Friedrich Schlegel

Philosophical Fragments

Translated by
Peter Firchow

Foreword by
Rodolphe Gasché

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Foreword
Ideality in Fragmentation
Rodolphe Gasché

Just as theories of writing, and on the multiplicity of the text, have gained hold in the field of literary studies over the last two decades, so also has the assumption that an inescapable fragmentation has always already gotten the best of the idea of totality associated with the book, the *oeuvre,* the opus, and so on. Undoubtedly, these theories aim at conceptually making sense of a destruction of the book that has not only been under way for some time but also has affected more domains than the merely literary. And yet, it is generally taken for granted that "fragmentation" and "fragmentary writing" capture the energy and the effects of the disruption by writing, the complex of referrals, and the inner multiplicity constitutive of the text denuded in the destruction that is taking place. Whether the very concept of the fragment, as well as its history, is indeed sufficient to describe the *form* of the more significant literary experiments from the late nineteenth century up to the present, as well as to conceptualize the intrinsic difference(s), heterogeneity, plurality, and so forth, of the text, has to my knowledge never been attended to explicitly. What should be obvious is that if the fragment, or rather its notion, is to bring out the radical atotality of writing, or the text, it must be a notion of fragment thoroughly distinct from its (historically) prevailing notion(s). A concept of the fragment that merely emphasizes incompletion, residualness, detachment, or brokenness will not serve here. A piece struck by incompletion, a detached piece, a piece left over from a broken whole, or even an erratic piece, is structurally linked with the whole or totality of which it would have been, or of which it has been, a part. Such a fragment is a piece of an ensemble, possible or constituted at one point. It receives its very meaning from that ensemble that it thus posits and presupposes rather than challenges. Yet more often than not, this is the concept of fragment and fragmenta-

tion that one encounters in texts of criticism where reference is made to the disruption of totality by writing and textuality. It is the classical, pre-Romantic concept of the fragment. More promising, therefore, might be the early German Romantic reflections on this notion. Indeed, much of the renewed interest in the writings of Friedrich Schlegel and Novalis is based to a large extent on the premise that the early Romantics' theory and practice of the fragment prefigure the discoveries associated with contemporary theories on writing and textuality. Although the early Romantics' fragment is still indebted to the history of a genre that must be traced back to Montaigne's *Essais*, Pascal's *Pensées*, and the entire tradition of the English and French moralists—it is well established that Friedrich Schlegel introduced the form of the fragment into German literature after the strong impression he received from the publication in 1795 of Chamfort's *Pensées, maximes et anecdotes*—the Romantic fragment is not a *pensée*, maxim, saying, opinion, anecdote, or remark, all of which are marked by only relative incompletion, and which receive their unity from the subject who has authored them. Although Friedrich Schlegel refers to it as the "Chamfortian form," the Romantic fragment is, as Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy have shown, "a determinate and deliberate statement, assuming or transfiguring the accidental and involuntary aspects of fragmentation." The Romantic fragment "aims at fragmentation for its own sake."[1] Rather than a piece to be understood from the whole of which it would be a remainder, or a broken part, the Romantic fragment is a genre by itself, characterized by a concept of its own. This *concept*, rather than the Romantic fragment's literary, rhetorical, or stylistic form—it is indeed questionable whether the very concept of the Romantic fragment is ever enacted on the level of the signifier—is what shall concern us hereafter.

Before analyzing in some detail what this concept amounts to, it must be noted that the fragments that embody what later came to be known as the Romantic literary ideal were written in an amazingly short period of time (during the two years from 1798 to 1800 that the *Athenaeum* lasted) and are also largely the result of Friedrich Schlegel's obsession with the genre. Against the sometimes overt hostility on the part of the other members of the group, including his own brother, to practice the fragmentary genre, and to publish more fragments in the journal, Friedrich stubbornly maintained the Romantic exigency. It is thanks to this determination by a single person—Friedrich Schlegel and his engrossment with the form in question—that there exists a Romantic genre at all. Deeply personal reasons seem to have motivated him in pursuing this ideal, namely, the difficulty, to which many critics have pointed, in disciplining his intellectual energy. Moreover, a discrepancy between

his creative abilities and his monumental plans added to his developing a habit of jotting down his thoughts at the moment they occurred. As a result, Friedrich Schlegel filled notebook after notebook with "notes written on the spur of the moment." Indeed, the fragments published between 1798 and 1800—the *Critical Fragments,* the *Athenaeum Fragments,* and the *Ideas*—constitute only a very small part of the ensemble of his attempts to catch his burgeoning thoughts at the moment of their genesis. By the time of his death, approximately 180 notebooks existed, half of which have survived.[2] The Chamfortian genre, with its demand for concise expression, had therefore to become the ideal and most appropriate literary form for fixing (and communicating) the inexorable flow of his thoughts. But this very same excess of thought also, more often than not, prevented Schlegel from fine-tuning his notes in accordance with the form of the fragment. In Maurice Blanchot's words, the fragments often appear to be for Schlegel "a complacent self-indulgence, rather than the attempt to elaborate a more rigorous mode of writing."[3] Yet the paradox remains that although Schlegel's fragments are of uneven value, rarely even distinguishable from maxims, aphorisms, notes, thoughts, opinions, and remarks, they were to become the manifesto of the Romantic exigency. What we have advanced as reasons for Schlegel's personal predilection for the genre in no way explain that fate. Moreover, the fact that these fragments only rarely conform in style and form to the fragmentary exigency itself makes their success even more intriguing. The question I would like to raise here then concerns an additional reason that would explain the thrust Schlegel's fragments were to acquire. As I will argue, this other reason lies in Schlegel's encounter with Kant. More precisely, it is from the recontre between a "characteristic weakness" (Eichner) in Schlegel (i.e., his inability to develop and systematically present his insights, and to carry out his innumerable projects) and Kant's theory of the transcendental ideas that the exigency or concept of fragmentation was born. It is this encounter that guards writing fragmentarily from becoming the mere reflection of Schlegel's own discord or disorder and that allows the fragment to have a closure other than the perfect sentence of the aphorism. If the Romantic fragment achieves the task of introducing, in Blanchot's terms, "a totally new mode of fulfillment (*accomplissement*),"[4] then this becomes rigorously possible only through a cross-fertilization between the Romantics' practice of writing and the Kantian doctrine, which, as we shall see, deals with the universal conditions of completion.

It is certainly true that the Romantics did not explicitly develop a theory of the fragment. There is no such theory to be found in the pub-

lished fragments, but they contain an ongoing reflection on the very concept of the fragment. In *The Literary Absolute*, Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy have argued, in a manner consistent with what Walter Benjamin already suggested in his dissertation, "Der Begriff der Kunstkritik in der deutschen Romantik" (1920), that "although it is not entirely or simply philosophical, romanticism [i.e., the Jena Romanticism] is rigorously comprehensible (or even accessible) only on a philosophical basis, in its proper and in fact unique (in other words, entirely new) articulation with the philosophical."[5] If I contend that the fragments attempt to elaborate a *concept* of the fragment—a concept that remains clearly discrepant from the literary devices on which the written fragments rely[6]—it is also to make the point that the Romantic fragment is a *philosophical* conception.

With the foregoing references to "Der Begriff der Kunstkritik" and *The Literary Absolute*, I have made it evident from what angle I shall broach the problematic of the Romantic fragment. I shall approach its problematic from a philosophical perspective, armed, as it were, with a thesis that if developed further than I can hope to do here would complement the analyses and findings by Benjamin and the authors of *The Literary Absolute*. Traditionally, Jena Romanticism has been traced back to Fichte's transcendental philosophy. Benjamin still follows that line of interpretation when he seeks to demarcate the revolutionary conceptions of the early Romantics from Weimar classicism. It is certainly the case that Fichte exercised a decisive influence on the theoreticians of Romanticism. Schlegel's first notebooks are a clear sign of their preoccupation with Fichte's thought, and so are Novalis's studies on Fichte. But however illuminating such derivation of Romanticism from Fichte's metaphysics may be, it does not allow for a clear recognition of the originality of the position. What is truly new about it can come into view only if Romantic thought is seen to arise, as does Fichte's metaphysics, from possibilities opened up in Kant's philosophy. The originality of *The Literary Absolute* has been to argue that rather than merely applying some schemes found in Kant (or for that matter in Fichte), and transforming them in some original fashion, early Romanticism represents—together and in distinction, from Idealism properly speaking, and the thought of Hölderlin—a third, genuinely new philosophical position in the aftermath of critical philosophy. With these two other positions, early Romanticism shares, in spite of all the differences, the "first stages of Idealism," namely, the task of "completion, in the strongest sense of the word. The goal is to have done with partition and division, with the separation constitutive of history; the goal is to construct, to produce, to effectuate what even at the origin of history was already thought of as a

lost and forever inaccessible 'Golden Age.' "[7] But as we shall see, the originality of the Romantic position consisted in arguing that such completion could always be achieved only in a singular and finite way. It is this paradox around which Romantic theory revolves—according to which the universal can be achieved only in a manner that is each time singular—that led the early Romantics to consider art as a paradigm for thought, and to conceive of philosophy as accomplishing itself as art. Yet although this unique philosophical position arises from possibilities opened up by Kant's philosophical legacy, neither Benjamin nor the authors of *The Literary Absolute* have tried to clarify what these possibilities are. Benjamin explicitly puts aside any discussion concerning the relation between Romantic and Kantian theories of art, as beyond the scope of his monography,[8] whereas Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy largely assume the reader's familiarity with these possibilities. I shall develop here the thesis that the Romantic position, and in particular the theory of fragmentation, is understandable (that is, distinguishable in what it philosophically puts forward) only if it is seen to derive, elaborate on, and enact a series of implications that follow from Kant's reflections on the presentability of ideas.

Before taking up this problematic, I shall characterize the Romantic position in some detail. First, however, this: fragmentation does not exclude systematic intention and exposition. If this is indeed the case, it is not primarily because any reading of the fragments reveals an indisputably coherent system of thought. Nor does the fact that the Romantics practiced continuous genres as well—that is, properly theoretical expositions of their doctrine—explain this link between fragment and system. Fragmentation and systematic intentions are not exclusive for fundamental reasons: a fragment, in the Romantic sense, is the only possible presentation they could conceive of the system. The Romantics' conception takes place within the horizon of the notion of the system that they inherit and revive through a reflection on its presentability. In the often-quoted *Athenaeum Fragment* 53, Schlegel notes that "it's equally fatal for the mind to have a system and to have none. It will simply have to decide to combine the two." If the system is, "according to the way many philosophers think, a regiment of soldiers on parade" (*Athenaeum Fragment* 46), then it is fatal for the mind. Yet without systematic exigency, thought does not live up to its concept and remains stuck with the manifold. In *Literary Notebooks,* Schlegel remarks: "All philosophy that is not systematical is rhapsodic"; in other words, it is an ensemble of unconnected pieces merely stitched together. On the other hand, he continues, "every system is a rhapsody of masses and a mass of rhapsodies." Now the idea of the system is nothing less than the idea

of totality ("Totality is the systematic idea"). Yet "even the greatest system is merely a fragment."[9] The inevitable exigency of the system can thus be achieved only in a manner that is fragmentary. But it is nothing less than the system that takes shape in the fragment. By combining system and fragment in this fashion, the Romantics were able to avoid the dogmatic and sclerotic connotations that come with the notion of the system, and to ward off the specter of abstraction associated with system building, while supporting at the same time the traditional demand. This intrinsic relation of system and fragment has the additional meaning that all fragments are systems *in nuce*. In *Athenaeum Fragment* 206 we read: "A fragment, like a miniature work of art, has to be entirely isolated from the surrounding world and be complete in itself like a porcupine." Fragments are individuals, singular organic totalities, that is, systems in miniature. Indeed, as the *Literary Notebooks* remark, "The more organic something is, the more systematic it is.—The system is not so much a *species* of form as the *essence* of the work itself." Or: "A system alone is properly a work."[10] In short, then, the following equation pertains: fragment = system = work = individual. It would thus seem that Schlegel confines the synthetic power of absolute unity to the punctual entities of the fragment alone. In the closed-off individualities of the fragment, unity is achieved in chaos, but at the expense of any systematic relation as the ab-soluteness, or isolation, of the fragment suggests. A lack of coherence, or of "a-systasy," as Schelling called it, would characterize the fragmentary universe. But as *Athenaeum Fragment* 242 holds, "All individuals are systems at least in embryo and tendency." They are the seeds for future systems. Schlegel, indeed, uses the term "project" synonymously with "fragment." Peter Szondi has noted that "the fragment is conceived as 'the subjective embryo of a developing object,' i.e. as preparation of the longed-for synthesis. Rather than the not-yet-achieved, or what has remained a detached piece, the fragment is perceived as anticipation, promise."[11] The fragmentary universe, however incoherent, is thus made up of entities heavy with potential systems. But these fragments, complete in themselves as individualities, yet incomplete at the same time in that they are only embryos of developing systems—isolated and yet striving at a whole—are not simply without all systematic relation. Even if the fragment is (merely) "the failing expression of totality," as Manfred Frank has argued, it can be understood as such only "if nonetheless it has its place in the negative frame of a system."[12] As a matter of fact, does not Schlegel himself suggest that systems are made up entirely of fragments? More important, however, is the following: *Ideas* 48 claims that "every thinking part of an organization should not feel its limits without at the

same time feeling its unity in relation to the whole." Indeed, if "idea" is for Schlegel another concept for "fragment," then fragments, like ideas, point "toward the heart of things," or more precisely, toward the center, toward what orients all individual things (see *Ideas* 155). The fragments thus long for a higher unity, but this higher unity, the "system of fragments," is itself made up again of "a chain or garland of fragments" (*Athenaeum Fragment* 77). In other words, the higher unity that the fragments long for, and that they contain within themselves as a seed, is only another individuality. Schlegel writes in *Athenaeum Fragment* 242: "Aren't all systems individuals just as all individuals are systems at least in embryo and tendency?" Consequently, the totality that is sought by the fragment is an always singular totality, a totality that is therefore also necessarily plural, and thus incomplete. To conclude, fragmentation constitutes the properly Romantic vision of the system. It conceives of the absolute under the form of the individual, of totality as being at the same time finite and plural. But this is not yet all: if fragmentation is indeed the Romantic vision of the system, it is because "system" for the Romantics means not "the so-called systematic ordering of an ensemble, but that by which and as which an ensemble holds together . . . and establishes itself for itself in the autonomy of the self-jointure."[13] With the system, they conceive of the *production* of the whole, of what *makes* an ensemble of pieces a whole or a totality; and this closing upon itself of an ensemble can occur, they hold, only under the form of a work, an individuality—in short, a fragment. The fragment thus captures, as one would say today, the event character of the system, of the interlinkage of the pieces of a whole. If fragmentation is thus the specifically Romantic thought of the system, it is (as will be come obvious later on, because the production of totality is thought by them as a self-production) a self-jointure of what makes up a whole. In contradistinction from the Idealist position strictly speaking—Hegel, for instance—according to which the system consists of an ordering totally transparent to itself, the early Romantics think the system through fragmentation, that is, as presenting itself, not in a pure medium of thought and in absolute figurelessness, but as always an individuality, and hence, in principle, multiple. But with these elaborations on the relation between the Romantic fragment and the system—which we engaged in order to show that the genre of fragmentation does not for essential reasons exclude a coherent unity of thought, even though this unity can be achieved only in the form of a fragment—we have also already characterized the Romantic position itself. For the Romantics, the philosophy of the system is an aesthetic philosophy. For them the ideality and absoluteness of the whole, of the totality, are thinkable only in

terms of an individuality, that is, as a sensible, and hence intrinsically plural, unity. For them the question of the presentability (*Darstellung*) of the manifold's gathering into one remains an irreducible question. In this sense, the Romantics are closer to Kant than to the Idealists, with whom they share their theoretical concerns. It is this insistence of the question of the presentation of what unifies that has led them to seek the unity of thought in art. Art, indeed, stands for the irreducibility of presentation. If beauty becomes the unifying idea by which all the Kantian oppositions become sublated, this sublation takes place in the realm of the *Darstellung* itself.[14] It takes place in an aesthetic speculation that yields to become a work of art itself, and in which philosophy accomplishes itself as art. Within the landscape of Idealism in general, the very possibility that the *unifying idea* (of the beautiful) can seek presentation as *beautiful idea,* and that unification hence is always necessarily aesthetic, sensible, and manifold, in other words, fragmentary—this is what constitutes the Romantic vision and demarcates it from the Idealism of Fichte and Hegel, as well as from the poetry of poetry of Hölderlin.

In *The Literary Absolute,* Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy hold that although Schlegel had been forced to abandon the term "fragment" by other members of the group, the fragments entitled "Ideas," published in 1800 in the *Athenaeum,* are engaged, from a philosophical point of view, in a deepening of the concept of the fragment. Indeed, even if the fragments of the *Ideas* are no longer fragments strictly speaking, in that they are not written collectively and have a unifying title, they further deepen, as the authors put it, the idea of the subject, that is, of self-conception and self-production as an interminable process. But what is an idea for Schlegel in the first place? In *Athenaeum Fragment* 121, he writes: "An idea is a concept perfected to the point of irony, an absolute synthesis of absolute antitheses, the continual self-creating interchange of two conflicting thoughts." In an idea, synthesis of opposites occurs; they lose their individuality and dissolve in it. An idea, therefore, is (in the same way as a work) formed (*gebildet*), "everywhere sharply delimited, but within those limits limitless and inexhaustible" (*Athenaeum Fragment* 297). But the idea is a synthetic concept perfected to the point of irony, Schlegel insists, that is, to refer to the aforementioned *Fragment* once again, a concept that in spite of its faithfulness to itself, and homogeneity, is "nonetheless exalted above itself [*über sich selbst erhaben ist*]." An idea, consequently, continuously transcends the synthesis, or sublation that it achieves. It is destructive of the form of the idea itself as not fully adequate to its concept. An idea that unifies and brings into infinite interchange two absolutely antithetical thoughts is always

only a self-presentation of the idea as such, and must therefore, ironically, destroy its own actualization. If ideas are called "infinite, independent, unceasingly moving, godlike thoughts"—the idea of God being "the Idea of ideas" (*Ideas* 10 and 15)—it is in order to point not only to the continual interchange of what is sublated in the idea but to one infinite strife of the idea to approximate itself, to make idea and its presentation alike. Although Schlegel was a lifelong avid reader of Plato, such an understanding of "idea," as infinitely inappropriate to its own self-presentation, does not belong to the order of the *proteron te physei*. Nor is the Schlegelian concept of idea to be assimilated with the speculative idea, that is, the idea as the unity of the ideal and the real. As Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy put it, "The idealistic 'step' has been effectuated (in the motif of infinitization), but not without a kind of obscure resistance to idealism itself, or more precisely, not without a sort of (quite unexpected) folding back of idealism into Kant, and of the transgression of finitude into the finite itself."[15] The Romantic notion of the idea is, indeed, more Kantian than Platonic or Idealist; and if between fragment and idea there is a close (or rather, deepening) connection, it is certainly appropriate to inquire, however briefly, into Kant's theory of the idea.

As Kant readily acknowledges in *Critique of Pure Reason*, his own use of the term "idea"—with which Plato designated "something which not only can never be borrowed from the senses but far surpasses even the concepts of understanding . . . inasmuch as in experience nothing is ever to be met with that is coincident with it"—is dependent on Plato, but only as far as the spirit of Plato's doctrine of the ideas is concerned. By following Plato's intentions, rather than certain things he explicitly said about the ideas, Kant, in developing his own concept of the idea, claims to have understood Plato "better than he has understood himself."[16] But what, then, are ideas in the Kantian sense? In very general terms, they are concepts of reason to which no corresponding object can be given in sensation, and which therefore can only be approximated in an infinite process. Such a dictionary definition, however, does not allow us to grasp the specificity and range of Kant's concept of idea. It certainly does little to disarm the popular opinion, that however defined, ideas are only ideas, in other words, superfluous and void. To show that ideas in the Kantian sense represent a valid problematic, and indeed, one that flows from Kant's (and much of the tradition's) conception that the activities of the mind are primarily judgmental activities, I turn to his discussion of the notion of idea in *Critique of Pure Reason*, more precisely, to "The First Book of the Transcendental Dialectic."

As Kant's elaborations in the context of the *First Critique* on the formal (i.e., logical) function of reason under the form of the syllogism (*Vernunftschluss*) demonstrate, universal concepts that do not originate in understanding, but that "depend on thought alone," serve as principles (of sorts) to provide unity to the manifold judgmental acts of understanding. Through the syllogism and its universal concepts, reason, or pure thought for that matter, gives a unity to knowledge (i.e., to the manifold of cognitive judgments) that is called "the unity of reason, and which is quite different in kind from any unity that can be accomplished by the understanding" (*CPR*, p. 303). Reason achieves such unification of the manifold of understanding through the a priori synthetic principles and rules that it spontaneously formulates. They represent a knowledge on the basis of concepts alone and that is implied in the very acts of judgments of knowledge. It is the a priori knowledge of the unconditioned, of the whole series of conditions—synthetic knowledge, in short. Kant calls these universal synthetic concepts that accompany all our intellectual efforts to understand phenomena "ideas." As opposed to the pure concepts of understanding, which contain nothing more than "the unity of reflection upon appearances, in so far as appearances must necessarily belong to a possible empirical consciousness," the ideas, or concepts of reason, contain the unconditioned to which all experience is subordinate, yet which itself can never be an object of experience, and which must be obtained by mere reflection on the acts of cognitive judgments. The transcendental concepts of reason—the ideas—are, writes Kant, "none other than the concept[s] of the *totality* of the *conditions* for any given conditioned," that is, the unconditioned or the ground of the synthesis of the conditioned. They are concepts of the "totality in the synthesis of conditions," of the "*allness* (*universitas*) or totality of the conditions" or, as he also calls it, the *absolute* (*CPR*, p. 316). He writes: "The transcendental concept of reason is directed always solely towards absolute totality in the synthesis of conditions, and never terminates save in what is absolutely, that is, in all relations, unconditioned." Reason, Kant continues, occupies itself with prescribing "to the understanding its direction towards a certain unity of which it has itself no concept, and in such a manner as to unite all the acts of the understanding, in respect of every object, into an *absolute* whole" (*CPR*, p. 318). While Kant had called the concepts of understanding, that is, the forms of all experience, *categories*, he now names the formal elements involved in all inferring by reason, *transcendental ideas*. Whereas categories serve to *understand* phenomena, transcendental ideas that pertain to the knowledge about phenomena serve to make sense of what is understood or known. Concepts of reason, or ideas,

make it possible to *conceive of or comprehend* (*begreifen*) judgments regarding perceptions. Kant can thus, in the section entitled "The Transcendental Ideas," advance the following definition of *ideas:*

> I understand by idea a necessary concept of reason to which no corresponding object can be given in sense-experience. Thus the pure concepts of reason, now under consideration, are *transcendental ideas*. They are concepts of pure reason, in that they view all knowledge gained in experience as being determined through an absolute totality of conditions. They are not arbitrarily invented; they are imposed by the very nature of reason itself, and therefore stand in necessary relation to the whole employment of understanding. Finally, they are transcendent and overstep the limits of all experience; no object adequate to the transcendental idea can ever be found within experience. (*CPR*, pp. 318–19)

Although this definition is biased to the extent that the frame of the *First Critique* makes it center on the *regulative* use of the ideas for theoretical cognition, the basic features that inform Kant's elaboration on the same topic in the two other critiques transpire clearly. First, ideas are concepts of reason, of pure thought—in other words, of thought engaged not with determining objects but with the judgmental statements about them. Second, they are *necessary* concepts in that they have an indispensable function to play in the economy of the faculties of the mind, here, for cognition's extended and consistent employment. Their task is that of "extending the unity of understanding," a task that, as the role of reason in the syllogism demonstrates, is not only consistent with theoretical understanding, but indispensable to it. Such an attempt to bring conditioned knowledge to completion by deriving it from and subsuming it under the ideas is a task required by "the very nature of human reason" as evidenced in the form of syllogistic inferring (*CPR*, p. 316). Where such completion is not achieved, and the complete system of causes is not established, reason plunges, as Kant writes, "into an abyss of skepticism."[17]

Although the ideas do not help understanding to gain knowledge of objects, they help such knowledge "receive better and more extensive guidance" (*CPR*, p. 320). They have, in other words, no constitutive, but only a regulative, role to play in the domain of theoretical reason. The definition quoted above also stresses that from the viewpoint of knowing, ideas are transcendent. They cannot become objects of experience, or known. But the fact that they cannot be known in no way pre-

cludes their indispensable regulative use in knowing. In addition, to resist all cognitive apprehension does not mean to resist thinking.

First, ideas can be shown to represent precise concepts, and to be limited in number. In analogy to what he had done with respect to the categories, Kant, in the *First Critique,* deduces the ideas from the various logical forms that characterize the formal employment of reason in the judgment about judgments that is the syllogism. In this analysis of the different forms of inferring, that is, of judging mediately, Kant distinguishes three kinds of inference that yield, indeed, three, and only three classes of principles, or transcendental ideas: "the *first* containing the absolute (unconditioned) *unity* of the *thinking subject,* the *second,* the absolute *unity of the series of the conditions of appearance,* the *third* the absolute *unity of the condition of all objects of thought in general.*" These three classes of ideas exhaust the "unconditioned synthetic unity of all conditions in general" with which pure concepts of reason are concerned (*CPR,* p. 323). The names under which these three kinds of ideas are usually known are freedom, immortality, and God. Although theoretical reason cannot establish any objective reality for these concepts, its own need to extend the function of reason in order to achieve completion shows that these concepts are thinkable without contradiction. These *problematic* concepts are necessary hypothetical concepts for theoretical reason. They are not objects of possible experience, but all experience as experience presupposes them. They lie beyond the boundaries of the sensible, and constitute the "world" of the supersensible. Yet, the very transcendence of the transcendental ideas, or concepts of pure thought, is not an obstacle to their being thought (one may well surmise that they are the thinkable par excellence). But, "I cannot think without a category," Kant remarks in *The Critique of Practical Reason* (*CPrR,* p. 107); that is, I cannot think without also applying pure concepts of understanding to merely intelligible objects. "To each employment of reason with respect to objects, pure concepts of the understanding (categories) are required, for without them no object can be thought" (*CPrR,* p. 141). However, in serving to think the intelligible and supersensible, the categories are freed of their hold in experience; their pure use is thus theoretically empty. Indeed, since sensible intuition is lacking here, no knowledge of what nonetheless is thought can be expected. Yet although the thinking of the intelligible does not a priori determine its objects, the pure use of the categories with respect to the ideas does not imply that "as mere form(s) of thought," they would be completely empty and without significance (*Bedeutung*) (*CPrR,* p. 141). On the contrary, in such thinking, *reality* is supplied to these ideas. Reality and intuitive presentation are indeed entirely differ-

ent things. Reality becomes bestowed on noumena by practical reason, that is, by that kind of thinking that applies categories to them independently of the categories' hold in intuitions. In practical reason, Kant writes, one is not concerned with furnishing intuitions for ideas—this is, as seen, impossible—"but only with whether they do have objects or not. This reality is supplied by pure practical reason" (*CPrR,* p. 141). Through practical reason, the idea acquires actuality and concreteness. This is the reason why, in the realm of morality, ideas can themselves play a role that goes far beyond the one that is theirs in the realm of cognition. In the domain of practical reason, ideas have a constitutive function. Kant notes:

> Here they become immanent and constitutive, since they are the grounds of the possibility of realizing the necessary object of pure practical reason (the highest good); for otherwise they are transcendent and merely regulative principles of speculative [that is, theoretical] reason, which is charged with the task not of assuming a new object beyond experience but only of approaching perfection in its employment within experience. (*CPrR,* pp. 140–41)

At this point, it is necessary to recall that Kant, in the chapter "On Ideas in General" in the *First Critique,* had determined the ideas as a kind of representation, indeed, as its highest form. Within the genus of representation in general, the idea hovers above representation with consciousness. The latter, we are told, includes subjective perception (sensation) and objective perception (knowledge). Objective perception is either intuitive or conceptual. A concept, however, can be empirical or pure. A pure concept, Kant continues, "in so far as it has its origin in the understanding alone (not in the pure image of sensibility), is called a *notion.* A concept formed from notions and transcending the possibility of experience is an *idea* or concept of reason" (*CPrR,* p. 314). It follows from this that an idea is a representation by a concept of the concepts that serve to represent representation with consciousness. Representation here translates the German *Vorstellung,* a term Kant uses to designate the operation by which the different faculties that constitute the mind bring their respective objects before themselves. Yet when Kant claims that in spite of the impossibility of intuitively representing (and thus knowing) the ideas, they nonetheless play a decisive role in the realm of cognition, or that in the moral realm they acquire an at least partial concretization, he broaches the question of the becoming present of the highest, but intuitively unpresentable representation that is the

idea. This is the problem of the *presentation,* or *Darstellung* of the idea, and it is rigorously distinct from that of representation. The issue is no longer how to depict, articulate, or illustrate something already present yet resisting adequate discursive or figural expression, but of how something acquires presence—reality, actuality, effectiveness—in the first place. The question of *Darstellung* centers on the coming into presence, or occurring, of the ideas.

This problem is addressed (and solved) in the *Second Critique* in a section entitled "Of the Typic of Pure Practical Judgement." To fully appraise Kant's achievement in this part, it is necessary first to indicate how the first two *Critiques* relate to each other. In the history of philosophy it is commonly accepted that the genesis of German Idealism, that is, of post-Kantian thought, is largely the result of the primacy that practical philosophy gains over theoretical thought. From Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason,* Fichte concluded that the principle of thinking, of reason itself, is moral freedom. Undoubtedly, the very notion of practical reason that Fichte invokes is already an interpretation of what Kant understood by that term.[18] But it is also clear that the way for the ascendancy of practical reason is prepared, if not already effectuated, in Kant's text of 1788. In the preface to the *Second Critique,* Kant notes that the demonstration that pure reason is actually practical, or what amounts to the same, that transcendental freedom is real, provides "the keystone of the whole architecture of the system of pure reason and even of speculative reason." Although the concept of freedom, that is, of the entirely self-determining causality of the thinking subject, is at best for theoretical reason, a problematic concept whose objective reality it can never hope to assure, theoretical reason needs this concept "in its use of the concept of causality, for this freedom is required if reason is to rescue itself from the antinomy in which it is inevitably entangled when attempting to think the unconditioned in a causal series" (*CPrR,* p. 3). Even though the postulation of the objective reality of those objects that had only a problematic status in theoretical reason in no way implies that any positive use could be made of those objects for theoretical purposes, this very postulation substantiates the recourse to ideas that theoretical reason has to make in order to overcome its antinomies. Consequently, the inquiry into how ideas are presented—into how they acquire objective reality or practical necessity—is the touchstone on which the system rests. With it the theoretical exigency for merely formal concepts of unity appears to have its substantive ground in the law of morality. It also follows from this that the Kantian problematic of *Darstellung* is an eminently practical problem.

