alembert, the Genevan Rousseau lashes out at the theater and declares it an "amusement," and that if people cannot do without "amusements" they at least ought to be limited to an absolute minimum: "every unnecessary amusement is an evil for a being whose life is so short and whose time so valuable."[128] When Robespierre's spiritual mentor propagates this hatred of pleasure, he can appeal to illustrious Genevan predecessors. Although Calvin, in contrast with a few of the more radical members of his leadership, was of the opinion that "one must not deprive the people of all delights,"[129] under his rule dance, play, and public and private festivities were either completely forbidden or tied to conditions that virtually amounted to a prohibition.[130] Even theatrical performances with "a good intention"[131] were opposed on grounds of principle by the congregation he headed, even if not by his own initiative. "As could be expected," a modern study of Robespierre says, "he also used his power to enforce universal morality. Maximilien and Couthon, who often ate together at noon, represented a strong puritanical element on the committee. In October they encouraged the Commune in its striving to break the wave of immorality that had inundated Paris. They obtained an order from the committee to arrest the writer and owner of a theater where an indecent play was being performed."[132] Certainly, Robespierre is infinitely more positive toward theory and reason than Luther and his followers, both because of the historical progress which had occurred in the interim and because of his role in the left wing of the bourgeoisie. But it is also true that Robespierre was no less exempt from the rule that bourgeois popular leaders lag behind the knowledge of the writers who prepared the way for them. He was very critical of the Enlightenment. "Virtue and talent are both necessary qualities, but virtue is the most necessary. Virtue without talent can still be useful. Talent without virtue is just a misfortune."[133] In the speech on 18 Floreal 1794, quoted above, he inveighed against the materialism of antiquity and the modern age, especially against the Epicureans and Encyclopedists. After a very idiosyncratic digression into the history of philosophy, he reproaches them for writing against despotism and then accepting pensions from it, and for penning books against the court and dedicating them to kings. Robespierre criticizes the

materialist philosophy for "making egoism into a system, and understanding human society as a war of treachery, success as the measure for right and wrong, honesty as a matter of taste and decorum, the world as the property of clever scoundrels."[134] He plays off Rousseau against Voltaire's circle, which of course very much hated the Genevan moralist. But the harsh depiction of the world rejected by Robespierre corresponded more accurately to reality than did his own belief that after the bourgeois order is consolidated, justice will depend on the return to virtue. This idealism, however, is inseparable from Robespierre's historical task. With his fall, this view showed its deficiency compared with the spirit of materialism which he so disdained.

III

In order to illuminate the historical consequences of unrestrained egoism, which, despite the official morality of the modern age, is an essential trait of everyday life, a few non-everyday events were pointed out above. From the key points of its development, the revolutions, a light is cast over the bourgeois spirit as a whole that is also useful in analyzing the normal state. The question arises as to why this historical meditation was necessary at all. The derivation of the psychic and intellectual narrowness of the predominant character seems simple enough. Bourgeois society does not rely upon conscious collaboration for the existence and happiness of its members. Its vital law is a different one. Each person thinks he is working for himself, and must think of his own survival. There is no plan laying out how universal needs are to be met. By everyone producing things which can be exchanged for other things that are needed, production is regulated just enough for society to develop in its given form. The more a better, more rational system becomes technically possible over the course of centuries, the cruder and more clumsy this "fine" instrument, the market, proves to be; it mediates the reproduction of society only with severe losses in human life and goods, and with the advancement of the capitalist economy it is unable to save humanity, despite its growing wealth, from a reversion to barbarity. It is this very state of affairs—that during the epoch that emancipates the individual, each human being experiences itself in the underlying economic sphere as an isolated subject of interests, associated with others only by