It has been observed that the section called "Typic" parallels the section entitled "The Schematism of the Pure Concepts of Understanding" in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. It is true that both sections play a crucial role in their respective edifices. Kant himself has pointed to the analogical role that they perform. Kant's theory on schematism served as an answer to the question of how, in a judgment, things as heterogeneous as an intuition and a pure concept of understanding can possibly come together. The need for a theory on typic, by contrast, arises from the difficulty of subsuming particular actions in the sensible world under the law of reason, to which, moreover, no intuition can be adequate. But apart from the fact that this impossibility of providing an adequate intuition for practical rules or concepts makes the problem faced by practical judgment more difficult than that of theoretical judgments where the schemata allow for a mediation of sorts between the sensible and the intelligible, there is perhaps a more decisive dissymmetry between the two theories. Undoubtedly, the question of how pure concepts of understanding—categories—can be applied to intuitions is not without relation to the question of how concepts of reason—ideas—can become the causes of moral action. Between categories and ideas a certain kinship exists. Freed of their anchorage in experience, categories become—as Kant argues in the *Second Critique* with respect to the idea of freedom—ideas of reason. Conversely, one ought to be able to show that when ideas become restricted so as to be able to refer to objects of sense, they have turned into categories. And yet, considering the architectonic of Kantian thinking, one wonders whether perhaps a section in the *First Critique*, on how ideas lend themselves to becoming *formal concepts* of theoretical reasoning and syllogistic inferring, would not have represented the true symmetric counterpart to that presented in "Typic."

I recall that the problem Kant faces in "Typic" is that of how the supersensible idea of freedom, an idea of which no intuition is possible, and which escapes empirical experience, can nevertheless become real, that is, take on sensible existence. In Kant's own words:

> A practical rule of pure reason, as *practical*, concerns the existence of an object, and, as practical *rule* of pure reason, implies necessity with reference to the occurrence of an action; hence it is a practical law, not a natural law because of empirical determining grounds but a law of freedom by which the will is determinable independently of everything empirical and merely through the conception of a law in general and its form. Because of this, and since all instances of possible

> actions are only empirical and can belong only to experience and nature, it seems absurd to wish to find a case in the world of sense, and thus standing under the law of nature, which admits the application of a law of freedom to it, and to which we could apply the supersensuous ideal of the morally good, so that the latter could be exhibited *in concreto*. (*CPrR*, p. 70)

And yet even the commonest mind, Kant adds, constantly applies ideas in a practical sense. Thus, the question that necessarily arises is that of the bridge between what is and what ought to be, what is sensuous and what is "merely" ideal. At issue is a third something that could mediate between the morally good—or the law of freedom for which by virtue of its supersensuous nature nothing corresponding in sensuous intuition can be found—and something concrete in the order of sense, or nature. Without this third instance, practical judgments are impossible.

The seemingly hopeless difficulty can, however, be overcome, precisely since

> The subsumption under a pure practical law of an action which is possible to me in the world of sense does not concern the possibility of the *action* as an event of the world of sense. This possibility is a matter to be decided by the theoretical use of reason according to the law of causality, a pure concept of the understanding for which reason has a schema in sensuous intuition. The physical causality or the condition under which it occurs belongs among the concepts of nature, whose schema is sketched by the transcendental imagination. (*CPrR*, p. 71)

In a practical judgment, consequently, the question is not one of subsuming an empirical, physical action motivated by the moral principle, under that very law. Only theoretical judgment can deal with events of sense such as concrete actions, and that according to the law of causality. In contrast to physical causality, which becomes established by means of concepts of nature for which imagination provides the mediating schema, "here we are concerned not with the schema of a case occurring according to laws but with the schema (if this word is suitable here) of a law itself, because the determination of the will through law alone and without any other determining ground (and not the action with reference to its consequences) connects the concept of causality to conditions altogether different from those which constitute natural connection" (*CPrR*, p. 71). In other words, what is determined in the practical judgment is whether the will as will yields to the law. The practical judgment concerns the becoming concrete of the ideal law under the form of

the will. Whether such a will as which the supersensuous idea of freedom takes shape truly leads to empirical, physical actions according to the law, is an altogether different issue, for whose causality theoretical reason (with its schemata) alone is responsible. Practical judgment is solely concerned with the becoming actual, concrete, real of the idea of freedom as will. This is what Kant means when he claims that in the case of the practical judgment, he is concerned with the schema of the law itself. Let us recall that schemata mediate between concepts of understanding and sense perceptions by presenting the a priori concepts' unifying function in terms of the pure forms of sensibility, that is, through temporalization (successive presentation) and spatialization (simultaneous presentation). Without singularizing the concepts of understanding as images would do, the *pure images* of the schemata, as Kant also calls them, provide the unifying concepts with a *pure* sensible form. However, since the idea of a causality that is not sensuously conditioned is a supersensuous concept, "no intuition and hence no schema can be supplied for the purpose of applying it *in concreto*." With the possibility of intuitive presentation being excluded, the only other possibility left is to present such an idea through understanding, that is, the faculty that ordinarily provides the laws for the empirical manifold. Kant writes: "Thus the moral law has no other cognitive faculty to mediate its application to objects of nature than the understanding (not the imagination); and the understanding can supply to an idea of reason not a schema of sensibility, but a law" (*CPrR*, p. 71). Hence, in contrast to what happens in theoretical judgment, where a priori intuitions of the categories permit sense-data to be subsumed under intelligible rules or laws, concepts of understanding, or laws, serve in practical judgment to explain the possible application of the morally good to the will. Understanding provides a *law for the law*, an *intellectual presentation*, rather than a sensuous one, of what ought to be. Without such an intellectual presentation of the moral law, the will would not yield to the idea of freedom. Kant continues: "This law [required to present the moral law], as one which can be exhibited *in concreto* in objects of the senses, is a natural law (*Naturgesetz*). But this natural law can, for the purpose of judgement, be used only in its formal aspect, and it may, therefore, be called the *type* of the moral law" (*CPrR*, p. 72). The type, in contradistinction from the schema, thus achieves the required presentation by which the intuitively unpresentable ideas become real, effective, and actual, by intellectually "illustrating" them in terms of the pure, that is, formal aspects of the natural law. The natural law is always at hand, Kant adds. In its merely formal sense of lawfulness in general, the order of nature, phenomena under law (that is, a pure construct of understand-

ing), makes it possible for ideas of reason to find the hold in the will without which they would have no reality. Through the *type,* as the "image" of the organic nature of the sensuous world viewed exclusively from the lawfulness of its phenomena, freedom can become the determining ground of the will. This presentation of the ideas commonly referred to as superfluous and void secures their practical reality and necessity. As seen, it is not the reality of the intuitively objective, but that of the determining ground of the will. In practical reason, the transcendental ideas of the unity of the thinking subject, and by extension of immortality and God, acquire a practical reality in that they give the will its shape. As will, the ultimate synthetic concepts of reason, the ideas of completion, have thus taken on an objective practical reality. This presentation of the ideas is the substantive ground on which rests the merely hypothetical use of ideas in the kingdom of cognition.

This practical presentative reality of the ideas, however, is not total; it is only a partial concretization, Kant insists. The ideas' practical reality is as much an indication of the human being's finitude as is the human being's inability to know them. The very fact that the presentation of ideas is plural—we have seen that it divides into the hypothetical occurrence of ideas in the theoretical realm and their partial realization as determinants of the will in the practical realm—shows an intrinsic limit in the becoming effective or operative of the ideas. Yet, there is still a third kind of ideas that we have not mentioned: the aesthetical ideas. In the *Critique of Judgement,* Kant proposes the following definition:

> By an aesthetical idea I understand that representation of the imagination which occasions much thought, without any definite thought, i.e. any *concept,* being capable of being adequate to it; it consequently cannot be completely compassed and made intelligible by language. We easily see that it is the counterpart (pendant) of a *rational idea* (*Vernunftidee*), which conversely is a concept to which no *intuition* (or representation of the imagination) can be adequate. (*CJ,* p. 157)[19]

Before commenting on this definition it is imperative that I once again situate the *Third Critique,* in extremely succinct terms at least, with respect to the two preceding ones. Its declared function is to discover a bridge that links the heterogeneous realms investigated by the two previous *Critiques*. The analysis of judgment *as such* (i.e., of a judgment that is not determinant, but that exhibits its own subjective conditions—the reflective, merely formal, or aesthetic judgment) is to

provide this link. As is well known, the aesthetic judgment is double. It divides into the analytics of the beautiful and the sublime. Kant, in *Critique of Judgement,* proceeds to demonstrate that both these reflective judgments are rooted in a free play of the faculties that obeys a priori rules, and that thus explains the universal claims made by these judgments. Yet, the decisive bridging function of reflective judgment comes into light only when Kant argues that the free play between imagination and understanding that is constitutive of judgments on the beautiful brings these faculties into a minimal relation presupposed by all theoretical judgments; whereas the free play between imagination and reason is shown to animate these respective faculties to such an extent that it can be said to represent the minimal condition under which something like a practical judgment can occur. With this in mind I now turn back to the question about aesthetical ideas.

Aesthetical ideas are distinct from rational or intellectual ideas, that is, from ideas strictly speaking. Compared to the latter, which are representations of reason, aesthetical ideas are representations of the imagination as a productive faculty. Yet if Kant nonetheless calls these productions "ideas," it is "because they at least strive after something which lies beyond the bounds of experience and so seek to approximate to a presentation (*Darstellung*) of concepts of reason (intellectual ideas), thus giving to the latter the appearance of objective reality, but especially because no concept can be fully adequate to them as internal intuitions" (*CJ,* p. 157). By freeing itself from the strict law of association and yielding to principles that "occupy a higher place in reason," imagination works the material of nature up "into something different which surpasses nature." Nature is transgressed by nature itself, through a manipulation of the natural material that produces an excess of partial and supplementary representations (*Neben-* and *Teilvorstellungen*). Thus "an abundance of undeveloped material for the understanding" is brought forth (*CJ,* p. 160). Because these representations multiply their features, no definite concept is capable of exhausting and comprehending them. These aesthetical ideas help the poets "realize to sense, rational ideas of invisible beings," in short, ideas in the intellectual sense. But the manner in which such presentation to sense occurs is neither through logical presentation—that is, through a presentation of what lies within the concepts that we have of those ideas—nor by providing an example for them in the sensible world, since there is no possible way to present a rational idea adequately. Aesthetical ideas make ideas present to sense by producing an excess of supplementary representation, so that "more thought [is aroused by them] than can be expressed in a concept determined by words" (*CJ,* p. 158). But more im-

portant than the "actual" presentation that aesthetical ideas achieve of intellectual ideas is—as is evidenced by chapter 49 of the *Third Critique*—the fact that aesthetical ideas, by occasioning "more thought (which indeed belongs to the concept of the object) . . . than can in it be grasped or made clear," enlarge "the concept in an unbounded fashion." Aesthetical ideas indeed bring "the faculty of intellectual ideas (the reason) into movement" (*CJ*, p. 158). Kant writes:

> In a word, the aesthetical idea is a representation of the imagination associated with a given concept, which is bound up with such a multiplicity of partial representations in its free employment that for it no expression marking a definite concept can be found; and such a representation, therefore, adds to a concept much ineffable thought (*viel Unnennbares hinzu denken lässt*), the feeling of which quickens the cognitive faculties, and with language, which is the mere letter, binds up spirit also. (*CJ*, p. 160)

Aesthetical ideas neither help us cognize anything in particular nor compete with the idea's determination of the will. By contrast, aesthetical ideas serve to enliven the mind by bringing the faculty of the intellectual ideas into movement. They do this "by opening out to it the prospect into an illimitable field of kindred representations" of a given concept (*CJ*, p. 158). Aesthetical ideas hence create the subjective minimal conditions under which the mind can become receptive to ideas strictly speaking—to ideas in the first place—in both their theoretical and practical employment. The aesthetical ideas thus help to bridge the chasm that Kant had said existed between the domain of cognition and morality, by setting forth the minimal set of subjective dispositions required for both to be operative. But the aesthetical ideas provide (perhaps) much more than the subjective space and disposition for the double function of the ideas in the realms of theoretical and practical reason. They (perhaps) also set forth the conditions under which there can be different modes of the ideas' becoming effective or real, that is, of their presentation in general. Let me therefore return once again to the kind of presentation of ideas that takes place in aesthetical ideas.

In the production of aesthetical ideas, imagination as the faculty of presentation is set at liberty. This freedom enables imagination to unite the presentment of a concept with "the unbounded variety of possible forms accordant therewith," and to thus produce a presentation of that concept that includes "a wealth of thought to which no verbal expression is completely adequate" (*CJ*, pp. 170–71). Such an aesthetical idea

presents an idea of reason in that it shows these ideas to be inexhaustible. It presents the rational idea by signifying that there is always more to it than any concept can comprehend. Nature, Kant adds, is used in the aesthetical idea "on behalf of, and as a sort of schema for, the supersensible" (*CJ*, p. 171). Presentation occurs in the aesthetical idea through a pseudoschematization that itself clears the way for schematization properly speaking. In *Critique of Judgement,* Kant will argue as well that aesthetical ideas symbolize—that is, symbolically present—the morally good. This presentation is not to be confounded with the type-casting that makes ideas determinants for the will. Rather, by bringing the faculty of intellectual ideas into movement, the aesthetical idea only presents the idea of morality.[20] With this it lays the basis of morality, and opens the possibility of the type through which the idea becomes a law for moral action. It follows from this that the presentation of ideas by aesthetical ideas—a presentation distinct from that which occurs in the realm of cognition and morality—is, in principle at least, a condition as it were under which ideas can become real in either a theoretico-hypothetical or practical sense. Aesthetical ideas provide the mold for the becoming real of ideas in presentation.

If, as we have seen, the whole, or totality, is an idea, then all direct presentation of it, either by intuitions or (moral) examples, is in principle excluded. From a theoretical viewpoint, the concept of a whole cannot be experienced. Where the merely regulative role of the ideas in the realm of cognition is disregarded, and an attempt is made to extend knowledge to the supersensible, thought becomes entangled in dialectical antinomies. In practical reason, where ideas become real to the extent that they directly determine the will, this realization is only partial. Only a nonfinite being—God—could be said to be a full realization of the ideas. Because of these intrinsic limits to the presentation of the idea, all "theoretical experiential judgement [but practical judgment as well] remains necessarily a fragment, and knows itself as fragment as soon as it gains critical clarity about itself," in Ernst Cassirer's words.[21] The idea achieves presentative reality exclusively as fragment. All schematization or exemplification of ideas produces only fragments. Conversely, fragments, strictly speaking, are then ideas in presentation. They are not leftover pieces of an integral whole, broken parts of a former or anticipated totality; they are that whole itself *in actualitas*—the only way in which the supersensible substrate occurs, or becomes present. Fragmentation, consequently, rather than implying some loss or lack of presence, represents the *positive* mode in which presentation of the whole occurs. More precisely, it is an index of thinking's shift to

conceptualizing the very occurring, or coming into presence, of the idea.

Yet it is not Kant, but the Romantics, who proceed to think the presentation of ideas in terms of fragmentation. This, however, is not merely an innocent or arbitrary terminological change, but one that presupposes a paradigm shift, as it were. I shall characterize this shift in the following in an extremely schematic way. Yet before doing so, it must be emphasized that the distinctive traits of this paradigm shift of Romantic post-Kantian thought are not possible without the primacy of practical philosophy already alluded to. The Romantic notion of idea, of totality (*Ganzheit*) or allness (*Allheit*), is unmistakably an ethical notion. "Totality must always be ethical," Friedrich Schlegel writes. Ethicity is what, according to the *Literary Notebooks 1797–1801*, demarcates totality from unity (*Einheit*).[22] Unity, Schlegel remarks, proceeds from a homogeneous formation of the elements of a given ensemble. It is an economic aspect and "a necessary property of any work (*Werk*)." Thus, classical works have unity, but as Schlegel adds, only unity. Yet, since all elements are said to be infinitely divisible, unity is the result of abstraction and arbitrariness. However, if a work strives *also* to form its elements in a heterogeneous (*verschiedenartig*) fashion, if it "mixes and weaves together extremely heterogeneous (*heterogene*) components"—and such strife takes place in modern or progressive works—the unity of the work becomes ethical (*ethische Einheit*). Such ethical unity is ethical totality, or totality, for short.[23] With the emphasis on the ethical nature of the concept of totality, as opposed to the mere abstract, economic concept of unity, Schlegel clearly privileges the concept of the absolute developed by the *Second Critique*. He continues the practical problematic of presentation, that is, the question of the idea's realization. But in contradistinction from Kant, for Schlegel the main sphere for the becoming real of the idea is not primarily the sphere of human action. For Schlegel, totality, or the absolute, occurs in the work (*Werk*).

This shift, from the realm of the will to that of the work, however, does not mean that the becoming real of the idea through the type would simply have made room for the symbolic presentation analyzed in the *Critique of Judgement*. Still less does it mean that the question of presentation has become an aesthetic question, if one understands "aesthetic" in terms of the aestheticism that, as some have contended, follows from the Romantics' almost religious artistic affectations. If the *Third Critique* has unquestionably left its mark on the Jena Romantics, it is not only for its analysis of the minimal conditions for the theoretical and practical presentation of the ideas. What they have also been interested in, apart from Kant's analyses regarding the production of the

work of art—of what constitutes genius and of how taste combines with genius in the products of beautiful art—is that the absolute, or the universal, becomes realized in *singular* objects, i.e., in the individual works of art that are the objects of the equally singular judgments of taste. Indeed, to say that the presentation of the idea takes place, first and foremost, as work, or as art, has the dominant implication that all presentation of the idea is inevitably singular. This is undoubtedly a conclusion that becomes possible only in the aftermath of the three *Critiques,* and that Kant has not explicitly brought to bear as such on his own theory of the ideas. Fragmentation is the concept by which Schlegel tried to conceive of this inevitable individualization or singularization in the becoming real of the absolute. But this fragmentation does not affect particular ideas only. Nor is it limited to exploring the modes in which ideas become operative in theoretical knowledge, or in which they achieve their impact on the will. With the Romantic fragment, the question about presentation in general experiences a delimitation to a point where it concerns the presentation of the idea *as* idea. This is a problem that had been lying latent in Kant: it concerned the enigma of the inevitable plurality of what as the idea of the absolute could in principle only be one, as well as of the three classes of ideas—(self) presentation as God, the immortality of the soul, and freedom. The Romantic quest thus pertains to the self-production of the idea as such, prior to schematization and typization. Not only must the concept of presentation be understood here as a bringing about, or as Benjamin has shown, "according to the meaning it has in chemistry, that is, as the production of a substance by means of a determined process,"[24] but as centering on the coming into presence of the ideal in its ideality. The object of presentation is thus nothing less than the self-engendering of the idea, or the absolute. With this a new problem becomes manifest that is not explicitly addressed by Kant, and with which the question of presentation acquires a thrust—a universalist thrust, indeed—that it had not had with Kant, or before. It is a problem that only comes into view if the relation to self of the idea—a relation that the idea must entail *qua* idea (of totality, or allness)—is thought for itself, and moreover, in terms of self-production, self-determination, or self-engendering. As said earlier, this coming into presence of the idea in its ideality, of the idea as idea, is what the notion of fragmentation tries to capture, and it does so by making manifest that all such presentation is marked by singularity, or rather individuality. Schlegel's argument that the idea of art, as the real ground of all empirical artworks, must itself be understood as an individual work is a clear indication that the question of presentation is brought to bear on the very ideality of the idea. Whether in this case

Schlegel indeed committed a category mistake by mixing the levels of the general and the singular, as Benjamin has contended, is highly questionable. The very concept of idea that Schlegel refers to is not, *in its very ideality,* without the relation to self that—according to the Romantics—causes the individualization of the universal, or the absolute. Moreover, since the idea of art as a work takes shape as an invisible work that accommodates all visible works, the difference between the universal and the singular remains intact in a complex manner, even though in its very universality the idea becomes individualized. The idea is *absolutely* individualized.[25] The thought of the "absolute individuality" of the absolute totality is not, therefore, a *metabasis allo eis genos*.

In short, if the Romantic fragment can be demarcated from a notion of fragment that is a part of a (once) constituted or future whole, it is because it thematizes an essential fragmentation of the whole as such, owing to the idea's necessary individualizing presentation, or self-production. The Romantic fragment cannot be thought properly except if it is seen to articulate a problematic relative to the transcendental idea of totality—the idea, for short—that Kant's various investigations into the role of the ideas had made unavoidable. With the concept of the fragment, the theme of presentation is raised to a level that must be qualified as universal—it is shown to be constitutive of universality itself. In paradoxical terms: Only because the absolute is the fragment is there an absolute—absolute individuality.

To conclude, can this concept of a universal and essential incompletion of this whole, or of the idea in its ideality, and without which the whole or the idea would not be *itself,* guide us toward an understanding of the radical writing practices that since the end of the last century have determined what we now understand by literature? Undoubtedly, compared to the classical concept of the fragment, the Romantic fragment thematizes an incompletion that is universal, essential, and whose scope has no comparison to the incompletion to which the traditional notion of fragment alludes. Yet, without a radical recasting, the Romantic notion of fragment would be reductionist when applied to contemporary literary texts. Its focus lies on an *essential* incompletion, an incompletion that itself is a mode of fulfillment. Throughout our analysis of the Romantic concept of fragment, we have seen that it is in the positive form that the idea achieves itself. As fragment, totality occurs. After all, the Romantic fragment conceptualizes an incompletion that is a consequence of presentation as *self*-production. The tension that the Romantic fragment reveals to inhabit the idea results from the necessity that in order to be an idea, the idea must cast itself in the form of an individuality.

An incline, a declivity, or sorts, between two sorts of wholes, or totalities—the idea of totality and its self-presentation—causes an incompletion that is at the same time the ultimate fulfillment of the idea in absolute individuality. Yet it is doubtful whether such essential incompletion, or incompletion as a form of fulfillment, characterizes contemporary writing practices. The radicality of the contemporary texts, more cautiously, of some of its forms, is (perhaps) to be attributed to an inessential (but not, for that matter, arbitrary) incompletion. Such an incompletion, however, could in no way lend itself any more to closure. To call it fragmentary would be to erase a fracture that resists all dialectics of part and whole.

Notes

1. Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Literary Absolute: The Theory of Literature in German Romanticism*, trans. P. Barnard and C. Lester (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988), p. 41
2. Hans Eichner, Introduction, in Friedrich Schlegel, *Literary Notebooks 1797–1801* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), p. 5.
3. Maurice Blanchot, "The Athenaeum," trans. D. Esch and I. Balfour. In *Studies in Romanticism*, 22, no. 2 (1983), p. 172.
4. Ibid., p. 165.
5. Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, *The Literary Absolute*, p. 29.
6. From what follows, it should become clear that this discrepancy has its reasons not only in the biographical and psychological facts mentioned, as far as Schlegel is concerned, but perhaps in much more essential (that is, necessary) reasons that follow from the concept of the fragment itself.
7. Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, *The Literary Absolute*, p. 11.
8. Walter Benjamin, "Der Begriff der Kunstkritik in der deutschen Romantik" in *Gesammelte Schriften* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1974), vol. 1, 1, p. 64.
9. Friedrich Schlegel, *Literary Notebooks 1797–1801*, ed. H. Eichner (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), fragments 921, 922, 925, 927, and 930.
10. Ibid., fragments 893 and 931.
11. Peter Szondi, "Friedrich Schlegel und die romantische Ironie," in *Schriften* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1978), vol. 2, p. 20.
12. Manfred Frank, "Das 'fragmentarische Universum' der Romantik," in *Fragment und Totalität*, ed. L. Dällenbach and C. L. Hart Nibbrig (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1984), p. 219.
13. Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, *The Literary Absolute*, p. 46.
14. Ibid., p. 35.
15. Ibid., p. 64.
16. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. N. Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), p. 310. Hereafter abbreviated as *CPR*.
17. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. L. W. Beck (New York: Macmillan, 1988), p. 3. Hereafter abbreviated as *CPrR*.
18. See, for instance, Alexis Philonenko, "Fichte," in *Histoire de la philosophie*, ed. Y. Belaval (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), vol. 2, pp. 904ff.

19. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, trans. J. H. Bernard (New York: Hafner, 1951), p. 157. Hereafter abbreviated as *CJ*.

20. See chapter 59 in particular. Also see Donald W. Crawford, *Kant's Aesthetic Theory* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), p. 157.

21. Ernst Cassirer, *Kants Leben und Werk* (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1921), pp. 328–29.

22. Schlegel, *Literary Notebooks 1797–1801*, p. 20.

23. The preceding quotes refer to fragments 46, 210, 217, 441, 444, 891, and 1565.

24. Benjamin, "Der Begriff der Kunstkritik in der deutschen Romantik," p. 109.

25. Ibid., p. 20.

Critical Fragments

1. Many so-called artists are really products of nature's art.

2. Every nation wants to see represented on stage only its own average and superficial aspects; unless you provide it with heroes, music, or fools.

3. When Diderot does something really brilliant in his *Jacques,** he usually follows it up by telling us how happy he is that it turned out so brilliantly.

4. There is so much poetry and yet there is nothing more rare than a poem! This is due to the vast quantity of poetical sketches, studies, fragments, tendencies, ruins, and raw materials.

5. Many critical journals make the mistake which Mozart's music is so often accused of: an occasionally excessive use of the wind instruments.

6. People criticize Goethe's poems for being metrically careless. But are the laws of the German hexameter really supposed to be as consistent and universally valid as the character of Goethe's poetry?

7. My essay on the study of Greek poetry is a mannered prose hymn to the objective quality in poetry. The worst thing about it, it seems to me, is the complete lack of necessary irony; and the best, the confident assumption that poetry is infinitely valuable—as if that were a settled thing.

8. A good preface must be at once the square root and the square of its book.

* *Jacques le Fataliste,* published first in German in 1792 (French edition 1796); and inspired by Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy.*

9. Wit is absolute social feeling, or fragmentary genius.

10. One should drill the hole where the board is thickest.

11. Up to now, nothing really solid, nothing thorough, powerful, and skillful, has been written against the ancients; especially against their poetry.

12. One of two things is usually lacking in the so-called Philosophy of Art: either philosophy or art.

13. Bodmer* likes to call every simile "Homeric" that merely happens to be lengthy. So too, one hears jokes being called "Aristophanic" that have nothing classic about them except their lack of restraint and obviousness.

14. In poetry too every whole can be a part and every part really a whole.

15. The character of the stupid master in Diderot's *Jacques* perhaps does more honor to the author's skill than the character of the foolish servant. The former is just barely brilliantly stupid. But even that was probably more difficult to achieve than a completely brilliant fool.

16. Though genius isn't something that can be produced arbitrarily, it is freely willed—like wit, love, and faith, which one day will have to become arts and sciences. You should demand genius from everyone, but not expect it. A Kantian would call this the categorical imperative of genius.

17. Nothing is more contemptible than sorry wit.

18. Novels have a habit of concluding in the same way that the Lord's Prayer begins: with the kingdom of heaven on earth.

19. Many poems are loved in the way nuns love the Saviour.

20. A classical text must never be entirely comprehensible. But those who are cultivated and who cultivate themselves must always want to learn more from it.

21. Just as a child is only a thing which wants to become a human being, so a poem is only a product of nature which wants to become a work of art.

* Johann Jacob Bodmer (1698–1783), Swiss critic and poet, among the first to challenge the supremacy of Gottsched's neoclassicism in Germany; also significant for his work on medieval German literature.

22. The flame of the most brilliantly witty idea should radiate warmth only after it has given off light; it can be quenched suddenly by a single analytic word, even when it is meant as praise.

23. Every good poem must be wholly intentional and wholly instinctive. That is how it becomes ideal.

24. The most insignificant authors have at least this similarity to the great Author of the Heavens and the Earth: that after the day's work is done, they have a habit of saying to themselves, "And behold, what he made was good."

25. The two main principles of the so-called historical criticism are the Postulate of Vulgarity and the Axiom of the Average. The Postulate of Vulgarity: everything great, good, and beautiful is improbable because it is extraordinary and, at the very least, suspicious. The Axiom of the Average: as we and our surroundings are, so must it have been always and everywhere, because that, after all, is so very natural.

26. Novels are the Socratic dialogues of our time. And this free form has become the refuge of common sense in its flight from pedantry.

27. The critic is a reader who ruminates. Therefore he ought to have more than one stomach.

28. Feeling (for a particular art, science, person, etc.) is divided spirit, is self-restriction: hence a result of self-creation and self-destruction.

29. Gracefulness is life lived correctly, is sensuality intuiting and shaping itself.

30. In modern tragedy, fate is sometimes replaced by God the Father, more often by the devil himself. How is it that this hasn't yet inspired some scholar to formulate a theory of the diabolic genre?

31. The classification of works of art into naive and sentimental* might perhaps be fruitfully applied to criticism as well. There are sentimental critiques that lack only a vignette and a motto in order to be perfectly naive. For a vignette, a postilion blowing his horn. For a motto, a phrase from old Thomasius at the close of one of his academic lectures: *Nunc vero musicantes musicabunt cum paucis et trompetis.*

* An allusion to Schiller's famous essay "Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung" ("On Naive and Sentimental Poetry") (1796). Christian Thomasius (1655–1728) was professor of law at the University of Halle as well as a writer on philosophical subjects. The sentence at the close of the fragment is dog Latin for "Now the musicians will really make music with kettledrums and trumpets."

32. The chemical classification of disintegration into dry and wet varieties is also applicable in a literary sense to the dissolution of writers who are doomed to sink into obscurity after reaching their greatest heights. Some evaporate, others turn to water.

33. The overriding disposition of every writer is almost always to lean in one of two directions: either not to say a number of things that absolutely need saying, or else to say a great many things that absolutely ought to be left unsaid. The former is the original sin of synthetic, the latter of analytic minds.

34. A witty idea is a disintegration of spiritual substances which, before being suddenly separated, must have been thoroughly mixed. The imagination must first be satiated with all sorts of life before one can electrify it with the friction of free social intercourse so that the slightest friendly or hostile touch can elicit brilliant sparks and lustrous rays—or smashing thunderbolts.

35. One sometimes hears the public being spoken of as if it were somebody with whom one had lunch at the Hôtel de Saxe during the Leipzig Fair. Who is this public? The public is no object, but an idea, a postulate, like the Church.

36. Whoever hasn't yet arrived at the clear realization that there might be a greatness existing entirely outside his own sphere and for which he might have absolutely no feeling; whoever hasn't at least felt obscure intimations concerning the approximate location of this greatness in the geography of the human spirit: that person either has no genius in his own sphere, or else he hasn't been educated yet to the niveau of the classic.

37. In order to write well about something, one shouldn't be interested in it any longer. To express an idea with due circumspection, one must have relegated it wholly to one's past; one must no longer be preoccupied with it. As long as the artist is in the process of discovery and inspiration, he is in a state which, as far as communication is concerned, is at the very least intolerant. He wants to blurt out everything, which is a fault of young geniuses or a legitimate prejudice of old bunglers. And so he fails to recognize the value and the dignity of self-restriction, which is after all, for the artist as well as the man, the first and the last, the most necessary and the highest duty. Most necessary because wherever one does not restrict oneself, one is restricted by the world; and that makes one a slave. The highest because one can only restrict oneself at those points and places where one possesses infinite power, self-

creation, and self-destruction. Even a friendly conversation which cannot be freely broken off at any moment, completely arbitrarily, has something intolerant about it. But a writer who can and does talk himself out, who keeps nothing back for himself, and likes to tell everything he knows, is very much to be pitied. There are only three mistakes to guard against. First: What appears to be unlimited free will, and consequently seems and should seem to be irrational or supra-rational, nonetheless must still at bottom be simply necessary and rational; otherwise the whim becomes willful, becomes intolerant, and self-restriction turns into self-destruction. Second: Don't be in too much of a hurry for self-restriction, but first give rein to self-creation, invention, and inspiration, until you're ready. Third: Don't exaggerate self-restriction.