purchase and sale—that gives rise to otherness [*Fremdheit*] as an anthropological category. The characteristic philosophy of the age understands the human being as a self-contained monad in transcendental loneliness, connected with other monads only by complicated mechanisms independent of their will—this is the bourgeois individual's form of existence expressed in the concepts of metaphysics. Each one is the center of the world, and everyone else is "outside." All communication is an exchange, a transaction between solipsistically constructed realms. The conscious being of these individuals can be reduced to a small number of relations between fixed quantities. The language of logistics is its appropriate expression. Coldness and alienness are the direct result of this basic structure of the epoch: nothing in the essence of the bourgeois individual opposes the repression and annihilation of one's fellow human beings. On the contrary, the circumstance that in this world each becomes the other's competitor, and that even with increasing social wealth there are increasingly too many people, gives the typical individual of the epoch a character of coldness and indifference, one that is satisfied with the most pitiful rationalizations of the most monstrous deeds as long as they correspond to his interest.

The preceding expositions dealt with only a few aspects of the historical realization of the bourgeois principle. In considering the trait of cruelty, they attempted to lend a more concrete form to the purely theoretically derived model of the bourgeois individual than would be possible by means of a purely logical derivation. Though cruelty was not discussed at great length in connection with these uprisings, nothing is more well known about them than this. Certainly the counterrevolutionary reactions were, as a rule, much more bloody, for they lacked even the rapidly disappearing hope of a drastic change, which in bourgeois revolutions works against resentment; the progressive elements are completely helpless and are the main target of terror. The masses are reduced from a particular factor which, though not awakened to complete self-consciousness, nonetheless endeavors to drive the process forward and hence plays a role of its own, to a mere instrument of revenge against the most advanced groups. In the bourgeois revolution the masses, though with changing strength and constant vacillation, are determined by their more conscious wing, and are differentiated and alert. They must constantly be observed,

convinced, and taken seriously. They are not a mass in the same sense as in the counterrevolution, where the "mob" tends to appear on the scene. The "mob" is different from the masses in revolutions, down to the psychic structure of its units. The question of whether the uprisings that have taken place in the most recent past in some European states are to be classified more as one or the other kind of historical events—which, moreover, at times have a similar character and are ultimately all phases of a single process and a self-coherent totality—is not as easily answerable as it may appear to be from a liberal perspective. At any rate, what are involved here are not absolutist or clerical reactions but the staging of a bourgeois pseudorevolution with radical populist trappings, wholly contrary to any possible reorganization of society. The forms they take seem to be a bad imitation of the movements previously discussed.

The role of the bourgeois leader as a functionary of the property-owning strata; the surrounding of his person with magic qualities for the masses, his "charisma"; the importance of symbols and holidays; the preponderance of speech over action; the call for inner renewal; the replacement of the old bureaucracy; the personal struggles between aspirants for elite positions; the mostly psychically determined relation of leaders, subleaders, and followers; the religious and national emotionalism; the anchoring of the difference between poor and rich in the eternal essence of the world—all these are expressions of the same dynamic: the masses, set in motion under the slogans of freedom and justice, and with a tremendously vague or clear urge to improve their situation and to attain for themselves a meaningful existence, peace, and happiness, are incorporated into a new phase of class society. Certainly, this is just one side of the whole process. The other is the progress of this selfsame society, which advances in leaps and bounds precisely in these revolutions, in which the preconditions for a higher social order are developed in this way and not otherwise. But as long as the epoch lasts, this negative moment has its own anthropological consequences. Since the egoism of the masses led by the bourgeois leader must not be satisfied, since their demands are repressed as inner purification, obedience, submission, and self-sacrifice, since love and recognition of the individual are deflected toward the leader, who has been magnified to superhuman dimensions, and toward lofty symbols and great concepts, and since one's own being is

annihilated along with its claim to existence—idealistic ethics tends to go in this direction—the extraneous [*fremde*] individual is also experienced as a nullity and the individual as such, his pleasure and happiness, is despised and denied.