38. The only thing one can criticize about the model of Germany, which a few great patriotic authors have constructed, is its incorrect placement. It doesn't lie behind, but before us.

39. The history of the imitation of ancient poetry, especially as practiced in foreign countries, is among other things useful in permitting us to derive most easily and fully the important concepts of unconscious parody and passive wit.

40. In the sense in which it has been defined and used in Germany, aesthetic is a word which notoriously reveals an equally perfect ignorance of the thing and of the language. Why is it still used?

41. Few books can be compared with the novel *Faublas** for social wit and social exuberance. It is the champagne of the genre.

42. Philosophy is the real homeland of irony, which one would like to define as logical beauty: for wherever philosophy appears in oral or written dialogues—and is not simply confined into rigid systems—there irony should be asked for and provided. And even the Stoics considered urbanity a virtue. Of course, there is also a rhetorical species of irony which, sparingly used, has an excellent effect, especially in polemics; but compared to the sublime urbanity of the Socratic muse, it is like the pomp of the most splendid oration set over against the noble style of an ancient tragedy. Only poetry can also reach the heights of philosophy in this way, and only poetry does not restrict itself to isolated ironical passages, as rhetoric does. There are ancient and modern poems that are pervaded by the divine breath of irony throughout and informed by a

* *Les Amours du Chevalier de Faublas* (1789–1790), a semi-licentious, semi-picaresque novel by Jean-Baptiste Louvet de Couvret (1760–1797), French writer and revolutionary.

truly transcendental buffoonery. Internally: the mood that surveys everything and rises infinitely above all limitations, even above its own art, virtue, or genius; externally, in its execution: the mimic style of an averagely gifted Italian *buffo*.

43. Hippel,* so Kant says, had a commendable maxim that urged one to add the spice of profundity to the tasty dish of a whimsical style. Why doesn't Hippel find more followers for this maxim, since after all Kant gave his approval to it?

44. You should never appeal to the spirit of the ancients as if to an authority. It's a peculiar thing with spirits: they don't let themselves be grabbed by the hand and shown to others. Spirits reveal themselves only to spirits. Probably here too the best and shortest way would be to prove one's possession of the only true belief by doing good works.

45. Observing the peculiar fondness of modern poets for Greek terminology in naming their works, one is reminded of that naive remark of a Frenchman on the occasion of proclaiming the new Republican holidays: *que pourtant nous sommes menacés de rester toujours François*. Some of the names used in classifying the poetry of the Middle Ages might give rise to future scholarly investigations similar to those which concern themselves with why Dante called his masterpiece a divine comedy. There are tragedies which, if one has got to Hellenize their names in some way, would best be called sorry mimes. They seem to be baptized according to that concept of tragedy which is to be found once only in Shakespeare but occurs much more frequently in the history of modern art: a tragedy is a drama in which Pyramus commits suicide.

46. We are closer to the Romans and can understand them better than the Greeks; and yet a real feeling for the Romans is much rarer than for the Greeks, because there are fewer synthetic than analytic people. For one can have a feeling for nations too, for historical as well as moral individuals, and not simply for practical genres, arts, and sciences.

47. Whoever desires the infinite doesn't know what he desires. But one can't turn this sentence around.

48. Irony is the form of paradox. Paradox is everything simultaneously good and great.

49. One of the most important techniques of the English drama and

* Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel (1741–1796), German novelist, imitator of Sterne, and precursor of Jean Paul.

novel is guineas. They're used a great deal especially in the final cadenza when the bass instruments begin to have hard work of it.

50. How deeply rooted in man lies the desire to generalize about individual or national characteristics! Even Chamfort says: "*Les vers ajoutent de l'ésprit à la pensée de l'homme qui en a quelquefois assez peu; et c'est ce qu'on appelle talent.*" Is this common French usage?

51. To use wit as an instrument for revenge is as shameful as using art as a means for titillating the senses.

52. Instead of description, one occasionally gets in poems a rubric announcing that here something or other should really have been described, but the artist was prevented from doing so and most humbly begs to be excused.

53. In respect to their unity, most modern poems are allegories (mysteries, moralities) or novellas (adventures, intrigues), or a mixture or dilution of these.

54. There are writers who drink the absolute like water; and books in which even the dogs refer to the infinite.

55. A really free and cultivated person ought to be able to attune himself at will to being philosophical or philological, critical or poetical, historical or rhetorical, ancient or modern: quite arbitrarily, just as one tunes an instrument, at any time and to any degree.

56. Wit is logical sociability.

57. If some mystical art lovers who think of every criticism as a dissection and every dissection as a destruction of pleasure were to think logically, then "wow" would be the best criticism of the greatest work of art. To be sure, there are critiques which say nothing more, but only take much longer to say it.

58. Just as mankind prefers a great to a just action, so too the artist wants to ennoble and instruct.

59. Chamfort's pet idea that wit is a substitute for an impossible happiness—a small percentage, as it were, of the unpaid debt on the greatest good for which a bankrupt nature must settle—is not much better than Shaftesbury's* idea that wit is the touchstone of truth, or the more vulgar prejudice that moral ennoblement is the highest end of the

* Anthony Ashley-Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713), English moral philosopher and one of the shaping spirits of the eighteenth century.

fine arts. Wit is its own end, like virtue, like love and art. This brilliant man felt, so it seems, the infinite value of wit, and since French philosophy is inadequate for an understanding of this, he sought instinctively to join what was best in him to what is first and best in that philosophy. And as a maxim, the thought that the wise man must confront fate always *en état d'épigramme* is beautiful and truly cynical.

60. All the classical poetical genres have now become ridiculous in their rigid purity.

61. Strictly understood, the concept of a scientific poem is quite as absurd as that of a poetical science.

62. We already have so many theories about poetical genres. Why have we no concept yet of poetical genre? Perhaps then we would have to make do with a single theory of poetical genres.

63. Not art and works of art make the artist, but feeling and inspiration and impulse.

64. There should be a new *Laokoön* to determine the limits of music and philosophy. For a proper appreciation of a number of literary works we still need a theory of grammatical music.

65. Poetry is republican speech: a speech which is its own law and end unto itself, and in which all the parts are free citizens and have the right to vote.

66. The revolutionary rage for objectivity in my early philosophical writings has something of that fundamental rage which was so enormously widespread during Reinhold's* philosophical consulship.

67. In England, wit is at least a profession if not an art. There everything becomes craftsmanlike, and in that island even the *roués* are pedants. So too their wits: they introduce an absolute willfulness—whose illusion gives to wit its romantic and piquant quality—into reality and so manage to live wittily. Hence their talent for folly. They die for their principles.

68. How many authors are there among writers? Author means creator.

69. There is a negative feeling which is much better, but also much rarer than an absence of feeling. One can love something deeply precisely because one doesn't possess it: at least it whets the appetite and leaves no aftertaste. Even a decided incapacity of which one is completely aware,

* Karl Leonhard Reinhold (1758–1823), German philosopher and follower of Kant.

or else a strong antipathy, is an impossibility for someone who is totally deficient. It presupposes at least a partial capacity and sympathy. Like the Platonic Eros this negative sense is probably also the son of overabundance and of dearth. It is born when somebody possesses only the spirit and not the letter; or, the other way around, when he possesses only the material and formal requisites, the dry hard shell of productive genius without the kernel. In the former case, we get pure tendencies, projects that are as wide as the blue sky, or, at the very best, outlines of fantasies; in the latter, that harmoniously shaped artistic banality of which the greatest English critics are such classics. The distinguishing mark of the former type, of the negative spiritual sense, is continual desire combined with continual incapacity, of always wanting to hear, but never hearing.

70. People who write books and imagine that their readers are the public and that they must educate it soon arrive at the point not only of despising their so-called public but of hating it. Which leads absolutely nowhere.

71. A sense for the witty without the possession of wit is the ABC of tolerance.

72. Actually they rather like it when a work of art is a bit obscene, especially in the middle; except that decency mustn't be directly offended and everything must come out right in the end.

73. What is lost in average, good, or even first-rate translations is precisely the best part.

74. It's impossible to offend someone if he doesn't want to be offended.

75. Notes are philological epigrams; translations are philological mimes; some commentaries, where the text is only the point of departure or the non-self, are philological idylls.

76. There is a type of ambition which would rather be the first among the last than the second among the first. That is the ancient kind. There is another ambition which would rather, like Tasso's Gabriel,

Gabriel, che fra i primi era il secondo,*

be the second among the first than the first among the second. That is the modern kind.

* "Gabriel, who among the first was the second." From Torquato Tasso's *La Gerusalemme Liberata*, Canto I, 11, 4.

77. Maxims, ideals, imperatives, and postulates have all now become the small change of morality.

78. Many of the very best novels are compendia, encyclopedias of the whole spiritual life of a brilliant individual. Works which have this quality, even if they are cast in a completely different mold—like *Nathan** —thereby take on a novelistic hue. And every human being who is cultivated and who cultivates himself contains a novel within himself. But it isn't necessary for him to express it and write it out.

79. German books become popular because of a famous name, or because of a great personality, or because of good connections, or because of hard work, or because of mild obscenity, or because of perfect incomprehensibility, or because of harmonious banality, or because of many-sided dullness, or because of a constant striving toward the absolute.

80. I'm disappointed in not finding in Kant's family tree of basic concepts the category "almost," a category that has surely accomplished, and spoiled, as much in the world and in literature as any other. In the mind of natural skeptics it colors all other concepts and intuitions.

81. Carrying on a polemic against an individual has something petty about it, like selling retail. If an artist doesn't want to involve himself wholesale in controversy, then he should at least choose individuals who are classic and have eternally lasting merit. When that isn't possible, as for example in the lamentable case of self-defense, then the individuals must be raised as much as possible to the level of ideal prototypes of objective stupidity and objective foolishness; for these are, like everything objective, infinitely interesting, as subjects worthy of the higher polemics ought to be.

82. Spirit is natural philosophy.

83. Manners are characteristic edges.

84. From what the moderns aim at, we learn what poetry should become; from what the ancients have done, what it has to be.

85. Every honest author writes for nobody or everybody. Whoever writes for some particular group does not deserve to be read.

86. The function of criticism, people say, is to educate one's readers! Whoever wants to be educated, let him educate himself. This is rude: but it can't be helped.

* That is, Lessing's play, *Nathan der Weise* (1779).

87. Since poetry is of infinite worth, I don't understand why it should be merely more valuable than something or other that is also of infinite worth. There are artists who don't think too highly of art, for that's impossible, but who aren't free enough to raise themselves above their own greatest effort.

88. Nothing is more piquant than a brilliant man who has manners or mannerisms. That is, if he has them: but not at all, if they have him. That leads to spiritual petrification.

89. Isn't it unnecessary to write more than one novel, unless the artist has become a new man? It's obvious that frequently all the novels of a particular author belong together and in a sense make up only one novel.

90. Wit is an explosion of confined spirit.

91. The ancients are not the Jews, Christians, or English of poetry. They are not an arbitrarily chosen artistic people of God; nor do they have the only true saving aesthetic faith; nor do they have a monopoly on poetry.

92. Like animals, the spirit can only breathe in an atmosphere made up of pure life-giving oxygen mixed with nitrogen. To be unable to tolerate and understand this fact is the essence of foolishness; to simply not want to do so, is the beginning of madness.

93. In the ancients we see the perfected letter of all poetry; in the moderns we see its growing spirit.

94. Mediocre writers who advertise a little volume as if they were about to exhibit a great giant should be compelled by the literary police to have their book stamped with the following motto: *This is the greatest elephant in the world, except himself.**

95. Harmonious banality can be quite useful to the philosopher; it can serve as a bright beacon for the as-yet-uncharted territories of life, art, or science. The philosopher will avoid the man and the book that the harmonious bore admires and loves; and he will at least be suspicious of any opinion that is staunchly held by more than a few of the species.

96. A good riddle should be witty; otherwise nothing remains once the answer has been found. And there's a charm in having a witty idea which is enigmatic to the point of needing to be solved: only its meaning should be immediately and completely clear as soon as it's been hit upon.

* The sentence in italics is in English in the original.

97. The salt of expression is piquancy, in powdered form. It comes coarsely and finely ground.

98. The following are universally valid and fundamental laws of written communication: (1) one should have something to communicate; (2) one should have somebody to whom one wants to communicate it; (3) one should really be able to communicate it and share it with somebody, not simply express oneself. Otherwise it would be wiser to keep silent.

99. Whoever isn't completely new himself judges the new as if it were old; and the old seems ever new until one grows old oneself.

100. The poetry of one writer is termed philosophical, of another philological, of a third, rhetorical, etc. But what then is poetical poetry?

101. Affectation doesn't arise so much out of a striving to be new as out of a fear of being old.

102. To want to judge everything is a great fallacy, or a venial sin.

103. Many works that are praised for the beauty of their coherence have less unity than a motley heap of ideas simply animated by the ghost of a spirit and aiming at a single purpose. What really holds the latter together is that free and equal fellowship in which, so the wise men assure us, the citizens of the perfect state will live at some future date; it's that unqualifiedly sociable spirit which, as the beau monde maintains, is now to be found only in what is so strangely and almost childishly called the great world. On the other hand, many a work of art whose coherence is never questioned is, as the artist knows quite well himself, not a complete work but a fragment, or one or more fragments, a mass, a plan. But so powerful is the instinct for unity in mankind that the author himself will often bring something to a kind of completion at least directly with the form which simply can't be made a whole or a unit; often quite imaginatively and yet completely unnaturally. The worst thing about it is that whatever is draped about the solid, really existent fragments in the attempt to mug up a semblance of unity consists largely of dyed rags. And if these are touched up cleverly and deceptively, and tastefully displayed, then that's all the worse. For then he deceives even the exceptional reader at first, who has a deep feeling for what little real goodness and beauty is still to be found here and there in life and letters. That reader is then forced to make a critical judgment to get at the right perception of it! And no matter how quickly the dissociation takes place, still the first fresh impression is lost.

104. What's commonly called reason is only a subspecies of it: namely,

the thin and watery sort. There's also a thick, fiery kind that actually makes wit witty, and gives an elasticity and electricity to a solid style.

105. If one looks to the spirit and not the letter, then the whole Roman nation, including the senate and all triumphant generals and Caesars, was cynical.

106. Nothing is in its origins more contemptible and in its consequences more hideous than the fear of ridicule. Hence, for example, the servitude of women and many another cancer of mankind.

107. The ancients are masters of poetical abstraction; the moderns are better at poetical speculation.

108. Socratic irony is the only involuntary and yet completely deliberate dissimulation. It is equally impossible to feign it or divulge it. To a person who hasn't got it, it will remain a riddle even after it is openly confessed. It is meant to deceive no one except those who consider it a deception and who either take pleasure in the delightful roguery of making fools of the whole world or else become angry when they get an inkling they themselves might be included. In this sort of irony, everything should be playful and serious, guilelessly open and deeply hidden. It originates in the union of *savoir vivre* and scientific spirit, in the conjunction of a perfectly instinctive and a perfectly conscious philosophy. It contains and arouses a feeling of indissoluble antagonism between the absolute and the relative, between the impossibility and the necessity of complete communication. It is the freest of all licenses, for by its means one transcends oneself; and yet it is also the most lawful, for it is absolutely necessary. It is a very good sign when the harmonious bores are at a loss about how they should react to this continuous self-parody, when they fluctuate endlessly between belief and disbelief until they get dizzy and take what is meant as a joke seriously and what is meant seriously as a joke. For Lessing irony is instinct; for Hemsterhuis it is classical study; for Hülsen* it arises out of the philosophy of philosophy and surpasses these others by far.

109. Gentle wit, or wit without a barb, is a privilege of poetry which prose can't encroach upon: for only by means of the sharpest focus on a single point can the individual idea gain a kind of wholeness.

110. What if the harmonious education of artists and nobility is merely a harmonious illusion?

* August Ludwig Hülsen (1765–1810), German philosopher and educator, friend of Fichte and the Schlegel brothers.

111. Chamfort was what Rousseau liked to pretend to be: a genuine cynic, more of a philosopher in the classical sense than a whole legion of dried-up school philosophers. Though at first he made common cause with the fashionable world, he nonetheless lived and died a free and honorable man, and despised the petty fame of a great writer. He was Mirabeau's friend. His most precious legacy is his ideas and observations on the art of living: a book full of solid wit, deep feeling, delicate sensitivity, mature reason, and firm masculinity; and of suggestive traces of the most vital passion, and at the same time exquisitely and perfectly expressed. Without comparison, the highest and best of its type.

112. The analytic writer observes the reader as he is; and accordingly he makes his calculations and sets up his machines in order to make the proper impression on him. The synthetic writer constructs and creates a reader as he should be; he doesn't imagine him calm and dead, but alive and critical. He allows whatever he has created to take shape gradually before the reader's eyes, or else he tempts him to discover it himself. He doesn't try to make any particular impression on him, but enters with him into the sacred relationship of deepest symphilosophy or sympoetry.

113. Voss* is Homerian in his *Louise;* and in his translation, Homer is Vossian.

114. There are so many critical journals of varying sorts and differing intentions! If only a society might be formed sometime with the sole purpose of gradually making criticism—since criticism is, after all, necessary—a real thing.

115. The whole history of modern poetry is a running commentary on the following brief philosophical text: all art should become science and all science art; poetry and philosophy should be made one.

116. The Germans, it is said, are the greatest nation in the world in respect to their cultivation of artistic sensibility and scientific spirit. Quite so—only there are very few Germans.

117. Poetry can only be criticized by way of poetry. A critical judgment of an artistic production has no civil rights in the realm of art if it isn't itself a work of art, either in its substance, as a representation of a nec-

* Johann Heinrich Voss (1751–1826), German poet and translator of Homer; his *Luise*, a narrative poem on domestic subjects, was published in 1795.

essary impression in the state of becoming, or in the beauty of its form and open tone, like that of the old Roman satires.

118. Isn't everything that is capable of becoming shopworn already twisted or trite to begin with?

119. Sapphic poems must grow and be discovered. They can neither be produced at will, nor published without desecration. Whoever does so lacks pride and modesty. Pride: because he tears his inmost essence out of the holy stillness of his heart and throws it into the crowd, to be stared at, crudely or coldly—and that for a lousy *da capo* or a gold coin. And it will always be immodest to put oneself up for exhibition, like an old painting. And if lyrical poems are not completely unique, free, and true, then, as lyrical poems, they're worthless. Petrarch doesn't belong here: for the cool lover doesn't utter anything except elegant platitudes; and actually he is romantic [novelistic], not lyrical. But even if another creature existed who was so coherently beautiful and classical that she could show herself naked, like Phryne* before all the Greeks, still there no longer exists an Olympian audience to appreciate such a performance. And it *was* Phryne. Only cynics make love in the market-place. It is possible to be a cynic and a great poet: the dog and the laurel have equal title as ornaments on Horace's statue. But Horatian is not Sapphic by far. Sapphic is never cynical.

120. Whoever could manage to interpret Goethe's *Meister* properly would have expressed what is now happening in literature. He could, so far as literary criticism is concerned, retire forever.

121. The simplest and most immediate questions, like Should we criticize Shakespeare's works as art or as nature? and Are epic and tragedy essentially different or not? and Should art deceive or merely seem to do so? are all questions that can't be answered without the deepest consideration and the most erudite history of art.

122. If anything can justify that rather exalted conception of the Germans that one meets with here and there, then it is our complete neglect of and contempt for such ordinarily good writers as every other nation would receive with pomp and circumstance into their Johnson†; and also

* An Athenian courtesan of the fourth century B.C., supposedly the model of Apelles' picture, *Aphrodite Anadyomene*, and Praxiteles' statue of the Cnidian Aphrodite. According to legend, she was acquitted of a capital charge when she bared her breasts before the judges.

† That is, Samuel Johnson's *The Lives of the Poets* (1779–1781).

the rather general tendency to criticize freely and be quite demanding of what we recognize to be the best and too good to be appreciated by foreigners.

123. It is thoughtless and immodest presumption to want to learn something about art from philosophy. There are many who start out that way as if they hope to find something new there, since philosophy, after all, can't and shouldn't be able to do more than order the given artistic experiences and the existing artistic principles into a science, and raise the appreciation of art, extend it with the help of a thoroughly learned history of art, and create here as well that logical mood which unites absolute tolerance with absolute rigor.

124. At the heart and in the whole of the best modern poems, there is rhyme, the symmetrical repetition of similarity. Such rhyme not only rounds out a poem admirably but can also have a highly tragic effect. For example, the champagne bottle and the three glasses which old Barbara places on the table before Wilhelm during the night. I'd like to call it gigantic or Shakespearean rhyme, for Shakespeare is a master of it.

125. Sophocles already believed naively that his representations of people were better than the real thing. Where did he portray a Socrates, a Solon, an Aristides, or any number of others? How often can't we repeat this same question for other poets? Haven't even the greatest artists reduced the stature of real heroes in their creations? And yet this madness has become a common thing, from the emperors of poetry down to its lowliest bailiffs. This habit may be salutary for poets, like any consistent limitation, for condensing and concentrating their powers. But a philosopher who'd let himself be infected by it would deserve at the very least to be deported from the realm of criticism. Or could it be that there isn't an infinite variety of goodness and beauty in heaven and on earth that hasn't been dreamed of in poetry?

126. The Romans knew that wit is a prophetic faculty; they called it nose.

127. It's indelicate to be astonished when something is beautiful or great; as if it could really be any different.

From *Blütenstaub*

1. Even philosophy has blossoms. That is, its thoughts; but one can never decide if one should call them witty or beautiful.

2. If in communicating a thought, one fluctuates between absolute comprehension and absolute incomprehension, then this process might already be termed a philosophical friendship. For it's no different with ourselves. Is the life of a thinking human being anything else than a continuous inner symphilosophy?

3. If one becomes infatuated with the absolute and simply can't escape it, then the only way out is to contradict oneself continually and join opposite extremes together. The principle of contradiction is inevitably doomed, and the only remaining choice is either to assume an attitude of suffering or else ennoble necessity by acknowledging the possibility of free action.

4. In order to come to terms with vulgarity in the strong and easy way that gives rise to grace, one should—that is, if one isn't vulgar oneself—consider nothing more extraordinary than vulgarity, develop a sense for it, seek and divine a great deal in it. In this way a person who lives in entirely different circumstances can mollify ordinary people to the point of their not mistrusting him at all, and make them think of him as nothing more than what they, among themselves, would call amiable.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: These four fragments by Friedrich Schlegel were included in Novalis's collection of fragments, *Blütenstaub* (Pollen), published by the Schlegel brothers in the *Athenaeum*, 1798.

Athenaeum Fragments

1. Nothing is more rarely the subject of philosophy than philosophy itself.

2. Both in their origins and effects, boredom and stuffy air resemble each other. They are usually generated whenever a large number of people gather together in a closed room.

3. Kant introduced the concept of the negative into philosophy. Wouldn't it be worthwhile trying now to introduce the concept of the positive into philosophy as well?

4. The frequent neglect of the subcategories of genres is a great detriment to a theory of poetical forms. So, for example, nature poetry is divided into natural and artificial kinds, and folk poetry into folk poetry for the people and folk poetry for the nobility and scholars.

5. So-called good society is usually nothing more than a mosaic of polished caricatures.

6. *Hermann und Dorothea* has been criticized by some for being greatly deficient in delicacy because of the young man's feigned proposal to his beloved, an impoverished farmer's daughter, that she should come as a maid into the house of his worthy parents. It may be that these critics don't treat their servants very well. [AW]

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Authorship, if other than Friedrich Schlegel's, is indicated by one of the following abbreviations appended to the end of a fragment: [AW] for August Wilhelm Schlegel, [S] for Schleiermacher, [N] for Novalis. Cases of mixed authorship are footnoted separately. The attributions here follow those of the *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe* vol. 2, ed. Hans Eichner (Munich, 1967).

7. You're always demanding new ideas? Do something new, then something new might be said about it. [AW]

8. To certain eulogists of the past ages of our literature, one can make the same intrepid reply that Sthenelos made to Agamemnon: we boast of being much better than our fathers. [AW]

9. Luckily poetry waits as little for theory as virtue does for morality; otherwise we would, to begin with, have no hopes for a poem. [AW]

10. Duty is Kant's alpha and omega. Out of a duty to be grateful, so he maintains, we should defend and admire the ancients; and only out of a sense of duty did he become a great man.

11. Gessner's* idylls pleased the Parisian beau monde in the same way that a palate accustomed to *haut gôut* sometimes takes delight in dairy foods. [AW]

12. It has been said of many monarchs that they would have been admirable citizens; only as kings were they failures. Can we say the same of the Bible? Is it also just an admirable everyday book whose only fault is that it should have become the Bible?

13. When young people of both sexes know how to dance to a lively tune, it doesn't in the least occur to them to try to make a critical judgment about music just for that reason. Why do people have less respect for poetry?

14. A lovely exuberance in the recital is the only thing that can save the poetical morality of licentious stories. They bear witness to indolence and perversity if they don't reveal an overflowing abundance of vitality. The imagination must want to run riot and not be in the habit of yielding servilely to the ruling bent of the senses. And yet with us lighthearted levity is most reviled; while, on the other hand, the strongest levity is condoned when accompanied by a fantastic mysticism of sensuality. As if depravity could be compensated for by madness! [AW]

15. Suicide is usually only an accident, rarely an action. In the former case, suicide is always wrong: it's like a child trying to free itself. But if suicide is an action, then there's no question of right or wrong, only of decorum. For only the latter is subject to the will which must determine whatever cannot be determined by simple law, such as the Here and Now, and which can determine everything that doesn't destroy the free

* Salomon Gessner (1730–1791), Swiss poet and landscape painter.

will of others and thereby itself. It is never wrong to die of one's own free will, but often indecent to live any longer.

16. If the essence of cynicism consists of preferring nature to art, virtue to beauty and knowledge; of being oblivious of the letter, to which the Stoic clings so rigidly, and focusing entirely on the spirit; of absolutely despising every economic standard and political pomp, and maintaining bravely the rights of an independent will: then Christianity is really nothing but universal cynicism.

17. It's possible to choose to write in the form of the drama out of an inclination for systematic completeness; or in order to imitate and copy people and not simply portray them; or out of laziness; or out of a liking for music; or out of the pure joy of talking and letting people talk.

18. There are meritorious authors who have labored with youthful zeal for the greater education of their people, but have then desired to arrest that education at the point where their own strength left them. In vain: whoever has once aspired, be it foolishly or nobly, to take part in the advance of the human spirit must move with it or else be no better off than a dog on a spit who doesn't want to put his paws forward. [AW]

19. The best way not to be understood or, rather, to be misunderstood, is to use words in their original meanings, especially words from the ancient languages.

20. Duclos* observes that there are few excellent works which do not come from professional writers. In France this situation has been noted respectfully for quite some time. With us, a man was considered in former times less than nothing if he was merely an author, and even now this prejudice bestirs itself here and there, but the power of respected examples must paralyze it more and more. Depending on how one does it, writing is an infamy, a debauchery, a job, a craft, an art, a science, and a virtue. [AW]

21. The Kantian philosophy resembles that forged letter which Maria puts in Malvolio's way in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. With the only difference that in Germany there are countless philosophical Malvolios who tie their garters crosswise, wear yellow stockings, and are forever smiling madly.

22. A project is the subjective embryo of a developing object. A perfect project should be at once completely subjective and completely objec-

* Charles Pinot Duclos (1704–1772), French novelist and historian.

tive, should be an indivisible and living individual. In its origin: completely subjective and original, only possible in precisely this sense; in its character: completely objective, physically and morally necessary. The feeling for projects—which one might call fragments of the future—is distinguishable from the feeling for fragments of the past only by its direction: progressive in the former, regressive in the latter. What is essential is to be able to idealize and realize objects immediately and simultaneously: to complete them and in part carry them out within oneself. Since transcendental is precisely whatever relates to the joining or separating of the ideal and the real, one might very well say that the feeling for fragments and projects is the transcendental element of the historical spirit.

23. Much is printed that would have been better left simply said, and at times something is said that it would have been more appropriate to print. If the best ideas are those that are spoken and written spontaneously, then it might well be worth one's while to check occasionally what parts of one's talk could be written down and what part of one's writings printed. Of course it's presumptuous to have ideas during one's lifetime, or to make them known. To write an entire work is much more humble, because such a work can only be put together out of other works, and because, if worst comes to worst, the idea can always take refuge, hide itself submissively in a corner, and let the subject matter itself take over. But ideas, individual ideas, are forced to have value in themselves and must lay claim to being original and having been thought out. The only thing that is to some extent consoling about this is that nothing can be more presumptuous than the mere fact of existence, or, even more, of existence in a particular, independent way. From this original basic presumption we can deduce all the others, no matter how you look at it.

24. Many of the works of the ancients have become fragments. Many modern works are fragments as soon as they are written.

25. Interpretations are frequently insertions of something that seems desirable or expedient, and many a deduction is actually a traduction—a proof that erudition and speculation are not quite so harmful to the innocence of the spirit as some people would have us believe. For isn't it really childlike to marvel at the wonder of what one has created oneself?

26. Germany is probably such a favorite subject for the general essayist because the less finished a nation is, the more it is a subject for criticism and not for history.

27. Most people are, like Leibniz's possible worlds, only equally rightful pretenders to existence. Few exist.

28. Next to the perfect representation of critical idealism (which always comes first) the following seem to be the most important desiderata of philosophy: a materialistic logic, a poetical poetics, a positive politics, a systematical ethics, and a practical history.

29. Witty ideas are the proverbs of cultivated people.

30. A lovely young girl is the most charming symbol of pure good will.

31. Prudishness is pretension to innocence, without innocence. Women will probably have to remain prudish for as long as men are sentimental, stupid, and bad enough to demand eternal innocence and ignorance from them. For innocence is the only thing which can ennoble ignorance.

32. One should have wit, but not want to have it. Otherwise, you get persiflage, the Alexandrian style of wit.

33. It's much more difficult to make others talk well than to talk well oneself.

34. Almost all marriages are simply concubinages, liaisons, or rather provisional experiments and distant approximations of a true marriage whose real essence, judged not according to the paradoxes of any old system but according to all spiritual and worldly laws, consists of the fusion of a number of persons into one person. A nice idea, but one fraught with a great many serious difficulties. For this reason, if for no other, the will should be given as much free rein as possible, since after all the will has some say in any decision of whether an individual is to remain independent or become only an integral part of a common personality. It's hard to imagine what basic objection there could be to a marriage *à quatre*. But when the state tries to keep even unsuccessful trial-marriages together by force, then, in so doing, it impedes the possibility of marriage itself, which might be helped by means of new and possibly more successful experiments.

35. A *cynic* should really have no possessions whatever: for a man's possessions, in a certain sense, actually possess him.* The solution to this problem is to own possessions as if one didn't own them. But it's

* Only the first sentence is by Schlegel; the continuation is by Schleiermacher.

even more artistic and cynical not to own possessions as if one owned them.

36. Nobody judges a decorative painting and an altar screen, an operetta and a piece of church music, a sermon and a philosophical treatise, according to the same standard. Then why do people make the kind of demands on rhetorical poetry—which exists only on the stage—that can only be fulfilled by a higher dramatic art?

37. Many witty ideas are like the sudden meeting of two friendly thoughts after a long separation.

38. Patience, said S. [Schleiermacher], relates to Chamfort's *état d' épigramme* as religion does to philosophy. [S]

39. Most thoughts are only the profiles of thoughts. They have to be turned around and synthesized with their antipodes. This is how many philosophical works acquire a considerable interest they would otherwise have lacked.

40. Notes to a poem are like anatomical lectures on a piece of roast beef. [AW]

41. Those people who have made a profession of explaining Kant to us were either of the sort that lacked the capacity to gain an understanding for themselves of the subjects about which Kant has written; or else such people as only had the slight misfortune of understanding no one except themselves; or such as expressed themselves even more confusedly than he did.

42. Good drama must be drastic.

43. Philosophy is still moving too much in a straight line; it's not yet cyclical enough.

44. Every philosophical review should simultaneously be a philosophy of reviews.

45. New or not new: that's the question which is asked of a work from both the highest and the lowest points of view. From the point of view of history, and of curiosity.

46. According to the way many philosophers think, a regiment of soldiers on parade is a system.

47. The philosophy of the Kantians is probably termed critical *per antiphrasin;* or else it is an *epitheton ornans.**

48. My experience with the greatest philosophers is like Plato's with the Spartans. He loved and admired them enormously, but continually complained that they always stopped halfway.

49. Women are treated as unjustly in poetry as in life. If they're feminine, they're not ideal, and if ideal, not feminine.

50. In its origins true love should be at once completely premeditated and completely fortuitous, and seem simultaneously a result of necessity and free will. But in its character it should be both lawful and virtuous, and seem both a mystery and a wonder.

51. Naive is what is or seems to be natural, individual, or classical to the point of irony, or else to the point of continuously fluctuating between self-creation and self-destruction. If it's simply instinctive, then it's childlike, childish, or silly; if it's merely intentional, then it gives rise to affectation. The beautiful, poetical, ideal naive must combine intention and instinct. The essence of intention in this sense is freedom, though intention isn't consciousness by a long shot. There is a certain kind of self-infatuated intuition of one's own naturalness or silliness that is itself unspeakably silly. Intention doesn't exactly require any deep calculation or plan. Even Homeric naiveté isn't simply instinctive; there is at least as much intention in it as there is in the grace of lovely children or innocent girls. And even if Homer himself had no intentions, his poetry and the real author of that poetry, Nature, certainly did.

52. There is a kind of person for whom an enthusiasm for boredom represents the beginning of philosophy.

53. It's equally fatal for the mind to have a system and to have none. It will simply have to decide to combine the two.

54. One can only become a philosopher, not be one. As soon as one thinks one is a philosopher, one stops becoming one.

55. There are classifications that are bad enough as classifications but which nonetheless have dominated whole nations and eras, and are frequently extremely characteristic—are the central monads—of the historical individuals that nations and eras are. So, for example, the Greek separation of all things into the divine and the human, something that

* Rhetorical terms signifying, respectively, the use of words in a sense opposite to the proper meaning, and a decorative phrase.

goes all the way back to Homer. So the Roman dualism of At Home and At War. And the moderns continually speak of the world of the present and the world of the hereafter, as if there were more than one world. But, of course, for them too most things are just as isolated and separated as their present and their hereafter.

56. Since nowadays philosophy criticizes everything that comes in front of its nose, a criticism of philosophy would be nothing more than justifiable retaliation.

57. The reputation of a writer is often gained in much the same way as money or the favor of women. If you put down a good foundation, the rest follows by itself. Chance has made many men great. "Everything is luck, only luck" is true of a good many literary as well as most political phenomena.

58. Believing in tradition and always straining at new insanities; frenetically imitative and proudly independent; awkward in what is superficial and accomplished to the point of dexterity in what is profoundly or gloomily ponderous; congenitally vapid but striving to be transcendental in feeling and outlook; comfortably and seriously entrenched against wit and frivolity, and inflamed by a sacred abhorrence of these qualities. Can you guess to what great body of literature these traits correspond? [AW]

59. Bad writers complain a great deal about the tyranny of reviewers; I think the latter would be more justified in complaining. They're supposed to find beautiful, ingenious, and first-rate what is nothing of the sort; and it's only the slight circumstance of power that prevents the reviewed from treating the reviewers in the same way Dionysus treated the critics of his verses. Kotzebue* even admitted this publicly. The new productions of miniature Dionysuses of this kind might in fact be adequately advertised with the words: Lead me back to the latomies. [AW]

60. The subjects of several countries boast of having a great many freedoms, which would become wholly superfluous through the possession of freedom. It is probably for this reason only that the beauties of many poems are emphasized so strongly—because they have no beauty. They are artistic in parts, but taken as wholes are no works of art. [AW]

61. The few attacks against Kantian philosophy which exist are the most important documents for a pathological history of common sense. This

* August von Kotzebue (1761–1819), German dramatist, author of more than two hundred plays, some of which gained an almost unprecedented popularity, but never much intellectual respectability.

epidemic, which started in England, even threatened for a while to infect German philosophy.

62. Publishing is to thinking as the maternity ward is to the first kiss.

63. Every uncultivated person is a caricature of himself.

64. The demand for moderation is the spirit of castrated intolerance.

65. Many panegyrists reveal the greatness of their idol antithetically: that is, by exhibiting their own insignificance.

66. When an author doesn't know anymore what sort of answer to make to a critic, then he usually says: But you can't do it any better. That's like a dogmatic philosopher accusing the skeptic of not being able to create a system.

67. It would be intolerant not to assume that every philosopher is tolerant and therefore capable of being reviewed; yes, even when one knows the opposite is true. But it would be presumptuous to treat poets in the same way: except if one can produce a critique that is poetical through and through and at the same time a living, vibrant work of art.

68. The only true lover of art is the man who can renounce some of his wishes entirely whenever he finds others completely fulfilled, who can rigorously evaluate even what he loves most, who will, if necessary, submit to explanations, and has a sense for the history of art.

69. The pantomimes of the ancients no longer exist. But in compensation, all modern poetry resembles pantomimes.

70. Wherever a public prosecutor puts in an appearance, a public judge should also be at hand.

71. People always talk about how an analysis of the beauty of a work of art supposedly disturbs the pleasure of the art lover. Well, the real lover just won't let himself be disturbed!

72. Surveys of entire subjects of the sort that are now fashionable are the result of somebody surveying the individual items, and then summarizing them.

73. Might it not be the same with the people as with the truth: where, as they say, the attempt is worth more than the result?

74. According to the corrupt manner in which language is used, Probably [*wahrscheinlich*, lit. "true-seeming"] means much the same as Almost True, or Somewhat True, or whatever might at some time perhaps

come to be true. But the word, simply by the way it's formed, can't signify all these things. What seems to be true doesn't have to be true in the least degree: but it must seem to be positive. Probability is a matter for shrewdness, for those who have the ability to guess among possible alternatives the real consequences of possible free actions. It is something completely subjective. What some logicians have tried to systematize under the name of probability is actually possibility.

75. Formal logic and empirical psychology are philosophical grotesques. For whatever is interesting in an arithmetic of the four elements or in an experimental physics of the spirit can surely only derive from a contrast of form and content.

76. An intellectual intuition is the categorical imperative of any theory.

77. A dialogue is a chain or garland of fragments. An exchange of letters is a dialogue on a larger scale, and memoirs constitute a system of fragments. But as yet no genre exists that is fragmentary both in form and content, simultaneously completely subjective and individual, and completely objective and like a necessary part in a system of all the sciences.

78. Usually incomprehension doesn't derive from a lack of intelligence, but from a lack of sense.

79. Folly is to be distinguished from madness only in the sense that the former, like stupidity, is conscious. If this distinction is invalid, then it's highly unfair to lock up some fools while letting others run free. Then both states of being are different only in degree, not in kind.

80. The historian is a prophet facing backwards.

81. Most people know of no dignity other than the representative; and yet only a very few people have any sense of representative worth. Even if something is nothing in itself, still it must contribute something to the definition of some species. And in this sense one could say that nobody is uninteresting.

82. The demonstrations of philosophy are simply demonstrations in the sense of military jargon. And its deductions aren't much better than those of politics; even in the sciences possession is nine-tenths of the law. About its definitions one could raise the same objection that Chamfort does in remarking upon the sort of friends one has in worldly life. There are three kinds of explanations in science: explanations that give us an illumination or an inkling of something; explanations that explain nothing; and explanations that obscure everything. True definitions can't

be made at will, but have to come of themselves; a definition which isn't witty is worthless, and there exists an infinite number of real definitions for every individual. The necessary formalities of aesthetics degenerate into etiquette and luxury. As a way of verifying and testing virtuosity, these latter qualities have their purpose and value, like the bravura arias of singers and the Latin prose of philologists. Also they make a considerable rhetorical impression. But the main point is always to know something and say something. To want to prove or even explain it is in most cases wholly unnecessary. The categorical style of the laws of the twelve tablets and the thetical method, where we find set down the pure facts of reflection without concealment, adulteration, or artificial distortion, like texts for the study of symphilosophy, are still the most appropriate for a studied natural philosophy. In a case where one has both to propose and prove something, it's indisputably more difficult to propose than to prove. There are lots of formally splendid proofs for perverse and platitudinous propositions. Leibniz proposed and Wolff* proved. Need one say more?

83. The principle of contradiction is by no means to be equated with the principle of analysis: namely, of the absolute kind of analysis which alone deserves the name, the chemical decomposition of an individual into his simplest and most basic components.

84. Viewed subjectively, philosophy, like epic poetry, always begins in medias res.

85. Principles are to life what instructions written by the cabinet are for the general in battle.

86. Real sympathy concerns itself with furthering the freedom of others, not with the satisfaction of animal pleasures.

87. The first principle in love is to have a sense for one another, and the highest principle, faith in each other. Devotion is the expression of faith, and pleasure can animate and whet the senses, though it can't, as is commonly believed, create them. Therefore sensuality can deceive bad people into believing for a short time that they might love each other.

88. There are people whose whole life consists in always saying no. It would be no small accomplishment always to be able to say no properly, but whoever can do no more, surely cannot do so properly. The taste of these nay-sayers is like an efficient pair of scissors for pruning the extremities of genius; their enlightenment is like a great candle-snuffer for

* Christian von Wolff (1679–1754), German rationalistic philosopher.

the flame of enthusiasm; and their reason a mild laxative against immoderate pleasure and love.

89. Criticism is the sole surrogate of the moral mathematics and science of propriety which so many philosophers have sought for in vain because it is impossible to find.

90. The subject of history is the realization of all of it that is practically necessary.

91. Logic is neither the preface, nor the instrument, nor the formula, nor an episode of philosophy. It is, rather, a coordinated pragmatic science opposed to poetry and to ethics and deriving from the demand for a positive truth and the premise of the possibility of a system.

92. Until philosophers become grammarians, or grammarians philosophers, grammar will not be what it was among the ancients: a pragmatic science and a part of logic. It will not even be a science.

93. The doctrine of the spirit and the letter is so interesting because, among other things, it also puts philosophy in touch with philology.

94. As yet every great philosopher has explained his predecessors—often quite unintentionally—in such a way that it seemed that before him they had been entirely misunderstood.

95. Some things philosophy must assume for the present and forever, and it may do so because it must.

96. Whoever doesn't pursue philosophy for its own sake, but uses it as a means to an end, is a sophist.

97. As a temporary condition skepticism is logical insurrection; as a system it is anarchy. Skeptical method would therefore more or less resemble a rebellious government.

98. Everything is philosophical that contributes to the realization of the logical ideal and possesses scientific organization.

99. At the words "his philosophy, my philosophy," one is always reminded of that line in *Nathan:* "Who owns God? What kind of God is that who belongs to a man?"

100. Poetic illusion is a game of impressions, and the game, an illusion of actions.

101. What happens in poetry happens never or always. Otherwise it isn't really poetry. You shouldn't think it's actually happening now.

102. Women have absolutely no sense for art, but for poetry they do; no talent for science, but for philosophy. They certainly don't lack a capacity for speculation, for inward intuition of the infinite—but they have no sense for abstractions, something that can be learned much more easily.

103. The fact that one can annihilate a philosophy—whereat a careless person can easily accidentally annihilate himself as well—or that one can prove that a philosophy annihilates itself is of little consequence. If it's really philosophy, then, like the phoenix, it will always rise again from its own ashes.

104. The world considers anyone a Kantian who is interested in the latest German philosophical writings. According to the school definition, a Kantian is only someone who believes that Kant is the truth, and who, if the mail coach from Königsberg* were ever to have an accident, might very well have to go without the truth for some weeks. According to the outmoded Socratic concept of disciples being those who have independently made the spirit of the great master their own spirit, have adapted themselves to it, and, as his spiritual sons, have been named after him, there are probably only a very few Kantians.

105. Schelling's philosophy—which might be termed criticized mysticism—concludes like Aeschylus's *Prometheus* in earthquake and ruins.

106. Moral appreciation is entirely opposed to aesthetic appreciation. In the former good intentions mean everything, in the latter nothing at all. The good intention of being witty, for example, is the virtue of a clown. The only intention in matters of wit should consist of lifting the conventional barriers and liberating the spirit. But you must consider that man wittiest who is witty not merely without intending to be so, but actually against his own intention, just as the *bienfaisant bourru* is really the most good-natured of all characters. [AW]

107. The tacitly assumed and real first postulate of all the gospel harmonies of the Kantian evangelists reads as follows: Kant's philosophy must be in agreement with itself.

108. Beautiful is what is at once charming and sublime.

109. A certain kind of micrology and belief in authority are characteristics of greatness—namely, the perfecting micrology of the artist, and the historical belief in the authority of nature.

* Birthplace and residence of Immanuel Kant, from which he rarely ventured (in fact, he never traveled outside East Prussia).

110. It is a sublime taste always to like things better when they've been raised to the second power. For example, copies of imitations, critiques of reviews, addenda to additions, commentaries on notes. This taste is very characteristic of us Germans whenever it's a matter of making something longer; and of the French when it promotes brevity and vacuity. Their scientific education very likely tends to be an abbreviation of an extract, and the highest production of their poetical art, their tragedy, is merely the formula of a form. [AW]

111. The teachings that a novel hopes to instill must be of the sort that can be communicated only as wholes, not demonstrated singly, and not subject to exhaustive analysis. Otherwise the rhetorical form would be infinitely preferable.

112. Philosophers who aren't opposed to each other are usually joined only by sympathy, not by symphilosophy.

113. A classification is a definition that contains a system of definitions.

114. A definition of poetry can only determine what poetry should be, not what it really was and is; otherwise the shortest definition would be that poetry is whatever has at any time and at any place been called poetry.

115. That the nobility of patriotic hymns is not desecrated by being well paid for is proved by the Greeks and Pindar. But that money alone isn't enough is shown by the English, who have tried to imitate the ancients in this respect at any rate. So that beauty can't really be bought and sold in England, even if virtue can.

116. Romantic poetry is a progressive, universal poetry. Its aim isn't merely to reunite all the separate species of poetry and put poetry in touch with philosophy and rhetoric. It tries to and should mix and fuse poetry and prose, inspiration and criticism, the poetry of art and the poetry of nature; and make poetry lively and sociable, and life and society poetical; poeticize wit and fill and saturate the forms of art with every kind of good, solid matter for instruction, and animate them with the pulsations of humor. It embraces everything that is purely poetic, from the greatest systems of art, containing within themselves still further systems, to the sigh, the kiss that the poetizing child breathes forth in artless song. It can so lose itself in what it describes that one might believe it exists only to characterize poetical individuals of all sorts; and yet there still is no form so fit for expressing the entire spirit of an author: so that many artists who started out to write only a novel ended up by providing us with a portrait of themselves. It alone can become, like

the epic, a mirror of the whole circumambient world, an image of the age. And it can also—more than any other form—hover at the midpoint between the portrayed and the portrayer, free of all real and ideal self-interest, on the wings of poetic reflection, and can raise that reflection again and again to a higher power, can multiply it in an endless succession of mirrors. It is capable of the highest and most variegated refinement, not only from within outwards, but also from without inwards; capable in that it organizes—for everything that seeks a wholeness in its effects—the parts along similar lines, so that it opens up a perspective upon an infinitely increasing classicism. Romantic poetry is in the arts what wit is in philosophy, and what society and sociability, friendship and love are in life. Other kinds of poetry are finished and are now capable of being fully analyzed. The romantic kind of poetry is still in the state of becoming; that, in fact, is its real essence: that it should forever be becoming and never be perfected. It can be exhausted by no theory and only a divinatory criticism would dare try to characterize its ideal. It alone is infinite, just as it alone is free; and it recognizes as its first commandment that the will of the poet can tolerate no law above itself. The romantic kind of poetry is the only one that is more than a kind, that is, as it were, poetry itself: for in a certain sense all poetry is or should be romantic.

117. Works whose ideal doesn't have as much living reality and, as it were, personality for the artist as does his mistress or his friend are best left unwritten. At any rate, they don't become works of art.

118. It's not even a subtle but actually a rather coarse titillation of the ego, when all the characters of a novel revolve around a single figure like the planets around the sun. And this central character usually turns out to be the author's own naughty little darling who then becomes the mirror and flatterer of the delighted reader. Just as a cultivated human being isn't merely an end but also a means both to himself and others, so too in the cultivated literary work all the characters should be both ends and means. The constitution should be republican, but with the proviso that some parts can choose to be active and others passive.

119. Even those metaphors that seem simply arbitrary often have deep significance. What kind of analogy, one might wonder, exists between heaps of gold or silver and the accomplishments of the spirit that are so sure and so perfect they become arbitrary, and which sprang to life so casually they seem inborn? And yet it's obvious that one only has talents, owns them as if they were things, though they still retain their solid

value even though they can't ennoble the possessor. But one can never really have genius, only be one. And there is no plural for genius, which in this case is already contained in the singular. For genius is actually a system of talents.

120. They have so little regard for wit because its expressions aren't long and wide enough, since their sensitivity is only a darkly imagined mathematics; and because wit makes them laugh, which would be disrespectful if wit had real dignity. Wit is like someone who is supposed to behave in a manner representative of his station, but instead simply *does* something.

121. An idea is a concept perfected to the point of irony, an absolute synthesis of absolute antitheses, the continual self-creating interchange of two conflicting thoughts. An ideal is at once idea and fact. If ideals don't have as much individuality for the thinker as the gods of antiquity do for the artist, then any concern with ideas is no more than a boring and laborious game of dice with hollow phrases, or, in the manner of the Chinese bronzes, a brooding intuition of one's own nose. Nothing is more wretched and contemptible than this sentimental speculation without any object. But one shouldn't call this mysticism, since this beautiful old word is so very useful and indispensable for absolute philosophy, from whose perspective the spirit regards everything as a mystery and a wonder, while from other points of view it would appear theoretically and practically normal. Speculation *en detail* is as rare as abstraction *en gros,* and yet it is these that beget the whole substance of scientific wit, these that are the principles of higher criticism, the highest rungs of spiritual cultivation. The great practical abstraction is what makes the ancients—among whom this was an instinct—actually ancients. In vain did individuals express the ideal of their species completely, if the species themselves, strictly and sharply isolated, weren't freely surrendered, as it were, to their originality. But to transport oneself arbitrarily now into this, now into that sphere, as if into another world, not merely with one's reason and imagination, but with one's whole soul; to freely relinquish first one and then another part of one's being, and confine oneself entirely to a third; to seek and find now in this, now in that individual the be-all and end-all of existence, and intentionally forget everyone else: of this only a mind is capable that contains within itself simultaneously a plurality of minds and a whole system of persons, and in whose inner being the universe which, as they say, should germinate in every monad, has grown to fullness and maturity.

122. When Bürger came across a book of the type that leaves one neither warm nor cold, he used to say that it deserved to be praised in the *Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften.** [AW]

123. Isn't poetry the noblest and worthiest of the arts for this, among other reasons: that in it alone drama becomes possible?

124. If you ever write or read novels for their psychology, then it's quite illogical and petty to shrink from even the most painstaking and thorough analysis of unnatural pleasure, horrible tortures, revolting infamy, and disgusting physical or mental impotence.

125. Perhaps there would be a birth of a whole new era of the sciences and arts if symphilosophy and sympoetry became so universal and heartfelt that it would no longer be anything extraordinary for several complementary minds to create communal works of art. One is often struck by the idea that two minds really belong together, like divided halves that can realize their full potential only when joined. If there were an art of amalgamating individuals, or if a wishful criticism could do more than merely wish—and for that there are reasons enough—then I would like to see Jean Paul and Peter Leberecht† combined. The latter has precisely what the former lacks. Jean Paul's grotesque talent and Peter Leberecht's fantastic turn of mind would, once united, yield a first-rate romantic poet.

126. All plays that are both national and designed to produce an effect are romanticized mimes.

127. Klopstock‡ is a grammatical poet and a poetical grammarian. [AW]

128. Nothing is more pitiful than to sell oneself to the devil for nothing; for example, to write lascivious poems that aren't even very good. [AW]

129. In discussing questions like the use of meter in the drama, some theoreticians forget that poetry is essentially only a beautiful lie, but for just that reason one about which it also can be said:

* Gottfried August Bürger (1748–1794), German poet, celebrated for his vivid ballads, particularly "Lenore." The *Bibliothek* was a literary journal published in Leipzig from 1757 to 1806 and a rival of the Göttingen *Musenalmanach* of which, for a time, he was the editor.

† A pseudonym of Ludwig Tieck who published a collection of stories under that name.

‡ Gottlieb Friedrich Klopstock (1724–1803), whose *Messias*, a vast epic poem based on the life of Christ, established him as the Milton of Germany and as the most notable German poet before Goethe.

Magnanima menzogna, ov' or' è il vero
Si bello, che si possa a te preporre?*[AW]

130. There are grammatical mystics too. Moritz† was one. [AW]

131. The poet can learn little from the philosopher, but the philosopher much from the poet. It's even to be feared that the night lamp of the sage may lead someone astray who is given to walking by the light of revelation. [AW]

132. Every poet is really Narcissus. [AW]

133. It's as if women made everything with their own hands, and men everything with tools. [AW]

134. The male sex won't be improved by the female until we introduce a genealogy of names inherited from the mother, as in the kingdom of Nairi. [AW]

135. At times we really do perceive a connection between the separate and often contradictory parts of our education. So it seems that the better people in our moralistic plays are graduates of the most up-to-date pedagogy. [AW]

136. There are minds that lack flexibility despite a great application and specific focusing of their powers. They'll discover something, but not much, and will be in danger of forever repeating their favorite propositions. You don't penetrate deeply when you press a drill against a board with great force, without making it turn at the same time. [AW]

137. There is a material, enthusiastic rhetoric that's infinitely superior to the sophistic abuse of philosophy, the declamatory stylistic exercise, the applied poetry, the improvised politics, that commonly go by the same name. The aim of this rhetoric is to realize philosophy practically and to defeat practical unphilosophy and antiphilosophy not just dialectically, but really annihilate it. Rousseau and Fichte, one might add, enjoin even those who believe only what they can see from considering this ideal chimerical.

138. Tragedians almost always set the scene of their stories in the past. Why should this be absolutely necessary? Why shouldn't it also be possible to set it in the future, and in that way free the imagination at one stroke from all historical considerations and limitations? But then, of

* "Magnanimous lie, where is there a truth so beautiful as to be preferable to you?"
† Karl Phillipp Moritz (1757–1793), German novelist, critic, and friend of Goethe.

course, a nation that has to endure the humiliating spectacle of a better future would require more than a republican constitution. It would need a liberal mentality.

139. From the romantic point of view, even the vagaries of poetry have their value as raw materials and preliminaries for universality, even when they're eccentric and monstrous, provided they have some saving grace, provided they are original.

140. It seems to be a characteristic of the dramatic poet to lose himself with lavish generosity in other people, and of the lyric poet to attract everything toward himself with loving egoism. [AW]

141. We're told that there are so very many infractions of good taste in English and German tragedies. French tragedies are made up of just one single great infraction. For what can be more contrary to good taste than writing and performing plays that are completely outside nature? [AW]

142. Hemsterhuis unites Plato's beautiful visionary flights with the strict seriousness of the systematic thinker. Jacobi doesn't have this harmonious proportion of mental powers but instead a depth and force that are all the more effective. They share an instinct for the divine. Hemsterhuis's works could be called intellectual poems. Jacobi didn't create any flawlessly perfect classical works of art; he gave us fragments full of originality, nobility, and intimacy. Perhaps Hemsterhuis's enthusiasm leaves a deeper impression because it always stays within the limits of the beautiful; on the other hand, reason immediately assumes a defensive stance when it becomes aware of the vehemence of the feeling that is intruding upon it. [AW]

143. One can't force anyone to think of the ancients as classics, or as ancient. In the final analysis, that depends on maxims.

144. The golden age of Roman literature was more brilliant and more suitable for poetry; the so-called silver age much more correct in its prose.

145. Considered as a poet, Homer is very moral because he is so natural and yet so poetical. But as a moralist, as the ancients often viewed him, despite the protestations of older and better philosophers, he is for that very reason quite immoral.

146. Just as the novel colors all of modern poetry, so satire colors and, as it were, sets the tone for all of Roman poetry, yes, even the whole of Roman literature. This poetry surely remained through all its changes a classic universal poetry, a social poetry emanating from, and created

for, the center of the cultivated world. In order to have a feeling for what is most urbane, original, and beautiful in the prose of a Cicero, Caesar, or Suetonius, one has to have loved and understood the Horatian satires for a long time. They are the eternal wellsprings of urbanity.

147. To live classically and to realize antiquity practically within oneself is the summit and goal of philology. Is this possible without any kind of cynicism?

148. The greatest antithesis that ever existed is that between Caesar and Cato. Sallust's description of it is not without merit.

149. The systematic Winckelmann who read all the ancients as if they were a single author, who saw everything as a whole and concentrated all his powers on the Greeks, provided the first basis for a material knowledge of the ancients through his perception of the absolute difference between ancient and modern. Only when the perspective and the conditions of the absolute identity of ancient and modern in the past, present, and future have been discovered will one be able to say that at least the contours of classical study have been laid bare and one can now proceed to methodical investigation.

150. Tacitus's *Agricola* is a classically magnificent, historical canonization of a consular economist. According to the way of thinking that predominates in the book, man's greatest mission is to triumph by permission of the emperor.

151. Up to now everyone has managed to find in the ancients what he needed or wished for: especially himself.

152. Cicero was a great virtuoso of urbanity who wanted to be an orator, and, yes, even a philosopher, and who could have been a very brilliant antiquarian, man of letters, and polyhistorian of old Roman virtue and old Roman festivity.

153. The more popular an ancient author, the more romantic. This is the governing principle of the new anthology that the moderns have in effect made from the old anthology of the classics, or, rather, that they are still in the process of making.

154. To anyone coming fresh from Aristophanes, the Olympus of comedy, romantic persiflage seems like a long spun-out thread from the cloth of Athena, like a flake of heavenly fire of which the best part was lost on the way to earth.

155. The crude cosmopolitan efforts of the Carthaginians and other an-

cient peoples seem, in contrast to the political universality of the Romans, like the natural poetry of uncivilized nations compared to the classical art of the Greeks. Only the Romans were satisfied with the spirit of despotism and despised the letter; only they had naive tyrants.

156. Comic wit is a mixture of epic and iambic. Aristophanes is simultaneously Homer and Archilochus.

157. Ovid is in many ways similar to Euripides. The same power to move, the same rhetorical brilliance and often inopportune ingenuity, the same dawdling fullness, vanity, and thinness.

158. The best in Martial is what looks like Catullus.

159. In many poems of late antiquity, for example Ausonius's Mosella,* antiquarianism is the only remaining ancient quality.

160. Not his Attic education, his striving for Doric harmony, the Socratic grace that endows him with an occasional amiability, or the enthralling simplicity, clarity, and peculiar sweetness of his style can hide from an unbiased mind the vulgarity that is the inmost spirit of Xenophon's life and work. The *Memorabilia* shows how incapable he was of understanding the greatness of his master, and the *Anabasis*, the most interesting and beautiful of his works, how petty a man he himself was.

161. Might not the cyclical nature of Plato's and Aristotle's supreme being be the personification of a philosophical mannerism?

162. In investigating ancient Greek mythology, hasn't too little attention been paid to the human instinct for making analogies and antitheses? The Homeric world of gods is a simple variation of the Homeric world of men, while the Hesiodic world, lacking the principle of heroic contrast, splits up into several opposing races of gods. In that old remark of Aristotle that one gets to know people through their gods, one finds not only the self-illuminating subjectivity of all theology, but also the more incomprehensible innate spiritual dualism of man.

163. The history of the first Roman Caesars is like a symphony—striking up the theme that runs through the history of all the subsequent ones.

164. The mistakes of the Greek sophists were errors more of excess than omission. Even the confidence and arrogance with which they presumed and pretended to know everything has something quite philosophical

* Decimus Magnus Ausonius (c. 310–395 A.D.), Roman poet and teacher of rhetoric. The *Mosella* is a long, rather artificial poem in praise of the river Moselle.

about it: not intentionally but instinctively. For surely the philosopher has only the choice of knowing either everything or nothing. And certainly no philosophy worthy of the name tries to teach only some particular thing or some mélange of things.

165. In Plato we find unmixed all the pure types of Greek prose in their classic individuality, and often incongruously juxtaposed: the logical, the physical, the mimical, the panegyrical, and the mythical. The mimical style is the foundation and general component of all the rest; the others often occur only episodically. And then he has a further type of prose that is particularly characteristic of him and makes him most Platonic: the dithyrambical. It might be called a mixture of the mythical and panegyrical if it didn't also have something of the conciseness and simple dignity of the physical.

166. To characterize nations and ages, to delineate the noble nobly, is the real talent of the poetical Tacitus. In historical portraits, the critical Suetonius is a greater master.

167. Almost all criticisms of art are too general or too specific. The critics should look for the golden mean here, in their own productions, and not in the works of the poets.

168. Cicero ranks philosophies according to their usefulness to the orator; similarly, one might ask what philosophy is fittest for the poet. Certainly no system at variance with one's feelings or common sense; or one that transforms the real into the illusory; or abstains from all decisions; or inhibits a leap into the suprasensory regions; or achieves humanity only by adding up all the externals. This excludes eudaemonism, fatalism, idealism, skepticism, materialism, or empiricism. Then what philosophy is left for the poet? The creative philosophy that originates in freedom and belief in freedom, and shows how the human spirit impresses its law on all things and how the world is its work of art.