The feeling of one's own absolute nothingness that dominates the members of the mass corresponds exactly to the puritanical view "that practical success is at the same time the sign and the reward for ethical superiority. . . . The doctrine that misery is a proof of guilt, although it casts a strange light on the life of Christian saints and sages, was always liked among the wealthy."[135] The fact that the poor person is in reality worthless is demonstrated to him anew every day; at bottom, he knows it right from the start. The prevailing ideology does generally contain the opposite thesis, yet a person's deeper psychic layers are not determined by it alone, but equally by the constant experience of contradictory reality. The manifest ideology is just one of the factors that give rise to the personalities typical of the society. The humanism that pervades the history of the new spirit shows a double face. Directly, it signifies the glorification of the human being as the creator of its own destiny. Human dignity lies in the power to determine oneself independently of the powers of blind nature within and without; it lies in one's power to act. In the society in which this humanism spread, however, the power of self-determination is unevenly distributed; for inner energies depend no less on external destiny than it does on them. The more remote the abstract concept of the human being, as glorified by humanism, was from their real situation, the more pitiful the individuals of the masses had to appear to themselves, and the more the idealistic divinization of Man—as manifested in the concepts of the greatness, genius, and grace-endowed personality of the leader, etc.—resulted in the self-abasement and the self-contempt of the concrete individual. Yet the individual is simply reflecting reality. If even the happiest person can, from one moment to the next and without due cause, become like the most miserable and poorest person, not through the blind forces of nature but through causes within human society, and if unhappiness is the only normal and certain condition, then the concrete individual cannot count for very much. Each hour society confirms anew that only circumstances, not persons, actually deserve respect. The Reformation, with its morally depressing antihuman pathos, its hatred for the earthworm's

vanity, its dark doctrine of predestination, is not so much the opponent of bourgeois humanism as its other, its misanthropic side. It is humanism for the masses, while humanism itself is the Reformation for the wealthy.

The necessity to move the greatest part of society by spiritual practices to a renunciation which is necessitated not by external nature but by the organization of society into classes gives the whole cultural thinking of the age an ideological character that stands in disproportion to the knowledge possible at this stage of technical development. Even with an organization in which human freedom was restricted solely by external nature that had yet to be mastered and not by social relations, the limits set by nature would compel some portion of external wishes and needs to be internalized, leading to the transformation of energies. To the extent that other goals, satisfactions, and joys would develop, these would completely lack the character of the higher, more noble, and sublime, which today invests all spiritual and all so-called cultural endeavors in contrast to materialistic noninternalized desires. The medicine-man solemnity that, as a consequence of the antagonistic constitution of society, clings to the whole of life in all noneconomic spheres, disappears with the fetishes by means of which the masses are held in check and around whose grounding, cultivation, and propagation this life is centered. The preservation of aesthetic, literary, and philosophical elements of the past epoch does not mean the conservation of the ideological context in which they stood. The affirmative character of culture, according to which the existence of an eternally better world over the real world was asserted, this false idealism is crumbling, but the materialism that is left is not the bourgeois one of indifference and competition; the preconditions of this crude atomistic materialism, which under the sway of that idealism was and is the real religion of practice, will crumble as well. The words "the realm of freedom" do not mean that the fruits borne by culture's present level of development should be extended in a "refined" form to benefit the "whole people," as is usually said. This undialectical view, which naively adopts the bourgeois notion of culture, ascetic scale of priorities, and concept of morality but remains ignorant of its great artistic achievements, has dominated the reform efforts of even the progressive nineteenth-century political parties to this very day, made thinking shallow, and ultimately contributed to

defeat. With the increasing hopelessness of the masses' condition, the individual is finally left the choice between two modes of behavior. One is the conscious struggle against the conditions of reality—this retains the positive element of bourgeois morality, the demand for freedom and justice, while annulling its ideological hypostatization. The other is a continued profession of this morality and its corresponding hierarchy—this leads to a secret contempt for one's own concrete existence and to hatred for the happiness of others, to a nihilism [136] which has expressed itself again and again in the history of the modern age as the practical destruction of everything joyful and happy, as barbarity and destruction.