169. Proving things a priori conveys a blissful tranquillity, whereas observation always remains something partial and incomplete. Aristotle made the world as round as a ball by pure abstraction: he didn't leave the slightest corner sticking out or in. For the same reason he also drew the comets into the atmosphere of the earth and made short shrift of the true solar systems of the Pythagoreans. How long will our astronomers, looking through Herschelian telescopes, have to labor before returning to so definitely clear and spherical a view of the world? [AW]

170. Why don't German women write more novels? What are we to conclude from this about their skill in acting out novels in real life? Are both

of these arts connected, or does the former relate inversely to the latter? One might almost suspect this to be true from the circumstance of so many novels coming from English women and so few from French. Or are intelligent and charming French women in the same position as busy statesmen, who never get down to writing their memoirs except perhaps after they've been discharged from service? And when would such a female capitalist believe she's been cashiered? With the stiff etiquette of female virtue in England and the cloistered life into which women are forced by the rudeness of male society there, the frequency of novel writing by English women seems to indicate a need for more liberal conditions. One suns oneself by moonlight when one fears darkening the skin by walking out during the day. [AW]

171. A French critic has discovered *le flegme allemand* in Hemsterhuis's writings; another, after a French translation of Müller's *History of Switzerland** appeared, thought the book contained good raw materials for a future historian. Such extravagant stupidities should be preserved in the annals of the human spirit: even with the greatest intelligence it's impossible to invent them. And they also have this similarity to ideas of genius: that every word appended as commentary would deprive them of their piquancy. [AW]

172. One can say that it's a distinguishing mark of poetical genius to know a great deal more than he knows he knows. [AW]

173. There's nothing ornamental about the style of the real poet: everything is a necessary hieroglyph. [AW]

174. Poetry is music for the inner ear, and painting for the inner eye; but faint music, evanescent painting. [AW]

175. Some people prefer to look at paintings with closed eyes, so as not to disturb their imagination. [AW]

176. It could be said quite literally of many ceilings that there's pie in the sky. [AW]

177. In general it's probably impossible to enjoin any other precept for the frequently unsuccessful art of painting word-pictures than to vary it as much as possible with a mode of representation conforming to the actual objects. Sometimes the moment described can emerge alive from a story. At times an almost mathematical exactness of topical detail is necessary. Most often the tone of the description has to do its best to

* Johannes von Müller (1752–1809), German historian, the so-called Thucydides of the Germans.

communicate the "how" of it to the reader. Diderot is a master of this. Like Abt Vogler,* he sets many paintings to music. [AW]

178. If any work of German painting is worthy of being displayed in the forecourt of Raphael's temple, then certainly Albrecht Dürer and Holbein would be much closer to the inner sanctum than the scholarly Mengs.† [AW]

179. Don't criticize the limited artistic taste of the Dutch. In the first place, they know exactly what they want. Secondly, they have created their own genres for themselves. Can either of these statements be made about the dilettantism of the English?

180. Greek sculpture is extremely modest wherever the purity of the sublime is concerned. In the nude figures of gods and heroes, for example, earthly necessity is suggested in only the most discreet way. But it is, of course, incapable of false delicacy and therefore displays the bestial lusts of the satyrs without any kind of concealment. Everything must remain true to its kind. Because of their shapes, these untamable creatures were outcasts from humanity to begin with. Similarly it was perhaps not merely a sensual but a moral refinement that created the hermaphrodites. Since sensuality had somehow happened to move off in that direction, people imagined specific beings originally created for the purpose. [AW]

181. Rubens's composition is often dithyrambical while his figures remain inert and disjointed. The fire of his temperament is at war with the leadenness of the climate. If his paintings stand in need of greater inward harmony, then he should either have been less vital, or else not Flemish. [AW]

182. To have a Diderot describe an art exhibition for you is a truly imperial luxury. [AW]

183. Hogarth painted ugliness and wrote about beauty. [AW]

184. Pieter Laer's bambocciades are Dutch colonists in Italy. Though the warmer climate seems to have tanned their complexions, it has ennobled their character and expression by giving them more robust strength. [AW]

185. The thing itself can make us forget about its size: it wasn't felt to be

* Georg Joseph Vogler (1749–1814), usually called Abt (abbé), German composer and musician.

† Anton Raphael Mengs (1728–1779), German painter and collaborator of Winckelmann's.

improper that Olympian Jove couldn't stand up because he would have smashed the roof in; and Hercules carved on a stone still appears to be superhumanly large. Only dimensions that are scaled down may be deceptive. When something is ordinary, a colossal treatment only serves, as it were, to multiply its ordinariness. [AW]

186. We're right to laugh at the Chinese who, looking at European portraits done in light and shadow, asked if these people were really so bespotted. But would we dare smile at an ancient Greek who, having been shown a painting in Rembrandtian chiaroscuro, would innocently remark: Is this how they paint in the country of the Cimmerians? [AW]

187. No medicine is more powerful against base lust than the worship of beauty. Hence all higher sculpture is chaste, no matter what the subject; it purifies the senses, as tragedy, according to Aristotle, purifies the passions. Its chance effects are irrelevant in this respect, because even a Vestal virgin can arouse lust in filthy souls. [AW]

188. Certain things have never been equaled because the circumstances of their achievement were too degrading. If some drunken innkeeper like Jan Steen* doesn't happen to become a painter, then you can't very well expect some artist to become a drunken inn-keeper. [AW]

189. The small worthless part of Diderot's *Essai sur la Peinture* is its sentimentality. But because of his incomparable impudence, he manages himself to set right any reader whom this could lead astray. [AW]

190. Nature at its flattest and most monotonous is the best teacher of a landscape painter. Consider the wealth of Dutch art that comes under this heading. Poverty makes one thrifty: there comes from it a sense of frugality that is gladdened by even the slightest hint of higher life in nature. When later during his travels the artist gets to know romantic scenes, they make an even greater impression on him. The imagination too has its antitheses: the greatest painter of horrific wastelands, Salvator Rosa, was born in Naples. [AW]

191. The ancients, it seems, loved eternity in miniatures as well: the gem-carver's art is the miniature of the sculptor's. [AW]

192. Ancient art per se simply won't be resurrected, no matter how unremittingly scholarship labors at the accumulated treasures of nature. Of course, it often seems so; but there's always something lacking, namely precisely what derives from life alone and no model can provide. For all

* Jan Steen (1626–1679), Dutch painter of realistic and humorous scenes; for a time a tavern-keeper who is thought by some to have drunk too much of his own.

that, the fortunes of ancient art do return with literal precision. It's as if the spirit of Mummius,* who exercised his connoisseurship so strenuously on the art treasures of Corinth, were now arisen from the dead. [AW]

193. If you don't let yourself be blinded by aesthetic terminology and learned allusions, then you find that a sense for the plastic arts is a much rarer accomplishment among ancient and modern poets than you might expect. Pindar, before all others, can be called the most plastic of poets, and the delicate style of old vase-paintings reminds one of his Dorian softness and gentle splendor. Propertius, who in eight lines could portray as many artists, is an exception among the Romans. Dante reveals great talent for painting in his treatment of the visible world, but he has greater precision of draftsmanship than he has perspective. He lacked subjects on which to practice this faculty, for the new art was then in its childhood and the old was still in the grave. But then, what could painters teach a man from whom Michelangelo could learn? There are marked traces in Ariosto's work to show that he lived in the most flourishing period of painting; his descriptions of beauty and his taste for it sometimes carried him beyond the limits of poetry. This is never the case with Goethe. At times he makes the plastic arts the subject of his poems, but otherwise all mention of them is either irrelevant or farfetched. The fullness of calm possession doesn't thrust itself into the light of day, nor does it hide itself. All such passages aside, the poet's love for painting and his insight are unmistakable in the grouping of his figures, in the simple grandeur of his outlines. [AW]

194. To prove that ancient coins are genuine, numismatists look for so-called noble rust [verd-antique]. The art of counterfeiting has managed to imitate everything except this minting of time. There's also noble rust on people, heroes, philosophers, poets. Müller is a superb numismatist of humanity. [AW]

195. Condorcet built a monument to himself by writing, while encompassed by mortal dangers, his book on the *Progrès de l'esprit humain*. Isn't it a more beautiful one than any he could have constructed, during his brief respite, out of his own limited individuality? How could he have appealed better to posterity than by forgetting himself while dealing with it? [AW]

* Lucius Mummius (fl. second century B.C.), Roman consul who defeated the Achaean League, captured Corinth, killed its inhabitants, sent its art treasures to Rome, and razed the city to the ground.

196. Pure autobiographies are written either by neurotics who are enthralled by their own egos—a class that includes Rousseau; or out of robust artistic or adventurous self-love, like that of Benvenuto Cellini; or by born historians who consider themselves nothing more than the raw materials of historical art; or by women who are playing the coquette with posterity as well as with their contemporaries; or by worrisome people who want to clean up the least little speck of dust before they die and who can't bear letting themselves depart this world without explanations. Or else they are to be viewed as nothing more than *plaidoyers* before the public. A sizable proportion of autobiographers are actually autopseudists.

197. Hardly any literature other than ours can exhibit so many monstrosities born of a mania for originality. Here too are we proved Hyperboreans. For among the Hyperboreans asses were sacrificed to Apollo, who would then take delight in their marvelous leaps. [AW]

198. In former times nature used to be preached among us, now it's exclusively the ideal. We forget too often that these two things are profoundly compatible, that in a beautiful description nature should be ideal, and the ideal natural. [AW]

199. The notion that the English national character is sublime is unquestionably the doing, in the first instance, of innkeepers; but novels and plays have fostered it and thereby made a by no means contemptible contribution to the science of sublime ridiculousness. [AW]

200. "Nay, I'll ne'er believe a madman," says a very clever madman in Shakespeare, "till I see his brains." One might expect certain self-styled philosophers to fulfill this precondition of belief; and I would wager that one would find they had made papier-mâché out of Kant's writings. [AW]

201. In the *Fatalist,* in the *Essays on Painting,* and wherever he is really Diderot, Diderot is true to the point of shamelessness. He has often surprised nature when she was dressed only in a charming nightgown, and occasionally has also seen her relieving herself. [AW]

202. Ever since the need for the ideal in art has been so earnestly enjoined, one can observe students guilelessly chasing after this particular bird to put, as soon as they can get close enough to it, the salt of aesthetics on its tail. [AW]

203. Moritz loved how the Greeks used neuter adjectives as abstract nouns. He divined something mysterious in it. One could say in the lan-

guage of his *Mythology* and *Anthusa* that here the human seeks to approximate the divine in every respect, and here too thought seeks to recognize itself in symbol, but sometimes doesn't even understand itself. [AW]

204. No matter how good a lecture delivered from the height of the podium might be, the best of it is dissipated because one can't interrupt the speaker. So too with the didactic writer. [AW]

205. They have a habit of calling themselves Criticism. They write coldly, superficially, pretentiously, and beyond all measure vapidly. Nature, feeling, nobility, and greatness of spirit simply don't exist for them, and yet they act as if they could summon these things to appear before their judgment-stools. Imitations of the outdated French fashion of society verses are the furthest reaches of their lukewarm admiration. For them correctness is equivalent to virtue. Taste is their idol: a fetish that can only be worshipped joylessly. Who doesn't recognize in this portrait the priests of the temple of *belles lettres* who have the same sex as those of *Cybele?* [AW]

206. A fragment, like a miniature work of art, has to be entirely isolated from the surrounding world and be complete in itself like a porcupine.

207. Freethinking always proceeds in the following sequence: first the devil is attacked, then the Holy Spirit, next the Lord Christ, and finally God the Father. [AW]

208. There are days when one is in a very good mood and able to formulate new projects easily, but when one is as incapable of communicating them as of really creating anything. These aren't ideas, only the souls of ideas. [AW]

209. Should a language bound by conventions like the French not be able to republicanize itself by having recourse to the power of the general will? The mastery of language over spirit is manifest: but its sacred inviolability follows as little from this domination as does the admission in natural law of the divine origin formerly imputed to all sovereign state power. [AW]

210. The story goes that Klopstock met the French poet Rouget de Lisle, who was paying him a visit, with this greeting: how did he dare appear in Germany after his *Marseillaise* had cost the lives of fifty thousand brave Germans? This was an undeserved reproach. Didn't Samson defeat the Philistines with the jawbone of an ass? And even if the *Marseillaise* really does have a share in the victories of France, then Rouget

de Lisle exhausted the murderous power of his poetry in this one piece: with all the others put together you couldn't kill a fly. [AW]

211. To disrespect the masses is moral; to honor them, lawful.

212. Perhaps no people deserves freedom, but that is a matter for the *forum dei*.

213. A state only deserves to be called aristocratic when at least the smaller mass that despotizes the larger has a republican constitution.

214. A perfect republic would have to be not just democratic, but aristocratic and monarchic at the same time; to legislate justly and freely, the educated would have to outweigh and guide the uneducated, and everything would have to be organized into an absolute whole.

215. Can legislation be called moral which punishes attacks on the honor of citizens less severely than attacks on their lives?

216. The French Revolution, Fichte's philosophy, and Goethe's *Meister* are the greatest tendencies of the age. Whoever is offended by this juxtaposition, whoever cannot take any revolution seriously that isn't noisy and materialistic, hasn't yet achieved a lofty, broad perspective on the history of mankind. Even in our shabby histories of civilization, which usually resemble a collection of variants accompanied by a running commentary for which the original classical text has been lost; even there many a little book, almost unnoticed by the noisy rabble at the time, plays a greater role than anything they did.

217. Archaism of the words, novelty in their placement, compelling brevity and digressive fullness, reproducing even the inexplicable features of the individuals it delineates: these are the essential characteristics of the historical style. Most essential of all are nobility, splendor, dignity. The historical style is distinguished by the homogeneity and purity of its native words of true ancestry, and by the selection of the most significant, weighty, and precious words; by a nobly outlined and clearly—rather too rigidly than not clearly enough—articulated periodic structure, like that of Thucydides; by spare solidity, august alacrity, and superb joviality of tone and color after the manner of Caesar; but particularly by that innate and exalted cultivation of Tacitus, which poetizes, civilizes, and philosophizes the dry facts of pure empiricism, refines and generalizes them so that they seem to have been apprehended and variously sifted by someone who is at once a perfect thinker, artist, and hero, who has achieved this without allowing raw poetry, pure philosophy, or isolated wit to disturb the harmony of the whole at any

point. All of this must be blended into history, just as images and antitheses must only be hinted at or dissolved again, so that the brooding, flowing expression should match the living actualization of the moving shapes.

218. It's always a strange, rather suspicious feeling when one thinks one knows that such and such is going to happen. And yet it's really quite as strange that we should be able to know that such and such is as it is—which no one ever notices because it always happens.

219. In Gibbon the common, English, pedantic bigotry in matters relating to the classics has been exalted to the level of sentimental epigrams about the ruins of a past grandeur, but still it hasn't been able to divest itself entirely of its native character. He shows us repeatedly that he had absolutely no understanding of the Greeks. And what he loves in the Romans is actually only their materialistic pomp, but particularly—in the style of a country divided between mercantilism and mathematics—he loves quantitative nobility. The Turks, it appears, would have served his purpose just as well.

220. If wit in all its manifestations is the principle and the organ of universal philosophy, and if all philosophy is nothing but the spirit of universality, the science of all the eternally uniting and dividing sciences, a logical chemistry: then the value and importance of that absolute, enthusiastic, thoroughly material wit is infinite, that wit wherein Bacon and Leibniz, the chief representatives of scholastic prose, were masters, the former among the first, chronologically speaking, the latter among the greatest. The most important scientific discoveries are bon mots of this sort—are so because of the surprising contingency of their origin, the unifying force of their thought, and the baroqueness of their casual expression. But they are, of course, in respect to content, much more than the unsatisfied and evanescent expectation of purely poetical wit. The best ones are *echappées de vue* into the infinite. Leibniz's whole philosophy consists of a few fragments and projects that are witty in this sense. It may be that Kant—the Copernicus of philosophy—has even more natural syncretistic spirit and critical wit than Leibniz, but his situation and his education aren't as witty; and furthermore the same thing has happened to his ideas that happens to popular songs: the Kantians have sung them to death. Therefore it's quite easy to be unfair to him and think him less witty than he really is. Of course, philosophy will only be healthy when it no longer expects and counts on getting brilliant ideas, when it's able to make continuous progress, relying, naturally, on enthusiastic energy and brilliant art, but also on a sure method. But are

we to despise the few still extant products of synthesizing genius because no unifying art and science exists as yet? And how could they exist as long as we still simply spell out most sciences like high schoolers and imagine that we've achieved our object when we can decline and conjugate one of the many dialects of philosophy but have no notion of syntax and can't construct even the shortest periodic sentence?

221. A. You always maintain you're a Christian. What do you mean by Christianity? B. What the Christians have been doing—or have wanted to do—for the last eighteen centuries. Christianity seems to me to be a fact. But only a fact in its beginning stages, one, that is, that can't be represented historically in a system, but can only be characterized by means of divinatory criticism.

222. The revolutionary desire to realize the kingdom of God on earth is the elastic point of progressive civilization and the beginning of modern history. Whatever has no relation to the kingdom of God is of strictly secondary importance in it.

223. The so-called History of States, which represents nothing more than a genetic definition of the phenomenon of the present political conditions of a nation, actually can't be considered a pure art or science. It's a scientific trade that gains nobility through its candor and opposition to the idea of fashion and to the law of the strongest. Even universal history becomes sophistic as soon as it places anything above the communal education of all mankind, even if the heteronomous principle were a moral idea, and as soon as it chooses to take up the cause of any particular side of the historical universe. Nothing is more annoying in a historical work than rhetorical digressions and moral homilies.

224. In his history, Johannes Müller often looks beyond the borders of Switzerland into the history of the world; but less frequently does he examine Switzerland with the eye of a citizen of the world. [AW]

225. If a biography strives to generalize, then it is a historical fragment. If it concentrates on characterizing individuality, then it is a historical document or a work on the art of living.

226. Since people are always so much against hypotheses, they should try sometime to begin studying history without one. It's impossible to say that a thing is, without saying what it is. In the very process of thinking of facts, one relates them to concepts, and, surely, it is not a matter of indifference to which. If one is aware of this, then it is possible to determine and choose consciously among all the possible concepts the necessary ones to which facts of all kinds should be related. If one re-

fuses to recognize this, then the choice is surrendered to instinct, chance, or fate; and so one flatters oneself that one has established a pure solid empiricism quite a posteriori, when what one actually has is an a priori outlook that's highly one-sided, dogmatic, and transcendental.

227. The illusion of anarchy in the history of man arises simply out of the collisions of heterogeneous spheres of nature, all meeting and concatenating in his experience. For otherwise the absolute will has neither constitutional nor legislative power in this area of free necessity and necessary freedom, and only an illusory title to executive and judiciary power. The rough idea of historical dynamism does Condorcet's* mind as much credit as his more than French enthusiasm for the idea of infinite perfectibility—now almost trivial—does credit to his heart.

228. The historical tendency of his actions determines the positive morality of the statesman and citizen of the world.

229. The Arabs have highly polemical natures; they are the annihilators among nations. Their fondness for destroying or throwing away the originals when the translations are finished characterizes the spirit of their philosophy. Precisely for that reason it may be that they were infinitely more cultivated but, with all their culture, more purely barbaric than the Europeans of the Middle Ages. For barbarism is defined as what is at once anti-classical and anti-progressive.

230. The mysteries of Christianity necessarily led, because of those unceasing struggles which entangled reason with faith, either to a skeptical resignation of all nonempirical knowledge, or else to critical idealism.

231. Catholicism is naive Christianity, Protestantism sentimental Christianity. The latter, besides the merit of its polemical revolutionary services, has the further positive virtue of having—by its worship of the written word—given birth to philology, one of the essentials for a universal and progressive religion. Only Protestant Christianity is perhaps still somewhat lacking in urbanity. To travesty a few of the biblical stories into a Homeric epic, to portray others in the style of classical history with the frankness of Herodotus and the austerity of Tacitus, or to review the whole Bible as if it were the work of a single author: all this would seem paradoxical to everyone, irritating to many, and quite im-

* The Marquis de Condorcet (1743–1794), French mathematician, revolutionary, and philosopher, whose last and most famous work was the optimistic *Progrès de l'esprit humain (Progress of the Human Mind)* (1794), written while he was in hiding from the Revolutionary Terror.

proper and unnecessary to a few. But should anything seem unnecessary that might make religion more tolerant?

232. Since all things that are rightly One are usually Three as well, it's hard to see why it should be any different with God. God isn't simply an idea, but at the same time a thing, as are all ideas that aren't simply delusions.

233. Religion is usually only a supplement or even a surrogate for education, and nothing is religious, strictly speaking, that is not a product of freedom. So that it is possible to say: the more free, the more religious; and the more education, the less religion.

234. It's only prejudice and presumption that maintains there is only a single mediator between God and man. For the perfect Christian—whom in this respect Spinoza probably resembles most—everything would really have to be a mediator.

235. Christ has now been repeatedly deduced by a priori methods: but shouldn't the Madonna have as much right to be an original, eternal, and necessary ideal, if not of pure, then of male and female reason?

236. It's a gross but still common misconception to believe that in order to describe an ideal one has to pack into one name as numerous a conglomeration of virtues as possible, and that one has to exhibit a whole compendium of morality in a single human being—all of which achieves nothing but the obliteration of individuality and truth. The ideal is to be found not in quantity but in quality. Grandison* is an exemplar and not an ideal. [AW]

237. Humor is, as it were, the wit of sentiment. Hence it may express itself consciously; but it ceases to be genuine as soon as one perceives intention in it. [AW]

238. There is a kind of poetry whose essence lies in the relation between ideal and real, and which therefore, by analogy to philosophical jargon, should be called transcendental poetry. It begins as satire in the absolute difference of ideal and real, hovers in between as elegy, and ends as idyll with the absolute identity of the two. But just as we wouldn't think much of an uncritical transcendental philosophy that doesn't represent the producer along with the product and contain at the same time within the system of transcendental thoughts a description of transcendental thinking: so too this sort of poetry should unite the transcendental raw

* A reference to the virtuous hero of Samuel Richardson's novel, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1754).

materials and preliminaries of a theory of poetic creativity—often met with in modern poets—with the artistic reflection and beautiful self-mirroring that is present in Pindar, in the lyric fragments of the Greeks, in the classical elegy, and, among the moderns, in Goethe. In all its descriptions, this poetry should describe itself, and always be simultaneously poetry and the poetry of poetry.

239. The fondness of Alexandrian and Roman poets for difficult and unpoetical themes is really a result of their grand conception that all things are subject matter for poetry, though this is something that was by no means a conscious artistic intention, but a historical tendency of their works. And behind the confusion of all the artistic genres by the poetical eclectics of late antiquity there lies the demand that there should be only One Poetry and One Philosophy.

240. In Aristophanes immorality is, so to speak, legal, and in the great tragedians illegality is moral.

241. How convenient it is that mythological creatures signify all kinds of things that one would like to impute to oneself! By talking unceasingly about them, one contrives to make the good-natured reader believe one possesses the designated virtue. One or another of our poets would be a beaten man if there were no Graces. [AW]

242. If someone attempts a characterization of the ancients en masse, then no one considers that paradoxical; and yet so little do these people usually know their own minds that they would be surprised at the suggestion that classical poetry is an individual in the strictest and most literal sense of the word: more clearly defined in its physiognomy, more original in its manners, and more consistent in its maxims than whole masses of the phenomena whom we consider and should consider, in our legal and social relations, to be people and, yes, even individuals. Is it possible to characterize anything but individuals? Isn't whatever can't be multiplied after a certain given point just as much a historical entity as something that can no longer be divided? Aren't all systems individuals just as all individuals are systems at least in embryo and tendency? Isn't every real entity historical? Aren't there individuals who contain within themselves whole systems of individuals?

243. The mirage of a former golden age is one of the greatest obstacles to approximating the golden age that still lies in the future. If there once was a golden age, then it wasn't really golden. Gold can't rust or decompose: it emerges victoriously genuine from all attempts to alloy or decompose it. If the golden age won't last always and forever, then it

might as well never begin, since it will only be good for composing elegies about its loss. [AW]

244. The comedies of Aristophanes are works of art that can be viewed from all sides. Gozzi's* plays have one point of view.

245. To become popular with the masses, a poem or a drama has to have a little of everything, has to be a kind of microcosm. A little misfortune and a little happiness, a bit of art and a bit of nature, the appropriate amount of virtue and the right dose of vice. And it must have spirit along with wit, even philosophy, and particularly morality, sprinkled with politics. If one ingredient doesn't help, then maybe another will. And even supposing that the whole lot of them fail, then like many medicines that deserve eternal praise for precisely this reason, they at least won't do any harm.

246. Magic, caricature, and materialism are the means by which modern comedy can become inwardly similar to the old Aristophanic comedy, just as demagogic popularity is the outward means. Gozzi has succeeded here to the extent of reminding us of it. But the essence of the comic art will always remain enthusiastic spirit and classical form.

247. Dante's prophetic poem is the only system of transcendental poetry, and is still the greatest of its kind. Shakespeare's universality is like the center of romantic art. Goethe's purely poetical poetry is the most complete poetry of poetry. This is the great triple chord of modern poetry, the inmost and holiest circle among all the broad and narrow spheres of a critical anthology of the classics of modern poetry.

248. The individual great figures are less isolated among the Greeks and Romans. They had fewer geniuses but more brilliance. Everything ancient is brilliant. All of antiquity is a genius, the only genius that could without exaggeration be called absolutely great, unique, and unattainable.

249. The poetizing philosopher, the philosophizing poet, is a prophet. A didactic poem should be and tends to become prophetic.

250. Whoever has imagination, or pathos, or a gift for mimicry ought to be able to learn poetry like any other mechanical art. Imagination consists of both enthusiasm and invention; pathos, of soul and passion; and mimicry, of penetration and expression.

* Count Carlo Gozzi (1720–1806), Italian poet and dramatist who defended the *Commedia dell'arte* against Goldoni's attempts at reform.

251. There are so many people nowadays who are too tender and soft-hearted to be able to see tragedies, and too noble and dignified to go to comedies—a tangible proof of the delicate morality of a century that only tried to slander the French Revolution.

252. A real aesthetic theory of poetry would begin with the absolute antithesis of the eternally unbridgeable gulf between art and raw beauty. It would describe their struggle and conclude with the perfect harmony of artistic and natural poetry. This is to be found only among the ancients and would in itself constitute nothing but a more elevated history of the spirit of classical poetry. But a philosophy of poetry as such would begin with the independence of beauty, with the proposition that beauty is and should be distinct from truth and morality, and that it has the same rights as these: something that—for those who are able to understand it at all—follows from the proposition I = I. It would waver between the union and the division of philosophy and poetry, between poetry and practice, poetry as such and the genres and kinds of poetry; and it would conclude with their complete union. Its beginning would provide the principles of pure poetics; its middle the theory of the particular, characteristically modern types of poetry: the didactic, the musical, the rhetorical in a higher sense, etc. The keystone would be a philosophy of the novel, the rough outlines of which are contained in Plato's political theory. Of course, to the ephemeral, unenthusiastic dilettantes, who are ignorant of the best poets of all types, this kind of poetics would seem very much like a book of trigonometry to a child who just wants to draw pictures. Only a man who knows or possesses a subject can make use of the philosophy of that subject; only he will be able to understand what that philosophy means and what it's attempting to do. But philosophy can't inoculate someone with experience and sense, or pull them out of a hat—and it shouldn't want to do so. To those who knew it already, philosophy of course brings nothing new; but only through it does it become knowledge and thereby assume a new form.

253. In the nobler and more original sense of the word correct—meaning a conscious main and subordinate development of the inmost and most minute aspects of a work in line with the spirit of the whole, the practical reflection of the artist—there probably is no modern poet more correct than Shakespeare. Similarly, he is also systematic as no other poet is: sometimes because of those antitheses that bring into picturesque contrast individuals, masses, even worlds; sometimes through musical symmetry on the same great scale, through gigantic repetitions and refrains; often by a parody of the letter and an irony on the spirit of

romantic drama; and always through the most sublime and complete individuality and the most variegated portrayal of that individuality, uniting all the degrees of poetry, from the most carnal imitation to the most spiritual characterization.

254. Even before *Hermann und Dorothea* appeared, people compared it to Voss's *Luise*. Its publication should have put an end to comparisons, but, in the form of a letter of introduction to the public, *Luise* still—and rightly so—is helpful to the former poem in its travels. With posterity it will be a recommendation for Luise that she stood godmother to Dorothea. [AW]

255. The more poetry becomes science, the more it also becomes art. If poetry is to become art, if the artist is to have a thorough understanding and knowledge of his ends and means, his difficulties and his subjects, then the poet will have to philosophize about his art. If he is to be more than a mere contriver and artisan, if he is to be an expert in his field and understand his fellow citizens in the kingdom of art, then he will have to become a philologist as well.

256. The basic error of sophistic aesthetics is to consider beauty merely as something given, as a psychological phenomenon. Of course, beauty isn't simply the empty thought of something that should be created, but at the same time the thing itself, one of the human spirit's original ways of acting: not simply a necessary fiction, but also a fact, that is, an eternally transcendental one.

257. German parties are serious; their comedies and satires are serious; their criticism is serious; all of their belles lettres are serious. Must anything amusing in this nation always be either unconscious or involuntary? [AW]

258. All poetry that wants to produce an effect, and all music that tries to imitate the comic or tragic excesses and exaggerations of eccentric poetry for the sake of exhibiting itself or of making an impression, is rhetorical.

259. A. You say that fragments are the real form of universal philosophy. The form is irrelevant. But what can such fragments do and be for the greatest and most serious concern of humanity, for the perfection of knowledge? B. Nothing but a Lessingean salt against spiritual sloth, perhaps a cynical *lanx satura* in the style of old Lucilius or Horace, or

even the *fermenta cognitionis** for a critical philosophy, marginal glosses to the text of the age.

260. Wieland thought that his career, spanning almost half a century, began with the dawn of our literature and ended with its twilight. A really candid confession of a natural optical illusion. [AW]

261. Just as the motto "Mad but clever" of the poetical vagabond in *Claudine von Villabella*† also describes the character of many a work of genius, so too the opposite slogan might be applied to witless correctness: sane but stupid. [AW]

262. Every good human being is always progressively becoming God. To become God, to be human, to cultivate oneself are all expressions that mean the same thing.

263. True mysticism is morality at its most exalted.

264. You shouldn't try to symphilosophize with everyone, but only with those who are *à la hauteur.*

265. Some people have a genius for truth; many have a talent for error—a talent that is accompanied by an equally great industry. As with many a tasty tidbit, the ingredients for a single error are often gathered together with tireless effort from all the continents of the human spirit.

266. Couldn't we have a provisional philosophy right now, even before drafting a logical constitution? And isn't every philosophy provisional until that constitution has been sanctioned by acceptance?

267. The more one knows, the more one still has to learn. Ignorance increases in the same proportion as knowledge—or rather, not ignorance, but the knowledge of ignorance.

268. A so-called happy marriage is to love as a correct poem is to an improvised song.

269. W. [August Wilhelm Schlegel] said of a young philosopher: he has a theory ovarium in the brain and, like a hen, lays a theory every day; and that's his only possible time of rest in his continual movement of self-creation and self-destruction—which could be a tiresome maneuver. [AW]

* *Lanx satura* and *fermenta cognitionis* are Latin terms meaning, respectively, a full plate (of food) and the yeast or leaven of knowledge. *Satura* is also the Latin word for satire.

† *Claudine von Villabella* (1776), a "singspiel" by Goethe.

270. As is well known, Leibniz went to Spinoza to have his glasses made; and that's the only contact he had with him or his philosophy. If only he had also ordered his eyes there, so that he might have gazed at least from a distance into that continent of philosophy that was unknown to him and where Spinoza has his home.