In salient historical moments, this bourgeois nihilism is expressed in the specific form of terror. There have been certain periods in history in which terror was an instrument of the government. But various elements must be distinguished in this. Its rational goal consists in intimidating the opponent. Gruesome acts directed at the enemy are protective measures of domestic and foreign policy. But terror also serves another purpose, one which its originators are not always consciously aware of, and which is even more rarely admitted by them: the satisfaction of their own followers. Insofar as this second element plays a role even in such progressive movements as the French Revolution, it corresponds to the deep contempt, the hatred of happiness itself, that is connected with the morally mediated compulsion to asceticism. The preaching of honorable poverty which accompanies the everyday life of this age, one that has nonetheless made wealth its God, eventually becomes more intense in the course of the uprising and sets the basic tone even of the most liberal bourgeois leader's speech. The deepest instincts of the audience take this to mean that after the return to order, what will begin is not a new, meaningful, and joyous existence that will really put an end to misery—in which case terror would not be required for their satisfaction—but the return to hard work, low pay, and actual subjugation and impotence vis-à-vis those who need make no sacrifices in order to be honest. The equality which the individuals of the mass sense as fair and just at such moments, and which they demand, amounts to a universal abasement to the life of poverty so emphatically commended to them. If pleasure, or even just the capacity for pleasure, which they have had to fight in themselves since their youth, is so ruinous, then those who

embody this vice and remind one of it in their whole being, appearance, clothing, and attitude should also be extinguished so that the source of scandal disappears and one's own renunciation is confirmed. The individuals of the mass would have to view the entirety of their lives as misspent if it turned out that pleasure is really worthwhile and that the halo of renunciation exists only in the imagination. Through the clumsy and frenzied attempts to grab whatever is possible, through the imitation of orgies as he imagines them, the little man who one day came to power documents the same inner fear as the obstinately virtuous parvenu of missing the chance of his lifetime. For it is always a question of the soul. Driven by serious curiosity and inextinguishable hatred, people seek the forbidden behind what is alien to them, behind every door which they cannot enter, in harmless clubs and sects, monastery walls and palaces. The concept of the alien becomes synonymous with that of the forbidden and dangerous, and the enmity is all the more fatal since its carriers feel that this forbidden thing is irretrievably lost for themselves by virtue of their own rigid character. Petit bourgeois resentment against the nobility and anti-Semitism have similar psychic functions. Behind the hatred of the courtesan, the contempt for aristocratic existence, the rage over Jewish immorality, over Epicureanism and materialism is hidden a deep erotic resentment which demands the death of their representatives. They must be wiped out, if possible with torments, for the sense of one's own existence is called into question every moment by the existence of the others. In the orgies of the aristocracy, licentiousness in rebellious cities, and bloodthirstiness of the followers of an opposed religion—in the kind of deeds they impute to their victims—virtue betrays its own dream. It is not so much the scarcity of luxury that sets the ideologically dominated masses in motion as it is the very possibility of luxury at all. Luxury is therefore essentially considered impertinent not because there is poverty, but because poverty is taken to be the better of the two. All are equally nothing, and so soon as they believe themselves to be more, they are reduced to nothing. This brutality toward personal destiny, which in the bourgeois world is the law for most, is made plain for all to see by the guillotine, which moreover gives the masses the blissful feeling of omnipotence by virtue of their own principle having attained power. The guillotine symbolizes negative equality, the worst kind of democracy, which is identical with

its own opposite: utter contempt for the person. Accordingly, the cruel treatment of suspects in the prisons and tribunals of the bourgeois freedom movements and counterrevolutions is typically accompanied by moral abuse, castigation, and insults. "To make equal" has two meanings: to elevate what is below, to consciously set the highest claim to happiness as the standard of society, or to drag down, to cancel happiness, to bring everything down to the level of the present misery of the masses. Even the rebellions of this era that have been liberating and decisive for humanity harbor elements of this second meaning. Both principles are at work in the masses, and often enough they conflict. Even though only the negative one became operative in the counterrevolutions, it must also be said that the positive one, which points beyond the structure of the epoch, has already predominantly defined the character of a number of historical phenomena.

Nevertheless, one need not read Taine's descriptions, inspired by wild enmity,[137] to recognize this nihilism even in the Terror of the French Revolution. The "philosophical policeman Dutard," whom Mathiez quotes, expresses the significance of terror for the masses more clearly than any listing of terrible incidents. In his report on the execution of twelve condemned men, he makes the following observation:

> I must tell you that these executions have the greatest effect in politics, but the most important one consists in calming the people's resentment for the evils they have borne. They exercise their revenge in this way. The wife who has lost her husband, the father who has lost his son, the merchant who no longer has a business, the worker who pays so much for everything that his wage is reduced almost to nothing, can be reconciled with the evils that oppress them only when they see people who are even more unhappy than they are and whom they believe to be enemies.[138]

Marx and Engels did not overlook the contemptible side of the Terror of the French Revolution. "The whole French terrorism," they wrote in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, "was nothing but a plebeian manner of getting even with the enemies of the bourgeoisie: absolutism, feudalism, philistinism."[139] And in 1870 Engels wrote: "*La terreur* amounted to mostly useless cruelties, such as are committed by anxious people for their own reassurance. I am convinced that the guilt for the Reign of Terror of the year 1793 falls almost exclusively on the shoulders of overly anxious bourgeois acting like patriots, the narrow-minded . . . petty bourgeois, and the ragged mob [*Lumpenmob*]

that made their living from the Terror."[140] Though Engels in this passage understands the Terror mainly as a ridiculous exaggeration of the rational goal, his revulsion toward the petit bourgeois and the ragged mob also points to the socially conditioned sadomasochistic constitution of these strata, who were no less to blame for French terror than the opponents' activity.

In view of the indefinite postponement of a really thorough and lasting improvement for the poor, and of the certainty that the real inequality would continue despite the empty phrase "equality," the leaders hit upon the solution of offering the masses the unhappiness of particular people in place of the happiness of all the people. The beautiful Claire Lacombe played a certain role in the Revolution since the August 10 revolt, in which she had distinguished herself. She was closely affiliated with the radical leftists and had a great deal of influence among revolutionary women. When she came into conflict with Robespierre and his followers, her execution was announced even before her final arrest with the words, "The woman or girl Lacombe is finally in prison and been rendered incapable of doing harm. This bacchantic counterrevolutionary now drinks nothing but water; it is known that she was very fond of wine, no less than she was of good food and men. Proof: the intimate friendship between herself, Jacques Roux, Leclerc, and comrades."[141] Robespierre generally represented this petit bourgeois spirit in his policies. Personally, his ascetic predisposition disposed him to it, but the great progressive significance of the Revolution is also expressed in his character. "The people," he writes in his notes, "what obstacle stands in the way of instructing them? Misery. When will the people, then, be enlightened? When they have bread, and the rich as well as the government stop buying vile pens and tongues to deceive them. When their interest has fused with the people's. When will their interest have fused with the people's? Never."[142] But these sentences actually went beyond the movement he led. He crossed them out in his manuscript. Similarly, Saint-Just had arrived at a great insight. "Happiness is a new idea in Europe."[143] He expressed it in connection with the laws which led to the fall of his government. After Thermidor, it was not happiness but lawless and unrestricted terror that was put on the agenda.

The analysis of the psychic mechanisms by which hatred and cruelty are generated was begun in modern psychology mainly by Freud. The conceptual apparatus which he created in his early works can