271. Perhaps one has to be arch-modern in order to gain a transcendental perspective on antiquity. Winckelmann felt the Greeks like a Greek. Hemsterhuis, on the other hand, knew how to circumscribe modern amplitude beautifully with ancient simplicity, and from the height of his culture he cast, as if from a free frontier, equally meaningful glances into the old and the new world. [AW]

272. Why shouldn't there be immoral people as well as unphilosophical and unpoetical ones? Antipolitical or unlawful people are the only ones who shouldn't be tolerated.

273. Mysticism is what the eye of the lover alone sees in his beloved. Anyone can have his own mysticism, but he must keep it to himself. There are doubtless a great many people who parody the beauty of antiquity, but surely some too who mystify it, and therefore have to keep it to themselves. Both attitudes are removed from the sense of its pure enjoyment, and the way it can be regained.*

274. Every philosophy of philosophy that excludes Spinoza must be spurious.

275. People are always complaining that German authors write for such a small circle, and even sometimes just for themselves. That's how it should be. This is how German literature will gain more and more spirit and character. And perhaps in the meantime an audience will spring into being.

276. Leibniz was such a passionate moderate that he even wanted to fuse the I and the not-I, as well as Catholicism and Protestantism. And he thought of activity and passivity as differing only in degree. This is to exaggerate harmony and pursue moderation to the point of parody.

277. To believe in the Greeks is only another fashion of the age. People are rather fond of listening to declamations about the Greeks. But if someone were to come and say, here are some, then nobody is at home.

278. Much seeming stupidity is really folly, which is more common

* The last sentence of this fragment is by Friedrich Schlegel; the rest by his brother, August Wilhelm.

than one might think. Folly is an absolute wrongness of tendency, a complete lack of historical spirit.

279. Leibniz's *Method of Jurisprudence* is, for all practical purposes, a general display of his intentions. He designed it for everyone: for the practical man, the chancery clerk, the professor, the tutor. Its uniqueness consists merely in its combination of juristic substance with theological form. His *Theodicy,* on the other hand, is a lawyer's writ in God's defense against Bayle and accomplices. [S]

280. People think it unfortunate that there's no specific feeling to indicate physical health, but that for illness there is. The wisdom of this arrangement of nature can be seen from the state of the sciences, where the situation is reversed and where someone suffering from dropsy, consumption, or jaundice believes, when he compares himself with a healthy man, that there's no difference between them, other than the one between fat and thin, or brunet and blond. [S]

281. Fichte's theory of knowledge is a philosophy about the subject matter of Kant's philosophy. He doesn't say much about form because he is a master of it, but if the essence of the critical method is that the theory of the determining ability and the system of determined affective impressions should be intimately united in it, like object and idea, in a prestabilized harmony, then it might very well be that even formally he is a Kant raised to the second power, and the theory of knowledge much more critical than it seems to be. Especially the new version of the theory of knowledge is always simultaneously philosophy and philosophy of philosophy. There may be valid meanings of the word critical that don't apply to every work of Fichte's, but in Fichte one has to look as he does—without paying attention to anything else—only at the whole and at the one thing that really matters. Only in this way can one see and understand the identity of his philosophy with Kant's. And besides, one can never be too critical.

282. When man can't progress any further, he resorts to some dictatorial command or despotic act or rash decision. [N]

283. Whoever seeks will doubt. But a genius discloses unabashedly and confidently what he sees going on in himself, because he isn't embarrassed to describe himself and so in turn his description isn't embarrassed by him. On the contrary, his perception and the thing perceived seem to harmonize and unite freely into a single work. When we speak of the outer world, when we describe real objects, then we act as the genius does. Without genius none of us would even exist at all. Genius

is necessary for all things. But what is usually called genius, is the genius of genius. [N]

284. The spirit comes equipped with an eternal proof of its own existence. [N]

285. A transcendental perspective on this life still awaits us. Only then will it become really meaningful for us. [N]

286. The life of a truly canonical person must be thoroughly symbolic. Isn't every death, according to this premise, a redemptory death? More or less, it goes without saying. And couldn't a number of extremely interesting inferences be drawn from this? [N]

287. Only then do I show that I've understood an author: when I can act in his sense, when I can translate him and transform him in diverse ways, without diminishing his individuality. [N]

288. We are close to waking when we dream about dreaming. [N]

289. Truly sociable wit has no punch. There's a species of it that's only a magical play of colors in the higher spheres. [N]

290. Inspiration is something wherein the spirit reveals itself endlessly, at any rate often reappears in a new shape; and not simply once, at some point near the beginning, as in many philosophical systems. [N]

291. There are Germans everywhere. Germanism is confined to a particular state as little as Romanism, Hellenism, or Britannism are; these are universal characteristics of humanity that have only on occasion achieved perfect universality. Germanism is genuine popularity and therefore an ideal. [N]

292. Death is a triumph over the self that, like all self-mastery, procures a new and easier existence. [N]

293. Is the reason why we need so much strength and effort for something common and vulgar perhaps to be found in the fact that nothing is more uncommon for the real man than wretched commonness? [N]

294. Brilliant subtlety is the subtler use of subtlety. [N]

295. The famous prize competition of the Berlin Academy of Sciences on the topic of the progress of metaphysics elicited answers of all sorts: one that was hostile, one favorable, one unnecessary, another one, then one that was dramatic, and even a Socratic one by Hülsen. A little bit of enthusiasm, even if crude, a certain touch of universality, can hardly fail to make an impression and gain an audience for a paradox. But a feeling

for pure genius is a rarity even among cultivated people. No wonder then that there are only a few who are aware that Hülsen's work is one of those that always has been and still is extremely rare in philosophy: a work in the strictest sense of the word, a work of art, all of one cloth, second only to Fichte in dialectic virtuosity. And that a first essay originally intended only as an occasional piece. Hülsen is wholly master of his thought and expression: he proceeds surely and calmly; and this calm, noble circumspection combined with comprehensive vision and pure humanity is precisely what a historical philosopher, in his antiquarian and now unfashionable dialect, would call Socratic: a term, however, that an artist who has so much philological spirit will simply have to put up with.

296. Though he is such an idyllic character, Fontenelle is still strongly hostile to instinct; he compares pure talent, which he considers impossible, with the pointless artistic industry of beavers. How hard it is not to overlook oneself! For when Fontenelle says, *la gêne fait l'essence et le mérite brillant de la poésie,* it seems almost impossible to define French poetry better in fewer words. But a beaver who was an *academicien* would probably have been hard put to hit on the right phrase with a more perfect lack of awareness.

297. A work is cultivated when it is everywhere sharply delimited, but within those limits limitless and inexhaustible; when it is completely faithful to itself, entirely homogeneous, and nonetheless exalted above itself. Like the education of young Englishmen, the most important thing about it is *le grand tour.* It should have traveled through all the three or four continents of humanity, not in order to round off the edges of individuality, but to broaden its vision and give its spirit more freedom and inner versatility; and thereby greater independence and self-sufficiency.

298. In vain do the orthodox Kantians seek the principle of their philosophy in Kant. It's to be found in Bürger's* poems, and reads: "The words of the Emperor shouldn't be twisted and turned."

299. I rather doubt if the philosophers are very far behind the poets in their sublime lack of awareness.

300. When reason and unreason touch, there's an electric shock. It's called polemics.

* The quotation is from Bürger's ballad "Die Frauen von Weinsberg" ("The Women of Weinsberg").

301. Philosophers still admire only Spinoza's consistency, just as the English only praise Shakespeare's truth.

302. Jumbled ideas should be the rough drafts of philosophy. It's no secret how highly these are valued by connoisseurs of painting. For a man who can't draw philosophical worlds with a crayon and characterize every thought that has a physiognomy with a few strokes of the pen, philosophy will never be an art and consequently never a science. For in philosophy the way to science lies only through art, just as the poet, on the other hand, finds his art only through science.

303. To penetrate ever deeper and to climb ever higher are what philosophers like to do most. And they do it, if we are to believe every word they say, with astonishing rapidity. Moving forward is, however, a rather slow process for them. They compete especially in respect to height, outbidding each other remarkably, like two agents at an auction who have unlimited authority to continue the bidding. But perhaps all philosophy that is philosophical is infinitely high and infinitely deep. Or does Plato occupy a rather lower position than modern philosophers do?

304. Philosophy too is the result of two conflicting forces—of poetry and practice. Where these interpenetrate completely and fuse into one, there philosophy comes into being; and when philosophy disintegrates, it becomes mythology or else returns to life. The wisdom of the Greeks was created out of poetry and law. The most sublime philosophy, some few surmise, may once again turn to poetry; and it is in fact a common occurrence that ordinary people only begin to philosophize according to their own lights after they've stopped living. It seems to me that Schelling's real vocation is to describe better this chemical process of philosophizing, to isolate, wherever possible, its dynamic laws and to separate philosophy—which always must organize and disorganize itself anew—into its living, fundamental forces, and trace these back to their origins. On the other hand, his polemics, particularly his literary critique of philosophy, seem to me to represent a false tendency; and his gift for universality is probably still not sufficiently developed to be able to discover in the philosophy of physics what it seeks.

305. Intention taken to the point of irony and accompanied by the arbitrary illusion of its self-destruction is quite as naive as instinct taken to the point of irony. Just as the naive plays with the contradictions between theory and practice, so the grotesque plays with the wonderful permutations of form and matter, loves the illusion of the random and the strange and, as it were, coquettes with infinite arbitrariness. Humor deals with being and nonbeing, and its true essence is reflection. Hence

its closeness to the elegy and to everything transcendental; and hence its arrogance and its bent for the mysticism of wit. Just as genius is necessary to naiveté, so too an earnest, pure beauty is a requisite of humor. Most of all humor likes to hover about the gently and clearly flowing rhapsodies of philosophy or poetry, and abhors cumbersome masses and disconnected parts.

306. The story of the Gadarene swine is probably a symbolical prophecy from the period of the masterminds, who have now happily plunged themselves into the sea of forgetfulness.

307. When I talk about my antipathy toward cats, I except Peter Lebrecht's puss 'n boots.* His tomcat has claws and whoever has been scratched by these has, quite reasonably, cursed him; but others are amused how he, so to speak, takes his walks on the roof of dramatic art.

308. The thinker needs precisely the same sort of light as the painter: bright, without direct sunshine or blinding reflections, and, wherever possible, falling straight down from above.

309. What kind of ideas must those theorists have had who excluded portraiture from the province of the properly fine, liberal, and creative arts. It's just as if one were to refuse to consider something poetical in which a poet praises his actual mistress. The art of the portrait is the foundation and the touchstone of historical painting. [AW]

310. Recently the unexpected discovery was made that the hero in the Laocoön group is represented as dying: and specifically of apoplexy. It's now impossible to develop connoisseurship any further in this direction, unless somebody were to tell us that Laocoön is really already dead, something that would indeed be quite true in respect to the expert. When any occasion offers, Lessing and Winckelmann are taken to task: not beauty, as the former maintains (actually both do and Mengs along with them), nor the latter's calm grandeur and noble simplicity, are supposed to constitute the fundamental law of Greek art, but rather truth of characterization. Surely all human sculpture, down to the wooden idols of the Kamchadales, tries to characterize. But if one wants to capture the spirit of an object in one stroke, then one doesn't point to what is self-evident and what the object has in common with other objects, but rather to what constitutes its essential individuality. It's impossible to imagine characterless beauty; it always possesses, if not a moral, then certainly a physical character—the beauty of a certain age and sex—or reveals definite physical habits, like the bodies of wrestlers. Ancient art

* Ludwig Tieck's "Der gestiefelte Kater" (1794).

created its forms under the guidance of mythology and conceived them not only in their highest and noblest sense, but joined to every characteristic of form and expression that degree of beauty which it could tolerate without being destroyed. That they also knew how to make this possible where a barbarous taste wouldn't even have been capable of conceiving the idea is almost palpable in, for example, ancient busts of the Medusa. If comic or tragic representations were really an objection to this universal aspiration for beauty, then it would have been too obvious to escape the eyes of such connoisseurs of antiquity as Mengs and Winckelmann. Compare the grossest debauchery of ancient Satyrs and Bacchantes with similar performances from the Flemish school, and you would have to be totally unhellenic yourself not to feel what's still Hellenic in them. It's something completely different to wallow in the filth of vulgar sensuality or, like a god in the shape of an animal, to debase oneself out of wanton lust to that level. In the selection of horrible subjects too, everything still depends on the treatment that can diffuse over such subjects the moderating breath of beauty, and has actually done so in Greek art and poetry. Precisely in the warring elements, in the seemingly insoluble contradiction between the nature of what is represented and the law of representation, the inner harmony of the spirit appears most divine. Or is one going to deny the calm grandeur and noble simplicity of the tragedies of Sophocles, simply because they are so very tragic? Winckelmann very definitely recognized that in the body of Laocoön is expressed the most violent state of suffering and struggle; yet the face, he maintains, reveals the indomitable soul of the hero. Now we are given to understand that Laocoön does not scream because he can no longer scream. Namely, on account of the apoplectic fit. Of course he can't scream; otherwise he would raise his voice against such a distorted portrayal and misconception of his heroic grandeur. [AW]

311. If the English taste in painting is going to spread even further into the continent, as the mechanical elegance of their engravings gives reason to fear, then one would like to propose that we abandon the name "historical painting," which is in any case rather unsuitable, and introduce in its stead "theatrical painting." [AW]

312. In answer to the reproach that the captured Italian paintings in Paris are being treated badly, the man who has been restoring them has offered to exhibit one of Carracci's pictures half restored and half in its original state. An ingenious idea! In the same way, one often sees during some sudden hubbub in the streets a half-shaved face peering out of a window; and, carried out with French vivacity and impatience, this

business of restoration may very well have a great deal in common with the barber's art.

313. The delicate femininity of thought and imagination that adheres to the pictures of Angelika Kauffmann* at times insinuates itself illicitly into her figures; you can read in the eyes of her youths that they would so terribly much like to have girlish bosoms and, if possible, hips as well. Perhaps women painters among the Greeks were conscious of this barrier or gulf imposed on their talents. Of the few that Pliny mentions, he cites for Timarate, Irene, and Lala only pictures with female subjects. [AW]

314. Since the demand everywhere now is for practical applications of moral principles, the usefulness of portraiture will also have to be demonstrated by a reference to domestic bliss. Many a man who has gotten rather bored with looking at his wife will rediscover his pristine feelings when gazing at the purer features of her portrait. [AW]

315. The origin of the Greek elegy, it is said, lies in the Lydian double flute. Won't it be looked for soon in the human spirit as well?

316. For empiricists, who are sometimes capable of raising themselves to the level of an aspiration to thoroughness and a belief in great men, Fichte's theory of knowledge still will surely never mean more than the third issue of the *Philosophical Journal*†: the constitution.

317. If nothing too much means a little of everything, then Garve‡ is the greatest German philosopher.

318. Heraclitus said that reason can't be learned by trying to know everything. Nowadays it seems more necessary to remember that pure reason alone doesn't make one educated.

319. In order to be one-sided, we at least need to have one side. This is by no means the case with those people who (like the true rhapsodists in Plato's description of the species) have an understanding only of one thing, not because it's everything to them but because it's the only thing they have, and a thing they're forever repeating. It isn't so much that their mind is enclosed in narrow limits as that it stops altogether, and where it stops, empty space immediately begins. Their whole being is

* Angelika Kauffmann (1741–1807), German painter who, in part because she had been a child prodigy, was internationally famous.

† *The Philosophisches Journal* (1795–1800), to which Fichte contributed occasionally.

‡ Christian Garve (1742–1798), German philosophical popularizer.

like a dot that still retains some resemblance to gold: namely, that it can be hammered into unbelievably thin and large sheets of foil.

320. Why is an entry for the ridiculous always missing in those fashionable catalogues of all possible principles of morality? Perhaps because this principle is generally valid only in practice?

321. No mere amateur would dare pass judgment on even the slightest exemplar of ancient craftsmanship. But anybody who can produce some sort of conjecture or commentary, or who perhaps has been to Italy, thinks he has a right to talk about classical poetry and philosophy. Here for once they've put too much faith in instinct: for it may very well be one of the demands of reason that every human being should be a poet and a philosopher, and reason's demands, they say, bring faith in their wake. This particular species of the naive could be called the philological naive.

322. The continual repetition of a theme in philosophy is a result of two distinct causes. Either the author has discovered something, but he doesn't yet know himself quite what; and in this sense Kant's writings are rather musical. Or else the author has heard something new, but hasn't understood it properly; and in this sense the Kantians are the greatest musicians of literature.

323. That a prophet isn't heeded in his own country must be the reason why clever writers so often avoid having a homeland in the realm of the arts and sciences. They prefer to concentrate instead on traveling and on writing travel books, or else on reading and translating travelogues; and for that they receive the accolade of universality.

324. All genres are good, says Voltaire, except the one that's boring. But what is the boring genre? It may be bigger than all the rest, and many paths may lead to it. But the shortest probably is when a work itself is unsure of its own proper genre. Did Voltaire never follow this path?

325. Just as Simonides called poetry a talking picture, and painting a mute poem, so might one say that history is philosophy in the state of becoming, and philosophy completed history. But Apollo, who neither speaks nor keeps silent but intimates, no longer is worshipped; and wherever a Muse shows herself, people immediately want to carry her off to be cross-examined. How perversely even Lessing treats this clever Greek's beautiful insight, who perhaps had no opportunity to

think of "descriptive poetry,"* and who would have considered it quite unnecessary to remember that poetry is spiritual music also, since it would never have occurred to him that the two arts could be separated.

326. Once seized by the rage for progress, ordinary people who usually have no feeling for the future really go at it literally. With head forward and eyes closed they march into the four corners of the world as if the spirit of progress had arms and legs. And if they don't succeed in breaking their necks, then one of two things usually happens: either they become restive, or else they turn tail. The latter class of people has to be dealt with in the manner of Caesar who, in the heat of battle, had the habit of grabbing cowardly soldiers by the throat and turning their faces to the enemy.

327. Masters working in related fields are often those who understand each other least, and even spiritual closeness has a habit of causing dislike. Hence it isn't unusual for generous and cultivated people, who all write, think, or live in a godlike fashion—though approaching God in their own individual ways—to deny each other's religion: not because of any party or system, but through lack of understanding for religious individuality. Religion is quite simply as vast as nature, and even the best priest has only a little piece of it. There are infinite varieties of religion which nonetheless seem to fall of themselves under a few main headings. Some people have a great gift for worshipping the Saviour, for miracles and visions. These are the ones whom the common man calls either dreamers or poets. Another person perhaps knows more about God the Father and is adept at mysteries and prophecies. He is a philosopher and, like the healthy man who rarely talks about health, won't have much to say about religion, least of all his own. Others believe in the Holy Spirit and whatever is connected with it—revelations, inspirations, etc.—but in nothing else. These are the artistic people. It's very natural and even unavoidable to want to unite all the different types of religion in oneself. But in attempting to do so, the same thing happens as when one tries to mix the different genres of poetry. Whoever believes really instinctively both in the Saviour and in the Holy Spirit is already practicing religion as an isolated art, and that's one of the most wretched professions an honorable man can have. What would someone who believed in all three have to endure!

328. Only someone who risks himself can risk others. So too only someone who annihilates himself has a right to annihilate another. [S]

* English in the original.

329. It's childish to want to persuade people of something for which they have no feeling. Pretend they aren't there and show them what they should learn to see. This is both highly cosmopolitan and highly moral; very polite and very cynical. [S]

330. Many people have spirit or feeling or imagination. But because singly these qualities can only manifest themselves as fleeting, airy shapes, nature has taken care to bond them chemically to some common earthly matter. To discover this bond is the unremitting task of those who have the greatest capacity for sympathy, but it requires a great deal of practice in intellectual chemistry as well. The man who could discover an infallible reagent for every beautiful quality in human nature would reveal to us a new world. As in the vision of the prophet, the endless field of broken and dismembered humanity would suddenly spring into life. [S]

331. There are people who take no interest in themselves: some because they are simply incapable of taking any interest, even in others; others because they are sure of their uniform progress and because their self-creating power no longer requires any reflected sympathy, because in them freedom in all its noblest and most beautiful manifestations has, as it were, become natural. So that here in appearance too, the lowest and the highest meet. [S]

332. Among people who move with the times there are some who, like running commentaries, don't want to stop at the difficult places.

333. According to Leibniz, God exists because nothing prevents the possibility of his existence. In this respect, Leibniz's philosophy is quite godlike.

334. The age isn't ready for it, they always say. Is that a reason why it shouldn't happen? If something can't yet be, then it must at least always continue to become. [S]

335. If the world is the aggregate of all that is dynamically affective, then the cultivated man will never succeed in living in just one world. This single world should be the best: one that can only be sought and never found. But the belief in it is as sacred as the belief in the uniqueness of friendship and love. [S]

336. A man who can be the life of a party with his way of offhandedly cutting out little silhouettes of himself in various poses and handing them around, or who is ready at the slightest hint to transform himself into a cicerone and display what he has inside himself to everyone who stops at his door (like a country squire showing the tangled grounds of

his English garden): this kind of man they call open. For those who don't leave their laziness behind when they go out into society, and who have an incidental bent for examining and classifying whatever they see around them, this quality is unquestionably convenient. And there are enough people like this, people constructed exactly like garden houses: where every window is a door and everyone is urged to sit down in the supposition that they won't expect to find more than a thief could clean out in one night without making himself particularly rich in the process. A true human being has something more in him than these wretched household items and won't, of course, expose himself in the same way, because it would be futile in any case to try to get to know him from even the best and most intelligent descriptions of himself. There is no knowledge of character except through intuition. You yourselves have to find the point of view from which you can survey the whole man and must know how to infer his inner self from appearances, according to fixed laws and sure intuitions. So that for any real purpose, this kind of self-explanation is superfluous. And to require openness in this sense is as presumptuous as it is ignorant. Who could dissect himself and, like the subject of an anatomical lecture, tear the individual limb out of the context that alone makes it beautiful and intelligible, and, as it were, squirt out with words whatever is most subtle and delicate in it, so that the whole is distorted into a monstrosity? The inner life vanishes under such treatment; it's the most wretched kind of suicide. A human being should be like a work of art which, though openly exhibited and freely accessible, can nevertheless be enjoyed and understood only by those who bring feeling and study to it. A man should be unencumbered and move himself in accordance with his nature, without asking who is looking at him and how. It's only this serene unconcern that really deserves the name of openness: for open is where everyone can enter without resort to violence; though it goes without saying that even what isn't nailed down and bolted should be treated with consideration. That's the extent of the hospitality a human being must provide within his own heart; everything else is not out of place only in the effusions and delights of intimate friendship. In order even to find this narrower circle, a more privileged communication is of course necessary, a diffident, shy openness that discovers its inmost existence here and there through the slight pressure of its springs, and thereby reveals its tendency toward love and friendship. But this is no permanent condition; rather, like a divining rod, it comes to life only at the point where the instinct of friendship hopes to salvage the treasure. Loving souls are led beyond and to either side of this narrow line of moral beauty only through misunderstanding: by the unsuccessful attempts of this beautiful instinct to

get at that attractive reserve which doesn't want to disguise but only hide itself, and which is so magically intriguing to anyone who is able to divine excellence; by sanguine hopes and an excitability set in motion by even the slightest affinity and leading to that naive cordiality which, like the Freemasons, believes that at least the lowest rank can't be conferred on too many people. These are delightful and interesting phenomena because they are still at the borderline of what is the best and only the uninitiated would confuse them with the mannerisms that arise out of pure incapacity. Just as we'd rather deny merit to any book we don't understand, so many people are reserved only because they want to avoid questions about themselves; and in the same way that many people can't read without at the same time saying the words out loud, so many people can't look at themselves without immediately telling us what they see. But this reserve is timid and childishly unsure of itself, and this merely apparent openness doesn't care if someone is there and who it is, but simply pours forth its substance into the void and in all directions like an electric discharge. Another species of boring openness, one that caters more to the listener, is that of the enthusiasts who lecture, explicate, and translate themselves because they consider themselves exemplars in whom everything is instructive and edifying. Heinrich Stilling* is very likely the most perfect specimen of this type; and how is it that he's now sunk so low? With whatever we merely possess, we can afford without much danger to be much more generous than we are. No one should want to keep completely to himself experiences and insights that depend on local and temporal circumstances; they must always be accessible to every honorable man. Of course, there's also a not exactly enviable way of having opinions, feelings, and principles just sort of by the way, and whoever is in that position naturally has much more scope for his insignificant openness. Whereas, those people whose idiosyncrasy of feeling or character always comes into play are very badly off. One has to allow them to be more reserved even toward what others are usually only loosely attached to, until a complete knowledge of themselves and others gives them an unfailing tact for separating entirely the thing that these people are really concerned with from their own individual conception of it, and for discovering for every substance the mutually shared form that is so alien to them, but so much desired by others. In this way, notes and criticisms can be communicated without alluding to ideas and without profaning sensations; and the sanctity of feeling can be preserved without denying to anyone what might even remotely be

* Heinrich Stilling or Jung-Stilling, but actually Johann Heinrich Jung (1740–1817), German pietistic and spiritualist writer and sentimental novelist.

his due. Whoever has reached this point can be open to anyone according to the measure of his deserts. Everyone would think to have and know him, but only an equal or someone to whom he had conferred the gift of himself would really possess him. [S]

337. A man is arrogant who possesses both intellect and character, and who lets us know every now and then that this combination is useful and good. Whoever demands both from women too is a misogynist. [S]

338. Only the external formative and creative power of man is changeable and subject to the seasons. Change is a word for the physical world only. The ego loses nothing and engulfs nothing; it lives together with all that belongs to it, its thoughts and feelings, in the lordly freedom of immortality. You can only lose something that you've put now in one place, then in another. In the ego, all things are created organically and everything has its proper place. What you can lose never belonged to you. This is true even of individual thoughts. [S]

339. Feeling that is aware of itself becomes spirit; spirit is inner conviviality, and soul, hidden amiability. But the real vital power of inner beauty and perfection is temperament. One can have a little spirit without having any soul, and a good deal of soul without much temperament. But the instinct for moral greatness which we call temperament needs only to learn to speak to have spirit. It needs only to move and love to become all soul; and if it is mature, it has a feeling for everything. Spirit is like a music of thoughts; where soul is, there feelings too have outline and form, noble proportions, and charming coloration. Temperament is the poetry of elevated reason and, united with philosophy and moral experience, it gives rise to that nameless art which seizes the confused transitoriness of life and shapes it into an eternal unity.

340. What's often called love is merely a peculiar kind of magnetism. It begins with a tiresomely titillating placement *en rapport,* consists of disorganization, and concludes with revolting clearsightedness and much fatigue. Ordinarily one's also sober during the process. [S]

341. Whoever has discovered a higher viewpoint for himself than that of his external existence is able to remove himself from the world for brief moments. Similarly, those who haven't yet found themselves are thrust into the world only for brief moments, as if by magic, to see if perhaps they might not discover themselves. [S]

342. A beautiful spirit smiling at itself is a thing of beauty; and the moment when a great personality looks at itself calmly and earnestly is a sublime moment. But greater still is when two friends perceive at the

same time, clearly and completely, what is holiest in each other's hearts, and when, mutually happy in the assurance of their mutual worth, they can sense the presence of their limitations only by the knowledge of having been made whole through the existence of the other person. That's the intellectual intuition of friendship.

343. If you happen to be an interesting philosophical phenomenon and an excellent writer as well, then you can be quite sure of gaining a reputation as a great philosopher. Often one gets it even without the latter prerequisite.

344. Philosophy is a mutual search for omniscience.

345. It would be a good thing if a transcendental Limné were to classify the various egos and publish an exact description of them, accompanied in each case by a colored etching. Then the philosophizing ego would no longer be so commonly confused with the philosophized ego.

346. The renowned *salto mortale* of the philosophers is often only a false alarm. In their thoughts they take a frightfully long approach run and then congratulate themselves on having braved the danger; but if one only looks a little more closely, they're still sitting on the same old spot. It's like Don Quixote's flight on the wooden horse. Jacobi too seems to me someone who, though he can never stop moving, always stays where he is: caught in a squeeze between two kinds of philosophy, the systematic and the absolute, between Spinoza and Leibniz, where his delicate spirit has gotten to be rather pinched and sore.

347. It's a good deal more risky to assume that someone is a philosopher than to maintain that he's a sophist: if the latter should never be allowed, then the former is even less admissible.

348. There are elegies of a heroically lamentable sort that might be explained as follows: they are the feelings of wretchedness at the thought of the silliness of the relationship of dullness to folly.

349. Tolerance has no object other than destructiveness. Whoever has no desire to destroy anything has no need to be tolerated. Whoever wants to destroy everything should not be tolerated. The range between these two extremes is where tolerance exercises the full scope of its powers. For if you can't be intolerant, tolerance would be meaningless. [S]

350. No poetry, no reality. Just as there is, despite all the senses, no external world without imagination, so too there is no spiritual world without feeling, no matter how much sense there is. Whoever only has

sense can perceive no human being, but only what is human: all things disclose themselves to the magic wand of feeling alone. It fixes people and seizes them; like the eye, it looks on without being conscious of its own mathematical operation. [S]

351. Have you ever been able to touch the whole extent of another person, including all his rough spots, without causing him pain? Then both of you need furnish no further proof of being cultivated human beings. [S]

352. It's an invention of historians of nature that her creative powers labored long in vain exertions and that, after exhausting themselves in forms that could have no lasting life, conceived still others that, though living, were doomed to perish because they lacked the strength to reproduce themselves. The self-creative power of mankind is still at this level. Few live, and most of those who do only have fleeting existence. If they have found their egos in a propitious moment, then they still lack the strength to procreate them out of their own selves. Death is their habitual state, and if they once come to life, they imagine themselves transported into another world. [S]

353. That story about a Frenchman of the *ancien régime* who delivered his patents of nobility to the courts in order to ask for their return after he'd made a small fortune in trade is an allegory about modesty. Whoever would like to be reputed to have this virtue will have to act likewise with his inner nobility. First, let him deliver it *ad depositum* to public opinion and thereby gain the right to demand it back again, so that he may then manage with good luck and hard work an export-import business in other people's services, talents, and ideas: first-rate and medium quality, just as the customer likes it. [S]

354. Whoever wants to fuse tolerance and rigorism would need to be more than self-denying in the former and more than one-sided in the latter. But is this permitted? [S]

355. Pitiful, to be sure, is what the pragmatic philosophy of the French and English is, though they are considered to be so well versed in the knowledge of what man is, despite their failure to speculate on what he should be. Every organic being has its rules, its duties; and if one doesn't know them, how can one possibly understand that being? Where do they get the organizing principle of their scientific descriptions, and what standard do they use to measure man? But at least they're just as good as those who begin and end with the concept of duty. The latter class aren't aware that the moral man rotates around his axis freely by

means of his own power. They've discovered the point outside earth that only a mathematician should try to find, but they've lost the earth itself. In order to say what a man should do, one has to be a man, and know it too. [S]

356. *Knowing the world* means knowing that one doesn't signify much on it, means believing that no philosophical dream can be realized in it, and means hoping that it will never be otherwise, or at best only somewhat flimsier. [S]

357. Of a good bible Lessing demands adumbrations, hints, assays; he also approves of tautologies that sharpen one's acumen, and of allegories and parables that put the abstract in didactic dress; and he is confident that the mysteries of revelation are destined to be transformed into the truths of reason. According to this ideal, what book is more fit to be chosen by the philosophers for their bible than the *Critique of Pure Reason?*

358. At one point in describing the action and essence of a monad, Leibniz uses the remarkable phrase: *Cela peut aller jusqu'au sentiment*. It's tempting to apply this to Leibniz himself. If someone goes about making physics more universal, treating it as if it were a part of mathematics, and treating that as if it were a game of charades, and if he then sees that he has to bring theology in as well, whose mysteries appeal to his sense of diplomacy and whose confused controversies tempt his surgical abilities: *cela peut aller jusqu'à la philosophie*, even if he has even more instinct than Leibniz. But surely such a philosophy must always remain a muddled, incomplete something, much like Leibniz's idea of the primeval elemental substance which, in the manner of geniuses, has a habit of endowing particular objects in the external world with the form of its inner being.