significantly aide one's understanding of these processes. His original theory shows that social prohibitions, under the given familiar and general social conditions, are suited for arresting people's instinctual development at a sadistic level or reverting them back to this level. His theory of partial drives, of repressions, of ambivalence (a concept he adopted from Bleuler) and so on, are crucial for a psychological understanding of the process under discussion here, even though Freud himself did not pursue this application of his theory in any detail.[144] The transformation of psychic energies that takes place in the process of internalization cannot be understood today without the psychoanalytical perspective. While the Freudian categories originally displayed a dialectical character, in that they related the construction of individual destiny wholly in terms of society and reflected the interaction between external and internal factors, in later years the historical element in his conceptualization retreated in favor of the purely biological. Today it seems as if that dialectical character of his theory had crept into even those early works independent of the positivistically oriented author's will. The more he approaches more comprehensive sociological, historical, or philosophical problems, the more clearly the liberal and ideological cast of his thinking comes to the fore. His theory of narcissism already implies that love would appear to stand in greater need of explanation than hate, which "as a relation to objects, is older than love. It derives from the narcissistic ego's primeval repudiation of the external world with its outpouring of stimuli."[145] Later on, the destruction drive, "the inborn human inclination to 'badness,' to aggressiveness and destructiveness, and so to cruelty as well,"[146] was posited as a basic fact of psychic life that was directly determined by biology. Freud assumes that "besides the instinct to preserve living substance and to join it into ever greater units, there must exist another, contrary instinct seeking to dissolve those units and to bring them back to their primeval, inorganic state. That is to say, as well as Eros, there was an instinct of death."[147] The "meaning of cultural development" is the "struggle between Eros and Death, between the instinct of life and the instinct of destruction, as it works itself out in the human species."[148]

Freud's simple philosophy of history follows from this general model. As a result of "this primary mutual hostility of human beings,"[149] civilization is constantly threatened with disintegration, and a lasting

improvement of social conditions is impossible. All manner of coercion and laws, as well as morality and religion, are attempts to counter the effects of the eternal destruction drive. An "elite" will always be needed to hold the destruction-prone masses in check. In history we get the impression that "the idealistic motives served only as an excuse for the destructive appetites; and sometimes—in the case, for instance, of the cruelties of the Inquisition—it seems as though the idealistic motives had pushed themselves forward in consciousness, while the destructive ones lent them an unconscious reinforcement. Both may be true."[150] It is certain, in any case, "that there is no question of getting rid entirely of human aggressive impulses."[151] Although, according to Freud, the life of certain primitive tribes and the doctrine of the Bolsheviks seem to lend substance to such utopian ideas, he nevertheless persists in his skepticism. "That, in my opinion, is an illusion."[152] Above all, one should not think that war can be done away with so soon. "Culturability," i.e., "man's personal capacity for the transformation of the egoistic impulses under the influence of eroticism,"[153] consists of "two parts, one innate and the other acquired in the course of life."[154] We are inclined to overestimate the innate one, and the acquired one is generally held to be of little account. Most people are "hypocrites" as regards their cultivation. Freud does not base his explanation of the cruelty expressed in war, and not only in war, on a transformation of drive-impulses that aim at material goals, nor does he ultimately base it upon the coerced patient endurance of misery. He is inclined to understand the "pressure of culture," so far as it does not concern sexuality, as pressure on the innate destruction drive rather than on the aggregate of needs which the masses must repress contrary to the social possibilities. Like the devil in the Middle Ages, the eternal destruction drive is to be blamed for all evil. Freud, moreover, considers himself especially daring with this view. "We should probably have met with little resistance," he writes as an explanation for the long hesitation of psychoanalysis to accept the death instinct into its doctrine, "if we had wanted to ascribe an instinct with such an aim to animals. But to include it in the human constitution seems sacrilegious; it contradicts too many religious presumptions and social conventions."[155] He does not know how much this new phase of his doctrine and movement merely repeats social and religious convention.

The historical phenomena discussed above should confirm the view that the hostility toward pleasure contained in the modern age's optimistic and pessimistic conception of humanity stems from the social situation of the bourgeoisie. The overstrained human ideal, the simultaneously sentimental and harsh notion of virtue and self-surrender, and the cult of an abstract heroism all share the same roots as individualistic egoism and nihilism, which they simultaneously contradict and interact with. The overcoming of this morality lies not in the positing of a better one, but in the creation of conditions under which their reason for existing is eliminated. The realization of morality, of a state of society and individuals that dignifies humanity, is not merely a psychological but a historical problem. By this insight, Hegel led idealism beyond its original boundaries. Freedom is "itself only a notion—a principle of the mind and heart," but it is destined "to develop into an objective phase."[156] "When a father inquired about the best method of educating his son in ethical conduct, a Pythagorean replied: 'Make him a citizen of a state with good laws.' "[157] Hence the task is not just a spiritual one. At present, it is also not a matter of good guidance and skillful selection. Whether future generations will live in dignity depends on the outcome of a period of struggles whose significance for his own viewpoint Hegel could not yet see. But when Freud scoffs that in certain people's view human brutality, violence, and cruelty are merely temporary and provoked by circumstances, indeed are "perhaps only consequences of the inexpedient social regulations which [man] has hitherto imposed on himself,"[158] even though he is summing up a dialectical theory in words that are all too shallow, this contested view—even in its pragmatist rendition—still corresponds to the present condition better than the biologistic metaphysics Freud subscribes to.

In no phenomenon is the relationship between practical ruthlessness and idealistic morality more pregnantly expressed than in the coexistence of the most tender, guileless, and good-natured consideration with hardened cynicism, a combination that is characteristic not only of the individual who gains power but also of the ideal and fantasy figures of this era. At home, the owners of huge fortunes and the politicians whose business entails a terrible ruthlessness are usually sensitive and warm-hearted people. The role of children has already been mentioned. The most gruesome day's work is framed by

the friendship and the smile bestowed upon the child. The lower the socially weak must bend, the more the symbol of the naturally weak, of children, and of venerable old men becomes exalted. To date, the impeded intellectual and instinctual development within European society has manifested itself in its blindness to the existence of animals. Their fate in our civilization reflects all of the coldness and callousness of the prevailing human type. Nevertheless, when such individuals consciously resort to especially bloody means, if they have not exactly discovered their love for animals, then they at least tend to assert it. "You call me cruel, even though I can't stand to watch an insect suffer," says Marat, as he recommends the killing of a series of political opponents.[159] Sentimental love for animals is one of the ideological institutions in this society. It is not a universal solidarity that naturally extends itself to encompass these living creatures, but rather an alibi for one's own narcissism and for the public consciousness, a test of one's conformity to the ideal morality, as it were. To acknowledge cruelty, or to admit to enjoying the cruelty one commits, would completely contradict the necessary mood of this age. A government whose most important instruments used each day include that terror in a negative sense, which offers the most terrible sacrifices to the nihilistic disposition of its own followers and shows a calculated indulgence toward their spontaneous participation, would abolish itself if it were to actually admit this. It dismisses nothing more fervently than the inspirational function of cruelty. Indeed, it has long been part of the business of terror, as it were, to trivially or completely deny it. Calvin praised the mildness of the Geneva city council as they were torturing his opponents at his request,[160] then kept silent about the torture in a report meant for the outraged city of Zurich.[161] Voices are heard that in terrorized Geneva "incredible calm" and "harmony among all the good"[162] prevail, and those announcements to the outside world had "no further effects."[163] "The judge is a sublimated executioner," Nietzsche says.[164] If that is true, then this state of affairs would give way if the judge really became conscious of it. Freud is right in saying that for cultural reasons the destruction drive always needs a pretext, a rationalization: the wickedness of the opponent, pedagogical purposefulness, the defense of honor, a war, or some popular uprising. Yet this rationalization does not counteract the degeneration of every human community, but only the present one. The

destruction drive, understood to be eternal, was until now continually reproduced by social arrangements and also held in check with the help of ideological practices. Under changed circumstances, the effectiveness and knowledge of common interests can determine the social relations of human beings; the "destruction drive" will no longer disrupt them. In the present epoch egoism has actually become destructive, both the fettered and the diverted egoism of the masses as well as the archaic egoistic principle of the economy, which still shows only its most brutal side. When the latter is overcome, the former can become productive in a new sense. The badness of egoism lies not in itself but in the historical situation; when this changes, its conception will merge with that of the rational society.