359. Friendship is a partial marriage, and love is friendship from all sides and in all directions: universal friendship. The consciousness of necessary limits is the most essential and rarest thing in friendship.

360. If any art exists that could be called the black art, then it must be the art of making nonsense fluent, clear, and flexible, and of organizing it into a mass. The French possess masterpieces of this kind. Every great calamity is at its deepest root a serious grimace, a *mauvaise plaisanterie*. Therefore, all hail and honor to those heroes who never tire of struggling against a folly that often carries in its most trivial aspects the germ of an endless succession of horrible devastations! Lessing and Fichte are the princes of peace of future centuries.

361. Leibniz views existence as an office in court that one has to hold in fee. His God isn't merely the feudal liege lord of existence but also, as his royal prerogative, has sole possession of freedom, harmony, and synthetic power. To steal from the divine privy chancellory a title of nobility for a slumbering monad is a fruitful affair.

362. The ability to find for any given end the means which will satisfy that end most fully, without regard for any other consequences, and the ability to select the means in such a way that, aside from its relation to the particular end, nothing else will ensue from it which could either frustrate another one of our ends or else preclude thereby some object from our future exertions: these are two quite different talents, even though language prescribes the word intelligence for both. One shouldn't waste it on just anyone who knows how to display a sense of propriety only in the most ordinary circumstances, or who has acquired, by means of a little self-observation, a certain degree of knowledge about human nature, something that's neither very difficult nor particularly praiseworthy. The concept of intelligence really does make one imagine something meaningful and important, and a talent for making the most expedient choice out of a set list of means is something so trivial that even the most ordinary mind is equal to it and could only be led astray by some mad passionate delusion. To go to great expense for such an object with so imposing a word is surely not worth the trouble. And furthermore, common linguistic usage doesn't justify it. One never ascribes intelligence to nature or to the supreme being, despite the fact that one praises this faculty very highly in all their works. It would be better, therefore, to retain the word only to describe the latter quality. While striving to achieve one particular end, to consider at the same time all real and possible ends, and calculate the incidental natural consequences which each and every action can have, is indeed something great, something that could be said of only a few people. That in common usage something like this is really meant by the word intelligence is also evident from the feeling which is aroused when one uses a certain tone in calling somebody intelligent. Our first reaction is to think the man impressive, and the second, to search him for signs of sympathy and irony, and find him hateful if we don't discover both qualities in him. The latter is perhaps as common as the former, and is certainly quite as natural the moment we define intelligence in this sense. For in fact we expect everyone to be more or less available for our own purposes, and at the same time we want him to become for us, by the free, natural play of his disposition and his artless and unguarded expressions, an object of sympathy and, as occasion warrants, of amusement

or innocent mockery as well. With others we're fairly certain of gaining these two objectives even against their will. But the extraordinarily intelligent man, who regulates his actions so that they can result in nothing but what he's already foreseen, renders us dependent on his good will for both; and if he isn't sympathetically disposed to entering consciously and freely into the intentions of others, and if he lacks the irony that might cause him to raise himself consciously outside his intelligence and, by renouncing it, offer himself up as one of nature's creatures to whatever use society may find for him, then it's natural for us to want to have the place he occupies in our group filled by someone else. [S]

363. To idolize the object of love is in the nature of the lover. But it's something else to use one's strained imagination to substitute a new image and then admire it as absolute perfection, when it only seems perfect to us because we aren't cultivated enough to perceive the infinite fullness of human nature and the harmony of its contradictions. Laura is the product of her poet. And yet the real Laura may very well have been a woman of whom a less one-sided lover might have made both something less and something more than a saint.

364. Idea for a catechism of reason for noble ladies. The Ten Commandments. (1) Thou shalt have no other lover before him, but thou shalt be capable of friendship without toying with the shadow of love and without coquetry or idolization. (2) Thou shalt not make unto thee any ideal, neither of an angel in heaven, nor of a hero in a poem or novel, nor one that is dreamed up or imagined: rather shalt thou love a man as he is. For nature, your mistress, is a jealous divinity and visits the infatuations of the girl upon the third and upon the fourth generation of the feelings of the woman. (3) Thou shalt not profane even the smallest of the shrines of love: for that woman shall lose her tender feeling who desecrates her favor and delivers herself up for gifts and chattels, or merely in order to become a mother in peace and security. (4) Remember the sabbath day of your heart, to keep it holy, and if they hold you, then break free or perish. (5) Honor the individuality and the will of your children, that they may prosper and live vigorously on earth. (6) Thou shalt not conceive life intentionally. (7) Thou shalt not contract a marriage that may have to be broken. (8) Thou shalt desire to be loved where thou dost not love. (9) Thou shalt not bear false witness for men; thou shalt not extenuate their barbarity in word or deed. (10) Covet the education, art, wisdom, and honor of men. The Credo. (1) I believe in immortal humanity, which was before it assumed the garment of masculinity and femininity. (2) I believe that I do not live to obey commands or to seek

diversions, but rather to be and to become; and I believe in the power of the will and of education to make me draw near once more to the infinite, to deliver me from the chains of miseducation, and to make me independent of the restraints of sex. (3) I believe in inspiration and virtue, in the honor of art and the charm of science, in the friendship of men and the love for my country, in vanished glory and future progress. [S]

365. Mathematics is, as it were, sensual logic. It relates to philosophy as the material arts, music and sculpture, relate to poetry.

366. Understanding is mechanical, wit is chemical, genius is organic spirit.

367. People often think they can insult writers by comparing them to factories. But why shouldn't a real writer be a manufacturer as well? Shouldn't he devote all his life to the business of shaping literary substance into forms that are practical and useful on a grand scale? How well many bunglers could use only a small fraction of the industry and precision that we hardly notice anymore in the most ordinary tools!

368. There already have been and are doctors who want to philosophize about their art. Only businessmen make no show even about this and are quite quaintly modest.

369. A deputy is something quite different from a representative. Representative means only someone who, whether elected or not, portrays in his person a political whole that is, as it were, identical with himself; he is like the visible world-soul of the state. This idea apparently often constituted the spirit of past monarchies and was perhaps nowhere so purely and consistently put into practice as in Sparta. The Spartan kings were at once the supreme priests, generals, and presidents of public education. They had little to do with actual administration; they were quite simply nothing more than kings in the representative sense. The power of the priest, general, and educator is by its very nature undefined, universal, more or less a kind of lawful despotism. Only by virtue of the spirit of representation can it be softened and legitimized.

370. What is it, if not absolute monarchy, when all essential decisions are made secretly by a cabinet, and when the parliament is allowed to discuss and quarrel about the forms openly and ostentatiously? In this way an absolute monarchy might very well have a kind of constitution that to the uninitiated might even appear to be republican.

371. In order to determine the difference between a duty toward oneself

and a duty toward others, it would probably be hard to find other criteria than the ones a certain simpleton recommended for distinguishing between tragedy and comedy. If you laugh and get something out of it at the end, then think of it as a duty toward yourself; if you're closer to crying and someone else gets the benefit of it, then think of it as a duty toward your neighbor. It is obvious that in the final analysis the whole classification amounts to this, and obvious too that it's really a completely immoral distinction. Out of it emerges the notion that there are, as it were, two completely different and conflicting attitudes that either ought to be kept carefully apart or else artificially reconciled by means of some petty arithmetic. And out of this there arise the phantoms of dedication, sacrifice, magnanimity, and every other sort of moral mischief. In fact, the whole morality of all systems is anything but moral. [S]

372. In the works of the greatest poets there often breathes the spirit of a different art. Might not this be the case with painters too? Doesn't Michelangelo in a certain sense paint like a sculptor, Raphael like an architect, Correggio like a musician? And surely they aren't for this reason lesser painters than Titian, who was only a painter.

373. Philosophy was *in ecclesia pressa** among the ancients, as art is among the moderns. Morality, however, has always had a difficult time of it; utility and legality even begrudge the fact of its existence.

374. If one doesn't look at Voltaire's artistry but simply at the message of his book, namely that ridiculing the universe is philosophy and quite the proper thing to do, then one could say that the French philosophers use *Candide* in the same way that women use their femininity—they find an application for it everywhere.

375. Of all things, energy in particular least needs to prove what it can do. If circumstances require, it can quite easily make a show of being passive and be believed. It's satisfied to do its work silently, without accompaniment and without gesticulations. The virtuoso, the genius, want to carry out some particular intention, create some work, etc. The energetic man always makes use of only the moment, and is always ready and infinitely flexible. He has an infinite number of projects, or none at all; for energy is really more than mere agility: it is effective, certainly externally effective, but it is also universal power, through which the whole man shapes himself and acts.

* "In the service of the church."

376. Passive Christians usually regard their religion from a medical, active Christians from a mercantile point of view.

377. Does the state have a right to sanction change, purely arbitrarily, as being more valid than other treaties, and thereby deprive these of their force?

378. It's not unusual for someone who has long seemed and been considered cold to astonish the whole world later with the most violent explosions of passion, brought on by extraordinary provocations. This is a truly sensitive person whose first impressions aren't strong but have lasting effects, penetrating deeply into his heart and growing there secretly, nourished by their own strength. Always to react immediately is a sign of weakness. That inner crescendo of feelings is the mark of an energetic personality. [S]

379. The Satan of Italian and English poets may be more poetical, but the German Satan is more satanic; and to that extent one might say that Satan is a German invention. Unquestionably he is a favorite of German poets and philosophers. So he probably must have his good side, and even if his character consists of unlimited willfulness and scheming, and a fondness for destroying, confusing, and leading astray, one still finds him not infrequently in the very best society. But isn't it possible that up to now people have been mistaken about his real proportions? A great Satan always has something rough and robust about him; at best he only suits the pretensions to impiety of those caricatures who can't get beyond a mere affectation of intelligence. Why are the "Satanisks," the lesser Satans, not present in Christian mythology? There exists perhaps no fitter word and image for those vices *en miniature* which innocence is fond of feigning, and for the charmingly grotesque music of colors, consisting of the most sublime and most delicate mischief which so delights in playing about the surface of greatness. The classical Cupids are only a different species of these Satanisks.

380. Reading aloud and declaiming are not one and the same thing. The latter demands a really superlative, the former a moderately good elocution. Declamation belongs in the distance, not in a room. The loud voice to which it must raise itself in order to produce the required variation offends the sensitive ear. The whole effect is lost in the deafening noise. Combined with gesticulations it becomes repulsive, like all demonstrations of extreme passion. A refined sensitivity can tolerate it only at a distance that, as it were, casts a veil upon it. In order to gain its effect by different means, the tone, instead of rising, has to be kept muted and low, and the accent indicated only in such a way that a com-

prehension of what one is reading is suggested without being fully expressed. Particularly with epic poems and novels, the reader should never seem to be carried away with his subject, but rather maintain the calm superiority of the author himself, standing above his work. Altogether, it's quite necessary to practice reading aloud so as to establish the custom more generally, and quite necessary to establish it so as to practice it all the better. With us, poetry at any rate remains dumb, and nevertheless anyone who hasn't, for example, read *Wilhelm Meister* aloud, or heard it read, has only studied its music in the notes. [AW]

381. Many of the chief founders of modern physics should not be considered philosophers, but artists.

382. Instinct speaks darkly and metaphorically. If it is misunderstood, a false tendency ensues. This happens to ages and nations as often as it does to individuals.

383. There is a kind of wit which, because of its solidity, thoroughness, and symmetry, one is tempted to call architectonic wit. Expressed satirically, it produces the only real sarcasms. It has to be properly systematic, and then again it doesn't; with all its completeness, something should still seem to be missing, as if torn away. This baroque quality may very well be the source of the grand style in wit. It plays an important role in the novella, for surely a story can remain forever new only by virtue of this sort of uniquely beautiful rarity. This seems to be the direction in which the little understood point of the *Conversations of Emigrants** is moving. It's certainly not at all strange that an understanding for pure novellas has practically ceased to exist; and yet it wouldn't be a bad thing to revive it, since, among other things, one can never understand the form of the Shakespearean drama without it.

384. Every philosopher has his impulsive moments that frequently are real limitations for him, and to which he accommodates himself, etc. Hence those obscure places in a system for the investigator who isolates the system and doesn't study the philosophy historically and as a whole. Many of the confused controversies of modern philosophy are like the legends and gods of classical poetry. They recur in every system, but always in a new form.

385. In the transactions and regulations that are essential to the legislative, executive, or judiciary powers for achieving their aims, something absolutely arbitrary, something unavoidable often happens that can't be deduced from the concept of those powers, and over which they there-

* Goethe's *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewandeter* (1795).

fore seem to have no lawful authority. Isn't the authority for such extraordinary cases actually derived from the constitutive power and shouldn't that power therefore also have to have a veto and not merely a right of interdiction? Don't all absolutely arbitrary decisions in the state happen by virtue of the constitutive power?

386. The dull person judges all other people like people but treats them like things, and is absolutely incapable of understanding that they are human beings distinct from himself.

387. Critical philosophy is always thought of as if it had fallen from the sky. It would have originated in Germany even without Kant, and might have done so in a variety of ways. Still, it's better the way it is.

388. Transcendental is what is, should be, and can be high up; transcendent what tries to be high up, but can't or shouldn't be. It would be slanderous nonsense to believe that humanity could exceed its own aim, overtax its own powers, or that philosophy oughtn't to be able to do something it wants to do and can do.

389. If every purely arbitrary or purely random connection of form and matter is grotesque, then philosophy has its grotesques as well as poetry; only it knows less about them and has not yet been able to find the key to its own esoteric history. There are works of philosophy that are a tissue of moral discords from which one could learn disorganization, or in which confusion is properly constructed and symmetrical. Many a philosophical quasi chaos of this kind has had stability enough to outlast a Gothic church. In our century, construction has been less ambitious in the sciences as well as elsewhere, though no less grotesque. There is no lack of Chinese garden houses in literature. So, for example, English criticism, which surely consists of nothing but applying the philosophy of common sense (which is itself only a permutation of the natural and scholastic philosophies) to poetry without any understanding for poetry. For in Harris, Home,* and Johnson, the *coryphaei* of the species, there isn't even the faintest trace of a feeling for poetry.

390. There are law-abiding and agreeable people who think and talk about humanity and life as if they were discussing the best way of breeding sheep, or buying and selling land. These are the economists of morality, and really all morality without philosophy, no matter how sophisticated and sublimely poetical, always retains a certain intolerant and economical hue. Some economists are fond of building, others prefer to

* James Harris (1709–1780), English philologist and aesthetician. Henry Home (1696–1782), English critic.

patch things up, or always have to be getting something, or drift as the stream carries them, or make a try at everything and hold on wherever they can, or put things in order and divide things up neatly, or watch how it's done and imitate it. All imitators in poetry and philosophy are actually economists *manqués*. Every human being has his economic instinct that needs to be trained quite as much as orthography and metrics deserve to be learned. But there are economic zealots and pantheists who heed nothing but pressing needs and are happy about nothing but their usefulness. Wherever they appear, everything becomes dull and craftsmanlike, and even religion, the ancients, and poetry on their lathe turn into nothing more noble than flax comb.

391. To read means to satisfy the philological drive, to make a literary impression on oneself. To read out of an impulse for pure philosophy or poetry, unaided by philology, is probably impossible.

392. Many musical compositions are merely translations of poems into the language of music.

393. In order to translate perfectly from the classics into a modern language, the translator would have to be so expert in his language that, if need be, he could make everything modern; but at the same time he would have to understand antiquity so well that he would be able not just to imitate it but, if necessary, re-create it.

394. It's a great mistake to try to restrict wit to society. By their overwhelming power, their infinite content, and their classical form, the best ideas often cause an embarrassing pause in the conversation. It's just that real wit is still conceivable only in written form, like laws; one has to value one's products according to weight, just as Caesar carefully estimated the comparative weight of pearls and precious stones by balancing them in his hands. Their value increases quite disproportionately to their size; and some that possess, besides an enthusiastic spirit and a baroque exterior, also animated accents, fresh coloration, and a certain crystalline transparency comparable to the water of diamonds, are impossible to appraise.

395. In true prose, everything has to be underlined.

396. Caricature is a passive conjunction of the naive and the grotesque. The poet can use it equally well for tragic or comic purposes.

397. Since nature and man contradict each other so often and so sharply, philosophy perhaps can't avoid doing the same.

398. Mysticism is the cheapest and most moderate of all philosophical ravings. Only credit one of its absolute contradictions, and you will thereby supply all its needs and even allow it to live in the lap of luxury.

399. Polemical totality is, to be sure, a necessary consequence of assuming and demanding unlimited communicability and communication, and it can no doubt destroy one's opponents completely. Still, it does not suffice to legitimize the philosophy of its possessor so long as that philosophy is directed only at externals. Only when applied to the inner world, when a philosophy criticizes its own spirit and creates its own letter on the whetstone and with the file of polemics, only then can it lead to logical correctness.

400. As yet there is no skepticism worthy of the name. Real skepticism would have to begin and end with the assertion of and demand for an infinite number of contradictions. The fact that skeptical consistency would bring with it absolute self-annihilation is nothing characteristic. This is a trait which this logical disease shares with all unphilosophy. A respect for mathematics and a falling back to common sense are the diagnostic symptoms of the quasi-genuine skepticism.

401. In order to understand someone who only partially understands himself, you first have to understand him completely and better than he himself does, but then only partially and precisely as much as he does himself.

402. In trying to see if it's possible to translate the classical poets, the important thing is to decide whether or not even the most faithful German translation isn't still Greek. To judge by the reaction of the most sensitive and intelligent laymen, there are valid grounds for such a suspicion.

403. A real review should be the solution of a critical equation, the result and description of a philological experiment and a literary investigation.

404. One has to be born for philology just as for poetry and philosophy. There is no philologist without philology in the original sense of the word; that is, without interest in grammar. Philology is a logical emotion, the counterpart of philosophy, enthusiasm for chemical knowledge; for grammar is surely only the philosophical part of the universal art of dividing and joining. By the artistic development of this sense, we arrive at criticism, whose substance can only be the classical and absolutely eternal; otherwise the philologists, almost all of whom reveal the usual unmistakable signs of unscientific virtuosity, might just as easily

display their skill on works other than those of classical antiquity, where, as a rule, they have neither any interest nor understanding. But this necessary limitation is all the less to be blamed or regretted since here too only artistic perfection leads to knowledge, and a purely formal philology must move toward a material theory of antiquity and a humane history of mankind. And that is better than a so-called application of philosophy to philology in the usual style of those who compile rather than combine the sciences. The only way to apply philosophy to philology, or, what is much more important, philology to philosophy, is by being both philologist and philosopher. But even without this, the art of philology can assert its rights. To devote oneself exclusively to developing some original instinct is as good and wise as the best and noblest task a man can choose to make the business of his life.

405. Charity is the ignominious virtue that's always made to pay in novels and plays when a common person is elevated into a noble character, or even, as in Kotzebue's plays, when some other extraneous baseness is to be compensated for. Why don't they take advantage of the charitable mood of the moment to pass the hat around the house? [AW]

406. If every infinite individual is God, then there are as many gods as there are ideals. And further, the relation of the true artist and the true human being to his ideals is absolutely religious. The man for whom this inner divine service is the end and occupation of all his life is a priest, and this is how everyone can and should become a priest.

407. The most important part of good breeding is to have the cheek to attribute it intentionally to those one knows don't have it; the most difficult is to intuit and discover the essential commonness beneath the veneer of general good manners. [S]

408. Cute vulgarity and refined bad manners are called delicacy in the language of good society.

409. In order to be called moral, feelings have to be not only beautiful but also wise, appropriate to the structure of the whole, and in the highest sense decorous.

410. Triviality—economy—is the necessary supplement of all people who aren't absolutely universal. Often talent and education are lost entirely in this surrounding element.

411. The scientific ideal of Christianity is to portray God in an infinite series of variations.

412. Ideals that seem unattainable to themselves are for that reason not ideals but mathematical phantoms of a merely mechanical mind. Whoever has a sense for the infinite and knows what he wants to do with it sees here the result of eternally separating and uniting powers, conceives of his ideals at least as being chemical, and utters, when he expresses himself decisively, nothing but contradictions. This is the point that the philosophy of our age has reached, but not the philosophy of philosophy; for even chemical idealists often have only a one-sided, mathematical ideal of philosophy. Their theses in this regard are quite true, that is, philosophical; but the antitheses are missing. The time doesn't seem to have arrived yet for a physics of philosophy, and only a perfect mind could conceive of ideals organically.

413. A philosopher must talk about himself just as the lyrical poet does.

414. If there is an invisible church, then it is the church of the great paradox that is inseparable from morality and that still has to be kept quite distinct from the merely philosophical church. People who are eccentric enough to be quite seriously virtuous understand each other everywhere, discover each other easily, and form a silent opposition to the ruling immorality that happens to pass for morality. A certain mysticism of expression, combined with romantic imagination and grammatical understanding, can be something quite attractive and good, and it often serves them as a symbol for their beautiful mysteries.

415. Whoever conceives of poetry or philosophy as individuals has a feeling for them.

416. Depending on how you see it, you need either the fullest expert knowledge for philosophy, or none at all.

417. One shouldn't try to seduce or talk anyone into philosophy.

418. Even by the most ordinary standards, a novel deserves to become famous when it portrays and develops a thoroughly new character interestingly. *William Lovell** undeniably does this, and the fact that all the rest of its staging and scenery is either commonplace or a failure, just like the great stage manager behind it all, and the further fact that what's extraordinary about it is only the ordinary turned inside out would probably not have done the book a great deal of damage, except that unfor-

* *William Lovell* (1793–1796) and *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen* (1798) are novels by Ludwig Tieck. Together with Wilhelm Wackenroder, he also wrote the curious religious, aesthetic, historical production entitled *Herzensergiessungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders* (1797), or "Effusions from the Heart of an Art-loving Monk."

tunately the character was poetical. Lovell, like his insufficiently differentiated alter ego, Balder, is a complete phantast in every good and every bad, every beautiful and every ugly sense of the word. The whole book is a struggle between prose and poetry, in which prose is trodden underfoot and poetry stumbles and breaks its neck. Besides, it suffers from the fault of many first productions: it wavers between instinct and intention because it doesn't have enough of either. Hence the repetitions whereby the description of sublime boredom at times shifts into a communication of the thing itself. This is the reason why the absolute imaginativeness of this novel could have been misunderstood even by the initiates of poetry and disdained as mere sentimentalism. And this is the reason too why the reasonable reader, who likes to be moderately moved in return for his money, didn't like at all—in fact thought quite mad—the sentimentality of the novel. Tieck has perhaps never again portrayed a character so profoundly and thoroughly. But *Sternbald* combines the seriousness and vitality of *Lovell* with the artificial religiosity of the *Klosterbruder* and with everything that, taken as a whole, is most beautiful in those poetical arabesques he fabricated out of old fairy tales: namely their fantastic richness and facility, their sense of irony, and particularly their intentional variety and uniformity of coloration. Here too everything is clear and transparent, and the romantic spirit seems to be daydreaming pleasantly about itself.

419. The world is much too serious, but seriousness is nevertheless a rather rare phenomenon. Seriousness is the opposite of play. It has a particular purpose, the most important of all possible purposes; it is incapable of trifling or of deceiving itself; it pursues its aims tirelessly until it has achieved them. For this it needs energy, a mental power of absolutely unlimited extension and intensity. If there's no absolute height and breadth for man, then the word *greatness* is superfluous in the moral sense. Seriousness is greatness in action. Great is what simultaneously possesses enthusiasm and genius, what is both divine and complete. Complete is what is at the same time natural and artificial. Divine is what wells up out of love into pure eternal being and becoming, what is higher than any poetry and philosophy. There is a kind of serene divinity that lacks the crushing power of the hero and the creative activity of the artist. Whatever is simultaneously divine, complete, and great is perfect.

420. Whether or not a cultivated woman—and it's only of such that we can speak in moral terms—is corrupt or pure is a question that perhaps can be answered with considerable certainty. If she follows the general trend, if energy of spirit and character—their external appearance and

whatever else relates to it—are her be-all and end-all, then she is corrupt. If she knows of something greater than greatness, if she can smile at her natural liking for energy, if she is, in a word, capable of enthusiasm, then she is innocent in the moral sense. In this respect, one can say that all womanly virtue is religious. But that women should, as it were, believe more in God or Christ than men do, that some good and beautiful habit of freethinking should suit them less than it does men, is probably only one of the infinite number of commonly accepted platitudes which Rousseau built into a real systematic theory of womankind; and in which nonsense is so improved and developed that it simply had to gain universal acclaim.

421. Perhaps the great mass likes Friedrich Richter's novels only because of their apparent adventurousness. All in all he is probably interesting in the greatest variety of ways and for the most contradictory reasons. Although the educated businessman sheds quantities of noble tears while reading him, and the exacting artist hates him as the bloody symbol of the triumphant unpoetry of his nation and his age, the man of universal tendency can idolize his arbitrariness or else find great pleasure in those grotesque porcelain figures that his pictorial wit drums together like imperial soldiers. Richter is a unique phenomenon: an author who hasn't mastered the first principles of his art, who can't express a bon mot properly and can't tell a story in a better than average way, and yet someone who—if only because of a humorous dithyramb like the mulish, pithy, tense, and magnificent Leibgeber's letter to Adam—cannot justly be denied the name of a great poet. Even if his works don't have a great deal of cultivation, they are nonetheless cultivated. The whole is like the part, and vice versa; in short, he is accomplished. It is a great advantage of *Siebenkäs* that its execution and descriptions are even better than those of his other works; and it has the far greater advantage of having so few Englishmen in it. To be sure, his Englishmen are ultimately Germans too, but in idyllic surroundings and with sentimental names; still, they always have a strong resemblance to Louvet's Poles and so belong with those false tendencies he is so given to. In the same category is also where his women, philosophy, the Virgin Mary, delicacy, ideal visions, and self-criticism belong. His women have red eyes and are paragons, puppets who serve as occasions for psychomoralistic reflections on womanhood or infatuation. In fact, he almost never comes down to the level of portraying his characters; it is enough for him to have thought of them, and now and then to say something striking about them. And so he sides with the passive humorists, the people who are actually nothing more than humorous objects; the active

ones seem more self-sufficient, but they share too much of a family likeness amongst themselves and with the author to make us think of their self-sufficiency as a merit. His decor consists of leaden arabesques in the Nuremberg style. It is here that the monotony of his imagination and intelligence—bordering almost on destitution—becomes most noticeable; but here too do we find that charming dullness of his, and that piquant tastelessness which we can censure only on the grounds that he doesn't seem to be aware of it. His madonna is a sentimental sexton's wife, and his Christ is cast in the role of an enlightened student of divinity. The more moral his poetical Rembrandts are, the more common and ordinary they become; the funnier, the closer to the good; the more dithyrambical and provincial, the more divine: for he conceives of the village primarily as the City of God. His humorous poetry is separating itself more and more from his sentimental prose; often it appears, like interpolated songs, as an episode, or else it destroys the book in the shape of an appendix. But at times large masses of it still escape from him into the universal chaos.

422. Mirabeau played a great role in the Revolution because his character and mind were revolutionary; Robespierre because he obeyed the Revolution absolutely, devoted himself entirely to it, worshipped it, and considered himself its god; Bonaparte because he can create and shape revolutions, and destroy himself.

423. Isn't it true that the modern French national character actually begins with Cardinal Richelieu? His strange and rather tasteless universality reminds one of many of the most remarkable French phenomena which came after him.

424. The French Revolution may be regarded as the greatest and most remarkable phenomenon in the history of states, as an almost universal earthquake, an immeasurable flood in the political world; or as a prototype of revolutions, as the absolute revolution per se. These are the usual points of view. But one can also see it as the center and apex of the French national character, where all its paradoxes are thrust together; as the most frightful grotesque of the age, where the most profound prejudices and their most brutal punishments are mixed up in a fearful chaos and woven as bizarrely as possible into a monstrous human tragicomedy. Now only a few isolated traces remain that might serve to develop these historical insights.

425. The first impulse of morality is to oppose positive legality and conventional justice, and to be boundlessly irritable in temper. If one adds to this the negligence so peculiar to independent and strong minds, and

the passion and clumsiness of youth, then it is unavoidable that there should be excesses with incalculable consequences which can often poison a whole life. And so it happens that the rabble considers some people criminals or examples of immorality whom a truly moral person would class among the extremely rare exceptions who may be regarded as creatures of his own kind, as fellow citizens of his world. Who doesn't think in this connection of Mirabeau and Chamfort?

426. It's natural that the French should more or less dominate the age. They are a chemical nation and in them the chemical sense is most widely developed, and they always conduct their experiments—not least in moral chemistry—on a grand scale. Likewise, the age is also a chemical one. Revolutions are universal, chemical not organic movements. Big business is the chemistry of a great economy, and there's probably an alchemy of the same kind, too. That the novel, criticism, wit, sociability, the most recent rhetoric, and all previous history have a chemical makeup is self-evident. But until we have reached the stage of being able to characterize the universe and classify mankind, we have to be content with brief notes on the prevailing mood and individual mannerisms of the age, without even being able to draw a profile of the giant. For how would we go about finding out if the age is really an individual or perhaps only the collision point of other ages without this kind of preliminary knowledge? Where exactly does it begin and where does it end? How is it possible to understand and punctuate the contemporary period of the world correctly, if one can't even foresee the general outlines of the subsequent one? By analogy to what I said before, an organic age will follow a chemical one, and then the citizens of the next solar revolution will probably think much less of us than we do now, and consider a great deal of what we now simply marvel at as only the necessary preliminary exercises of humanity.

427. A so-called investigation is a historical experiment. The subject and result thereof are a fact. Every fact must have a strict individuality, be both a mystery and an experiment, that is, an experiment of creative Nature. Everything is secretive and mysterious that can only be apprehended by enthusiasm and philosophical, poetical, or moral understanding.