Since not only the practical but also the theoretical solution to the anthropological question can be attained only by the progress of society itself, and since the true nature of bourgeois man only becomes completely clear when he has changed, no philosophy and no clever educational methods will be adequate to this problem. The idealistic morality that hampers insight is surely not to be repudiated but historically realized, and hence it is still not to be dismissed even today. The question of how the fate of the universally denounced egoism, of the "destruction and death drive," would be shaped in a more rational reality finds no particular answer. But in recent times there have been signs pointing in one and the same direction for a solution. Some thinkers have, in contrast with the prevailing mentality, neither concealed, nor minimalized, nor accused egoism, but professed it: not that abstract and pitiful fiction, as it appears in the work of some political economists and of Jeremy Bentham, but pleasure, the highest degree of happiness, in which the satisfaction of cruel impulses is also included. They have idealized none of the drives given to them historically as primary; rather, they have stigmatized the distortion of the drives caused by the official ideology. These thinkers, since Aristippus and Epicurus, have been understood in modern history essentially only in terms of their opposition to the prevailing morality, for which they have been either defended or condemned. But there is a peculiar fact about these apologists of unrestricted egoism. When they investigated the despised drives for themselves and raised them to consciousness without rejection or minimalization, these forces lost their demonic power.

These hedonistic psychologists as a rule were portrayed as enemies of humanity, or praised on high by the latter. This happened most to Nietzsche. The superman, the most problematic concept with which the psychologist left the analytical realm Nietzsche had mastered, has been interpreted along the lines of the philistine bourgeois's wildest dreams, and has been confused with Nietzsche himself. The adventurous element seemed so appealing. Greatness, blood, and danger have always been cherished in paintings and monuments. But Nietzsche is the opposite of this inflated sense of power. His error lay in his lack of historical understanding of the present, which led him to bizarre hypotheses where clear theoretical knowledge was possible. He was blind to the historical dynamics of his time and hence to the way to his goal; therefore, even his most magnificent analysis, the genealogy of morals and of Christianity, for all of its subtlety, turns out to be too crude. But this prophet of Epicurean gods and of the pleasurableness of cruelty freed himself from the coercion to rationalize. When the will to cause suffering ceases to act "in the name" of God, "in the name" of justice, morality, honor, or the nation, it loses, by means of insight into itself, the terrible power it exercises so long as it conceals itself from its own carrier on the basis of ideological denial. It is taken up into the economy of real-life conduct for what it is and becomes rationally masterable. What turns it into a culturally destructive force is not the sublation of ideology and its basis, in other words the transition to a better society; rather, it is the unleashing of aggression which is presently reproduced and repressed for social reasons by the bourgeois authorities themselves, for example in war and national mobilization. Nietzsche himself cannot be thought of as an executioner, unlike many of his followers. His inoffensive existence stems from the deepest knowledge of psychic connections that may ever have existed in history. Nietzsche's precursors in the analysis of egoism and cruelty—Mandeville, Helvétius, de Sade—are as free, like himself, of Freud's condescending tolerance toward the destruction drive which "unfortunately" happens to exist, and of his resigned skepticism, as they are of the loving Rousseau's *ressentiment.*

By their own existence these psychologists seem to point out that the liberation from ascetic morality with its nihilistic consequences can bring about a human change in the opposite sense than internalization. This process sublates internalization; it does not cast the people

back to the previous psychic stage, as it were, as if that first process had never taken place, but raises them to a higher level of existence. But those thinkers have contributed little to making it a universal reality; that is mainly the task of the historical persons in whom theory and historical practice became a unity. In them the mechanisms of bourgeois psychology, both as determining forces of their life and as theoretical object, are less important than their world-historical mission. Insofar as humanity, with their help, enters a higher form of existence, it will change reality and thereby quickly acquire the freer psychic constitution of which the great number of fighters and martyrs for that general transformation is already possessed without psychological mediation, because the dark ethos of a dying epoch, an ethos that would deny them all happiness, no longer has any power over them.

According to Aristotle's aesthetic theory, the sight of suffering in tragedy causes pleasure.[165] People become purer by satisfying this drive, the pleasure in empathy. The application of Aristotle's theory to the modern age seems to be problematic; it has been reinterpreted and "moralized," even by Lessing, in the sense of idealistic morality. Catharsis through dramatic plays, through play in general, presupposes a changed humanity.