428. Even language behaves badly toward morality. It's never so rude and beggarly as when it comes to classifying moral concepts. As an example, let me cite the three types of character that can be constructed out of the various relations between ends and means. There are people with whom everything they consider a means turns mysteriously into an

end. They dedicate themselves to a branch of science in order to make their fortune, and are captivated by its charms. They look up one of its devotees, and they begin to love him. They frequent his circle of friends in order to be with him, and they become the most fervent members of that circle. They write, or dabble in the fine arts, or dress themselves better in order to be liked by these new friends, and suddenly they discover, quite independently of being liked or not being liked, a profound pleasure in their writing, their study of art, their elegance. This is a very specific type of character that is easily recognizable anywhere. But does language have a name for it? A great variety of activities can be run through in this way, and even language is generous with the adjectives "variegated" or "many-sided." But this variety is only a fraction of the manifestations of this mode of thinking, and a fraction shared by several other modes. People of this type transform the finite space of a specific moment into an infinite and infinitely divided greatness until they have reached their particular end. The man who is always delighted by this knack of treating the finite as if it were something infinite would like to call it by its name; but that is only to describe an impression. For the essence of this kind of character—namely that easy and habitual shifting from an interest in something as a means into a direct and immediate interest—language has no word. There are other people who take the opposite course and quite readily treat something that was for them at the outset an end as the means to something else; who, after they have enthusiastically read an author, finish by writing a critical sketch of him; who, after they have labored long in a science, soon raise themselves to the level of philosophy of science; and who, even when bound by personal attachment, are in danger of treating a beautiful friendship as the means to gaining new insight into human nature, or to philosophizing about love on the basis of their own experiments. Someone give me a name for that in German! To talk about the effect and impression of such a character is easy: you can say how noble it is to cast the finite aside because one is pursuing the infinite; or how original it is to tear down barriers where others are deterred; or to open up new channels where others imagine a dead end; or to run through great passions at a torrential pace and construct great works of art almost in passing (for these are the natural expressions of this kind of a character if he doesn't burn out). To portray all this, language has plenty of words. There is a third type of character who combines the other two; who, as long as he has an end before his eyes, reshapes all means into ends belonging to the system of that primary end, but who still, while enjoying this finite pleasure, does not forget to strive for higher things and in the midst of making his giant strides, again and again remembers the end he started out with. He com-

bines a talent for discovering his own limits easily, and for not attempting anything he cannot do, with a gift for enlarging his ends while at the same time enlarging his powers; he combines the wisdom and calm resignation of an inwardly directed mind with the energy of a completely elastic and expansive spirit that makes use of the slightest opening to escape and to occupy, in a moment, a much larger area than before. He never makes a futile attempt to escape the recognized limitations of the moment, and yet always burns with a longing to augment himself still further; he never struggles against fate, but forever challenges it to provide him with a broader existence; he always keeps close watch over everything a man can ever become or hope to be, but he never goes after something until the right moment. That this kind of character is a perfect practical genius, that everything is design in him and everything instinct, everything will and everything nature, can all be said, but it is useless to look for a word to describe his essence. [S]

429. Just as the novella has to be new and striking at every point of its substance and development, so perhaps the poetical tale and especially the romance has to be infinitely bizarre. For the romance tries not only to interest the imagination, but also to enchant the mind and stimulate the feelings; and the essence of the bizarre seems to consist precisely in certain arbitrary and strange connections and confusions of the processes of thinking, poetizing, and acting. There is a kind of bizarreness of enthusiasm that is compatible with the greatest refinement and freedom, and that not only intensifies tragedy but makes it beautiful and, as it were, deifies it: like Goethe's *Bride of Corinth,** which is an epoch in the history of poetry. What moves one in that work lacerates and nevertheless is seductively fascinating. Some parts could almost be called burlesque, and it is precisely in these parts that the horrible seems overwhelmingly great.

430. There are unavoidable situations and relationships that one can tolerate only by transforming them by some courageous act of the will and seeing them as pure poetry. It follows that all cultivated people should be capable of being poets if they have to be; and from this we can deduce equally well that man is by nature a poet, and that there is a natural poetry, or vice versa.

431. To sacrifice to the Graces means, when said to a philosopher, as much as: create irony and aspire to urbanity.

432. There are works, particularly rather comprehensive historical

* A ballad written in 1797

works, that in all their individual component parts are beautifully and attractively written, but as wholes are unpleasantly monotonous. To avoid this, the coloration, tone, and even the style would have to be changed and made strikingly different in each of the various large blocks that make up the whole; in this way, the work would become not only more variegated, but also more systematic. It is clear that this kind of regular alternation is not the result of chance; here the artist has to know precisely what he wants to do in order to be able to do it. But it is equally clear that it would be premature to call a work of poetry or prose art before these works have reached the point of being completely structured. The possibility that genius could be made superfluous by this requirement is something that needn't worry us, since the leap from the most vivid recognition and clearest perception of what needs to be done to its actual accomplishment will always be infinite.

433. The essence of the poetical sense, it may be, consists in being impressionable to the point of losing self-awareness, in getting emotionally wrought up about nothing and moved to daydreaming for no reason at all. Moral sensitivity is quite compatible with a total lack of poetical sense.

434. Should poetry simply be divided up? Or should it remain one and indivisible? Or fluctuate between division and union? Most of the ways of conceiving a poetical world are still as primitive and childish as the old pre-Copernican ideas of astronomy. The usual classifications of poetry are mere dead pedantry designed for people with limited vision. Whatever somebody is capable of producing, or whatever happens to be in fashion, is the stationary earth at the center of all things. But in the universe of poetry nothing stands still, everything is developing and changing and moving harmoniously; and even the comets obey invariable laws of motion. But until the course of these heavenly bodies can be calculated and their return predicted, the true world system of poetry won't have been discovered.

435. Some grammarians seem to want to introduce into language that principle in the old law of nations that says every stranger is an enemy. But a writer who knows how to manage even without foreign words will always have a right to use them wherever the demands of his genre require or make desirable a coloration of universality; and a historical mind will have a respectful and loving interest in old words and will occasionally rejuvenate them. After all, they often have not only more experience and understanding, but also more vitality and unity than many so-called human beings or grammarians.

436. Its contents quite aside, the *Fuerstenspiegel** is as good a model of the *bon ton* in written conversation as can, with only a few exceptions, be met with in German prose; and a writer who wants to put philosophy and the life of society *en rapport* with each other should learn from it how to raise the decorum of convention to the niveau of natural propriety. Actually everyone should know how to write in this style who has occasion to print something without wanting for that reason to be an author.

437. How can a science pretend to scientific rigor and perfection when it is usually regulated and arranged *in usum delphini*† or according to the system of accidental causation, like mathematics?

438. Urbanity is wit of harmonious universality, and that is the beginning and the end of historical philosophy and Plato's most sublime music. The humanities are the gymnastics of this art and science.

439. A critical sketch is a critical work of art, a *visum repertum* of chemical philosophy. A review is an applied and applying critical sketch with respect to the contemporary state of literature and the reading public. Surveys and literary annals are sums or series of critical sketches. Literary parallels are critical groups. By joining both together we get a selection of the classics, the critical world system for a given sphere of philosophy or poetry.

440. All pure, unselfish education is gymnastic or musical; its aim is the development of each particular power and the combined harmony of all. The Greek dichotomy of education is more than just another one of the paradoxes of antiquity.

441. Tolerance means being almost unaware of being free in all directions and from all sides; means living one's whole humanity; means holding sacred whatever acts, is, and develops, according to the measure of one's power; means taking part in all aspects of life and not letting oneself be seduced by limited opinions into a hatred or contempt for life.

442. Even those call themselves philosophical lawyers who, along with their other, frequently unlawful rights, also have a natural right that is often even more unlawful.

* A *Fuerstenspiegel* is a "Mirror for Princes," that is, a manual of conduct for the nobility, like Machiavelli's *The Prince*. There may also be a reference here to Wieland's poetical novel, *Der goldene Spiegel (The Golden Mirror)*.

† The notice on the series of translations of classics ordered by Louis XIV for the Dauphin's use.

443. To deduce a concept is to provide the genealogical proof of its descent from the intellectual perception of a science. For every science has its genealogical proofs.

444. Many people find it strange and ridiculous when musicians talk about the ideas in their compositions; and it often happens that one perceives they have more ideas in their music than they do about it. But whoever has a feeling for the wonderful affinity of all the arts and sciences will at least not consider the matter from the dull viewpoint of a so-called naturalness that maintains music is supposed to be only the language of the senses. Rather, he will consider a certain tendency of pure instrumental music toward philosophy as something not impossible in itself. Doesn't pure instrumental music have to create its own text? And aren't the themes in it developed, reaffirmed, varied, and contrasted in the same way as the subject of meditation in a philosophical succession of ideas?

445. Dynamics is the macrology of energy which, in astronomy, is applied to the organization of the universe. To that extent both could be called historical mathematics. Algebra demands the most wit and enthusiasm, that is, of the mathematical sort.

446. Consistent empiricism ends in contributions toward settling misunderstandings, or in a subscription to truth.

447. False universality is either theoretical or practical. The theoretical type is the universality of a bad lexicon, of a record office. The practical type originates in a totality of involvement.

448. These are the intellectual intuitions of criticism: the feeling of the infinitely subtle analytic quality of Greek poetry, and that of the infinitely rich mixture of Roman satire and Roman prose.

449. As yet there has been no moral author who could be compared with the great masters of poetry and philosophy. Such a writer would have to combine the sublime antiquarian politics of Müller with Forster's great universal economics and Jacobi's moral gymnastics and music; and combine in his language, too, the weighty, dignified, and enthusiastic style of the first with the fresh hues, the lovable delicacy of the second, and the refined sensitivity—so like a distant, ghostly concertina—of the third.

450. Rousseau's polemic against poetry is really only a bad imitation of Plato. Plato is more against poets than he is against poetry; he thought of philosophy as the most daring dithyramb and the most monodic mu-

sic. Epicurus is the real enemy of art, for he wants to root out imagination and retain sense only. Spinoza might be viewed as the enemy of poetry in quite a different way: because he demonstrates how far one can get with philosophy and morality unaided by poetry, and because it is very much in the spirit of his system not to isolate poetry.

451. Universality is the successive satiation of all forms and substances. Universality can attain harmony only through the conjunction of poetry and philosophy; and even the greatest, most universal works of isolated poetry and philosophy seem to lack this final synthesis. They come to a stop, still imperfect but close to the goal of harmony. The life of the Universal Spirit is an unbroken chain of inner revolutions; all individuals—that is, all original and eternal ones—live in him. He is a genuine polytheist and bears within himself all Olympus.

Ideas

1. The calls for and even the beginnings of a morality that might be more than the practical part of philosophy are becoming increasingly obvious. Already there is talk even of religion. It's time to tear away the veil of Isis and reveal the mystery. Whoever can't endure the sight of the goddess, let him flee or perish.

2. A priest is someone who lives only in the invisible world and for whom everything visible possesses only the truth of an allegory.

3. Only in relation to the infinite is there meaning and purpose; whatever lacks such a relation is absolutely meaningless and pointless.

4. Religion is the all-animating world-soul of culture, the fourth invisible element besides philosophy, morality, and poetry, which like the hearth-held fire gives off gentle warmth to all around it, and only breaks out into terrible destruction when subjected to forcible external interference.

5. The mind understands something only insofar as it absorbs it like a seed into itself, nurtures it, and lets it grow into blossom and fruit. Therefore scatter holy seed into the soil of the spirit, without any affectation and any added superfluities.

6. Eternal life and the invisible world are to be found only in God. All spirits dwell in him. He is an abyss of individuality; he alone is infinitely full.

7. Liberate religion and a new race of men will be born.

8. The mind, says the author of the *Talks on Religion,** can understand only the universe. Let imagination take over and you will have a God. Quite right: for the imagination is man's faculty for perceiving divinity.

9. A true priest always feels something greater than sympathy.

10. Ideas are infinite, independent, unceasingly moving in themselves, godlike thoughts.

11. Only through religion does logic become philosophy; only from it comes everything that makes philosophy greater than science. And instead of an eternally rich, infinite poetry, the lack of religion gives us only novels or the triviality that now is called art.

12. Is there such a thing as enlightenment? We should only be entitled to use this term if we could arbitrarily and without interference set going, if not artificially create, a principle in the mind of man that would play the same role in it that light plays in the universe.

13. Only someone who has his own religion, his own original way of looking at infinity, can be an artist.

14. Religion is not merely a part of culture, a limb of humanity: it is the center of all things, it is always first and foremost. It is originality per se.

15. Every particular conception of God is mere gossip. But the idea of God is the Idea of ideas.

16. The priest as such exists only in the invisible world. In what guise is it possible for him to appear among men? His only purpose on earth will be to transform the finite into the infinite; hence he must be and continue to be, no matter what the name of his profession, an artist.

17. When ideas become gods, then the consciousness of harmony will become devotion, humility, and hope.

18. The spirit of the moral man is everywhere suffused with religion; it is his element. And this bright chaos of divine thoughts and feelings we call enthusiasm.

19. To have genius is the natural state of humanity. Nature endowed even humanity with health, and since love is for women what genius is

* Schleiermacher's *Reden über die Religion (On Religion. Talks to the Educated among Those Who Despise It)* (1799).

for men, we must conceive of the golden age as a time when love and genius were universal.

20. Everyone is an artist whose central purpose in life is to educate his intellect.

21. The need to raise itself above humanity is humanity's prime characteristic.

22. What are the few remaining mystics doing? More or less ordering the raw chaos of already extant religion, but only in isolation, on a small scale, in ineffectual attempts. Let us do it on a large scale everywhere and in every possible way; let us awaken all religions from their graves and through the omnipotence of art and science reanimate and reorganize those that are immortal.

23. Virtue is reason transformed into energy.

24. The symmetry and organization of history teach us that mankind, for as long as it existed and developed, has really always been and has always become an individual, a person. In the great person of mankind, God became a man.

25. The life and power of poetry consist in its ability to step out of itself, tear off a fragment of religion, and then return into itself and absorb it. So too with philosophy.

26. Wit is the appearance, the outward lightning bolt of the imagination. Hence the divinity and witty appearance of mysticism.

27. Plato's philosophy is a worthy preface to the religion of the future.

28. Man is Nature creatively looking back at itself.

29. Man frees himself by bringing forth God or making him visible, and this is how he becomes immortal.

30. Religion is absolutely unfathomable. One can sound it anywhere and still penetrate more deeply into the infinite.

31. Religion is the centripetal and centrifugal force of the human spirit, and the power that unites the two.

32. Can we expect the world to be saved by scholars? I don't know. But it's time for all artists to join together as comrades into an eternal brotherhood.

33. The morality of a work is not to be found in its subject or in the relation of the speaker to his audience, but in the spirit of its execution.

If this is infused with the whole wealth of humanity, then the work is moral. If it is only the product of a particular ability or art, then it is not.

34. Whoever has religion will speak in poetry. But to seek and find religion, you need the instrument of philosophy.

35. As the generals of antiquity used to address their soldiers before a battle, so too the moralist ought to address mankind in the battle of the times.

36. Every complete human being has some sort of genius. True virtue is genius.

37. Culture is the greatest good and it alone is useful.

38. In the world of language or, what is much the same, the world of art and culture, religion necessarily assumes the guise of a mythology or a bible.

39. The Kantians' conception of duty relates to the commandment of honor, the voice of God and of one's calling in us, as the dried plant to the fresh flower on the living stem.

40. A definite relationship to God must seem as intolerable to the mystic as a particular conception or notion of God.

41. There is no greater need of the age than the need for a spiritual counterweight to the Revolution and to the despotism which the Revolution exercises over people by means of its concentration of the most desirable worldly interests. Where can we seek and find such a counterweight? The answer isn't hard: unquestionably in ourselves, and whoever has seen that the center of humanity lies there will also have discovered in the same place the center of modern culture and the harmony of all the hitherto isolated and conflicting sciences and arts.

42. If one is to believe the philosophers, then what we call religion is simply intentionally popular or instinctively artless philosophy. The poets, however, seem to prefer to think of it as a variety of poetry which, unsure of its own lovely playfulness, takes itself too seriously and too one-sidedly. Still, philosophy already admits and begins to recognize that it must start with religion and achieve perfection in religion, and poetry strives only for the infinite and despises worldly practicality and culture as the real opposites of religion. Hence eternal peace among artists is no longer a distant prospect.

43. What men are among the other creatures of the earth, artists are among men.

44. We cannot see God but we can see godlikeness everywhere—first and foremost in the heart of a thoughtful man, in the depths of a living human creation. Nature, the universe, can be felt and conceived of without mediation: but not God. Only a man among men can write divine poetry, think divine thoughts, and live religiously. No one can be the direct mediator for even his own spirit because the mediator must be purely objective, and necessarily centered on a point outside himself. One can select and appoint one's mediator, but only a mediator who has already appointed himself as such. A mediator is one who perceives the divinity within himself and who self-destructively sacrifices himself in order to reveal, communicate, and represent to all mankind this divinity in his conduct and actions, in his words and works. If this impulse is not present, then what was perceived was not divine or not really his own. To mediate and to be mediated are the whole higher life of man and every artist is a mediator for all other men.

45. An artist is someone who carries his center within himself. Whoever lacks such a center has to choose some particular leader and mediator outside of himself, not, to be sure, forever, but only to begin with. For a man cannot live without a vital center, and if he does not yet have one within himself, then he can only seek it in another man, and only a man and a man's center can stimulate and awaken his own.

46. Poetry and philosophy are, depending on one's point of view, different spheres, different forms, or simply the component parts of religion. For only try really to combine the two and you will find yourself with nothing but religion.

47. God is everything that is purely original and sublime, consequently the individual himself taken to the highest power. But aren't nature and the world also individuals?

48. Where philosophy stops, poetry has to begin. An ordinary point of view, a way of thinking, natural only in opposition to art and culture, a mere existing: all these are wrong; that is, there should be no kingdom of barbarity beyond the boundaries of culture. Every thinking part of an organization should not feel its limits without at the same time feeling its unity in relation to the whole. For example, one ought to contrast philosophy not simply with unphilosophy, but with poetry.

49. To give the brotherhood of artists a particular purpose would mean substituting a shabby institute for an eternal union, or debasing the community of saints into a state.

50. You marvel at the age, at the ferment of its gigantic power, at its violent convulsions, and don't know what new births to expect. You should understand yourselves and answer for yourselves the question whether something can happen to mankind which does not have its origins in mankind. Doesn't all motion have to come from the center, and where is the center? The answer is obvious, and therefore these events also point to a great rebirth of religion, a universal metamorphosis. To be sure, religion is per se eternal, consistent, and unchanging, as God is; but for precisely this reason it appears forever newly shaped and transformed.

51. We won't know what a man is until we have learned from the nature of man why there should be some men who have intellect and spirit, and others who don't.

52. Pretending to represent a religion is even more sacrilegious than trying to establish one.

53. No occupation is so human as one that simply supplements, joins, fosters.

54. The artist should have as little desire to rule as to serve. He can only create, do nothing but create, and so help the state only by making rulers and servants, and by exalting politicians and economists into artists.

55. Versatility consists not just in a comprehensive system but also in a feeling for the chaos outside that system, like man's feeling for something beyond man.

56. Just as the Romans were the only nation that was completely national, so our age is the first true age.

57. You will find a wealth of culture in our best poetry; but seek the profundity of man among the philosophers.

58. Even the so-called national teachers whom the state has hired should become priests again, and mindful of the spirit: but they can do so only by attaching themselves to higher culture.

59. Nothing is wittier and more grotesque than classical mythology and Christianity—because they are so mystical.

60. Individuality is precisely what is original and eternal in man; personality doesn't matter so much. To pursue the cultivation and development of this individuality as one's highest calling would be a godlike egoism.

61. The power of the letter has been talked about for quite some time without anyone's really understanding what is being said. It's time for it to be taken seriously, for the mind to awaken and grasp once again the forgotten magic wand.

62. You only have as much morality as you have philosophy and poetry.

63. The really central intuition of Christianity is sin.

64. Artists make mankind an individual by connecting the past with the future in the present. Artists are the higher organ of the soul where the vital spirits of all external humanity join together, and where inner humanity has its primary sphere of action.

65. Only by being cultivated does a human being, who is wholly that, become altogether human and permeated by humanity.

66. The original Protestants wanted to live faithfully according to scripture, take it absolutely seriously, and annihilate everything else.

67. Religion and morality are symmetrically opposed, like poetry and philosophy.

68. If you cast your life into a human mold, you've done enough; but you'll never reach the heights of art and the depths of science without some portion of divinity.

69. Irony is the clear consciousness of eternal agility, of an infinitely teeming chaos.

70. Music is more closely related to morality, history to religion; for rhythm is the idea of music, but history deals with the primitive.

71. Confusion is chaotic only when it can give rise to a new world.

72. Vainly do you search through your so-called aesthetics for the harmonious fullness of humanity, the beginning and end of culture. Try to recognize the elements of humanity and culture, and worship them, particularly fire.

73. There is no dualism without primacy; and therefore morality is not equal to religion, but subordinate to it.

74. Join the extremes and you will find the true middle.

75. As the finest flower of a particular kind of organization, poetry is a very localized thing. Philosophy, on the other hand, may possibly be not very dissimilar even on different planets.

76. Morality without a sense for paradox is vulgar.

77. Honor is the mysticism of justice.

78. The thinking of a religious person is etymological; it traces all concepts back to the original intuition, to whatever is characteristic.

79. There is only a single sense incorporating all the others. The most spiritual sense is the most original; all others derive from it.

80. We agree on this point because we are of one sense; but here we disagree because you or I am lacking in sense. Who is right, and how are we to settle the matter? Only by virtue of a culture that broadens every particular sense into a universal, infinite sense, and by faith in this sense or in religion. Then we will agree before we can agree to agree.

81. Every relation of man to the infinite is religion; that is, man in the entire fullness of his humanity. When a mathematician calculates what the infinitely great number is, that of course isn't religion. The infinite conceived of in such fullness is God.

82. You live only insofar as you live according to your own ideas. Your principles are only the means, your calling the end in itself.

83. Only through love and the consciousness of love does man become man.

84. The pursuit of morality is probably the greatest waste of time, with the exception of the rituals of piety. Can you make a habit of having a soul and a mind? So too with religion and morality; neither should influence the economy and politics of life without mediation.

85. The kernel, the center of poetry, is to be found in mythology and the mysteries of antiquity. Satiate the feeling of life with the idea of infinity, and you will understand both the ancients and poetry.

86. Beautiful is what reminds us of nature and thereby stimulates a sense of the infinite fullness of life. Nature is organic, and whatever is most sublimely beautiful is therefore always vegetal, and the same is true of morality and love.

87. A true human being is one who has penetrated to the center of humanity.

88. There is a beautiful kind of openness that unfolds like a flower to breathe forth its fragrance.

89. Why should morality belong only to philosophy, since the greatest

part of poetry is concerned with the art of living and the knowledge of human nature! Is morality then independent of both and something unto itself? Or is it perhaps like religion, which ought never to appear in isolation?

90. You wanted to destroy philosophy and poetry in order to have more room for religion and morality, both of which you misunderstood; but you've managed to destroy nothing but yourself.

91. All life is in its ultimate origins not natural, but divine and human; for it must arise out of love, just as there can be no understanding without spirit.

92. The only significant opposition to the religion of man and artist now springing up everywhere is to be expected from the few remaining real Christians. But they too, when the sun really begins to dawn, will fall down and worship.

93. Polemics can only sharpen the mind, and ought to exterminate irrationality. Polemics are thoroughly philosophical. Boundless religious wrath and fury lose their dignity when they become polemical, when they are focused in a specific direction and on a particular object or purpose.

94. The few revolutionaries who took part in the Revolution were mystics as only Frenchmen of our age could have been mystics. They legislated their characters and their actions into religion. But future historians will consider it the greatest honor and destiny of the Revolution that it was the strongest stimulus to a slumbering religion.

95. The new, eternal gospel that Lessing prophesied will appear as a bible: but not as a single book in the usual sense. Even what we now call the Bible is actually a system of books. And that is, I might add, no mere arbitrary turn of phrase! Or is there some other word to differentiate the idea of an infinite book from an ordinary one, than Bible, the book per se, the absolute book? And surely there is an eternally essential and even practical difference if a book is merely a means to an end, or an independent work, an individual, a personified idea. It cannot be this without divine inspiration, and here the esoteric concept is itself in agreement with the exoteric one; and, moreover, no idea is isolated, but is what it is only in combination with all other ideas. An example will explain this. All the classical poems of the ancients are coherent, inseparable; they form an organic whole, they constitute, properly viewed, only a single poem, the only one in which poetry itself appears in perfection. In a similar way, in a perfect literature all books should be only

a single book, and in such an eternally developing book, the gospel of humanity and culture will be revealed.

96. All philosophy is idealism, and there exists no true realism except that of poetry. But poetry and philosophy are only extremes. If one were to say that some people are pure idealists and others very definitely realists, then that remark would be quite true. Stated differently, it means that there as yet exist no wholly cultivated human beings, that there still is no religion.

97. A happy omen: that even a physicist—the profound Baader*—has raised himself up from the depths of physics to the level of intuiting poetry, honoring the elements as organic individuals, and pointing out the divinity at the heart of matter!

98. Conceive of something finite formed into something infinite, and you have a man.

99. If you want to penetrate into the heart of physics, then let yourself be initiated into the mysteries of poetry.

100. We will know man when we know the center of the earth.

101. Wherever there are politics or economics no morality exists.

102. The first man to have an intellectual intuition of morality, to recognize and, with divine inspiration, reveal the prototype of perfected man in the forms of art and antiquity was the holy Winckelmann.

103. Whoever doesn't come to know Nature through love will never come to know her.

104. Original love never appears in a pure state, but in manifold forms and disguises, as trust, humility, devotion, cheerfulness, loyalty, shame, and gratitude; but mostly as yearning and secret melancholy.

105. So Fichte is supposed to have attacked religion? If an interest in the world beyond the senses is the essence of religion, then his whole doctrine is religion in the form of philosophy.

106. Don't waste your faith and love on the political world, but, in the divine world of science and art, offer up your inmost being in a fiery stream of eternal creation.

107. In undisturbed harmony, Hülsen's muse formulates beautiful, sub-

* Franz Baader (1765–1841), German Catholic philosopher and theosophist; also a student of the natural sciences and technology.

lime ideas about culture, humanity, and love. This is morality in its highest sense; but morality suffused with religion, and moving from the artificial flux of syllogism into the free stream of the epic.

108. Whatever can be done while poetry and philosophy are separated has been done and accomplished. So the time has come to unite the two.

109. Imagination and wit are everything to you! Explain a beautiful illusion and take playfulness seriously, and you will apprehend what is at the center and rediscover your revered art in a more sublime light.

110. The difference between religion and morality is to be found quite simply in the old classification of all things into divine and human, if only it were understood properly.

111. Your goal is art and science, your life love and culture. Without knowing it, you're on the way to religion. Realize the fact and you'll be sure of achieving your goal.

112. In our age or any other, nothing more to the credit of Christianity can be said than that the author of the *Talks on Religion* is a Christian.

113. The artist who doesn't reveal himself completely is a contemptible slave.

114. No artist should be the only, the sole artist among artists, the central one, the director of all the others; rather, all artists should be all of these things, but each one from his own point of view. No artist should be merely the representative of his genre, but should relate himself and his genre to the whole, and thereby influence and control it. Like the Roman senators, true artists are a nation of kings.

115. If you want to achieve great things, then inspire and educate women and young men. Here, if anywhere, fresh strength and health are still to be found, and this is the way that the most important reformations have been accomplished.

116. Outward nobility in the man is to genius as beauty in women is to their capacity to love, to their temperament.

117. Philosophy is an ellipse. The one center, which we are closer to at present, is the rule of reason. The other is the idea of the universe, and it is here that philosophy and religion intersect.

118. What blindness to talk of atheism! Are there any theists? Did any human mind ever encompass the idea of divinity?

119. All honor to the true philologists! They accomplish a godlike task, for they disseminate the artistic sense throughout the whole region of scholarship. No scholar should be a simple workman.

120. The spirit of the old heroes of German art and science will remain ours for as long as we are Germans. The German artist either has no character at all or else that of an Albrecht Dürer, Kepler, Hans Sachs, or of a Luther and Jacob Böhme. Righteous, guileless, thorough, precise, and profound is this character, but also innocent and somewhat clumsy. Only with the Germans is it a national characteristic to worship the arts and sciences simply for their own sakes.

121. If you only listen to me now and realize why you can't understand each other, then I'll have achieved my purpose. When the sense of harmony has been awakened, then it's time to express more harmoniously the One Thing that will always have to be repeated.

122. Wherever artists make up a family there we have the original convocations of humanity.

123. False universality is what rubs the edges off all individual kinds of culture and takes as its basis the mediocre average. With true universality, on the other hand, art, for example, would become even more artificial than it is in its pure state, poetry would become more poetical, criticism more critical, history more historical, and so on. This universality can come into being when the simple light of religion and morality touches a chaos of combinative wit and fertilizes it. Then the most sublime poetry and philosophy burst into flower by themselves.

124. Why does all that is highest nowadays reveal itself so often as a false tendency? Because nobody understands himself who doesn't understand his fellows. Therefore you first have to believe you're not alone, you always have to intuit everything infinitely and never tire of cultivating the intellect until you've finally found what's original and essential. Then the Genius of the Age will appear to you and gently intimate what is proper and what isn't.

125. Whoever feels a noble impulse stirring deeply within himself and doesn't know how to explain it, let him read the *Talks on Religion,* and what he felt will become so clear to him that he will be able to formulate it precisely.

126. A family can only be formed around a loving woman.

127. Women have less need for the poetry of poets because their very essence is poetry.

128. Mysteries are female; they like to veil themselves but still want to be seen and discovered.

129. In religion it's always morning and the rosy light of dawn.

129a. You're not really supposed to understand me, but I want very much for you to listen to me.*

130. Only a man who is at one with the world can be at one with himself.

131. The hidden meaning of sacrifice is the annihilation of the finite because it is finite. In order to demonstrate that this is its only justification, one must choose to sacrifice whatever is most noble and most beautiful: but particularly man, the flower of the earth. Human sacrifices are the most natural sacrifices. But man is more than the flower of the earth; he is reasonable, and reason is free and in itself nothing but an eternal self-destination into the infinite. Hence man can only sacrifice himself, and he does so in an omnipresent sanctity the mob knows nothing of. All artists are Decians†, and to become an artist means nothing but consecrating oneself to the gods of the underworld. In the enthusiasm of annihilation, the meaning of the divine creation is revealed for the first time. Only in the midst of death does the lightning bolt of eternal life explode.

132. If you separate religion entirely from morality, then you'll get the real energy of evil in man, the horrible, cruel, raging, and inhuman principle that has dwelt in his spirit from the very beginning. Here the division of the indivisible is punished most terribly.

133. To begin with, I speak only to those who are already facing the Orient.

134. You suspect something greater even in me and ask why I keep silent precisely at the threshold? It's because it's still so early in the day.

135. Not Hermann and Odin are the national gods of the Germans, but art and science. Think again of Kepler, Dürer, Luther, Böhme; and then of Lessing, Winckelmann, Goethe, Fichte. Virtue is applicable not only to morals; it also holds good for the arts and sciences, which have their own rights and duties. And this spirit, this power of virtue, is precisely

* This fragment—though contained in the manuscript of the *Ideas*—was not printed in the *Athenaeum*.

† The Decii, a noted Roman family in which grandfather, father, and son freely gave their lives for the greater glory of Rome.

what differentiates the German from everyone else in his treatment of the arts and the sciences.

136. What am I proud of, and what can I be proud of as an artist? Of the decision that separated and isolated me forever from everything ordinary; of the work that divinely surpasses every intention, and whose intention no one will ever probe entirely; of the ability to worship the perfection I have encountered; of the awareness that I can stimulate my fellows to do their best, and that everything they create is my gain.

137. The piety of philosophers is theory, pure intuition of the divinity, calm and gay in silent solitude. Spinoza is the ideal of the species. The religious state of the poet is more passionate and more communicative. At the root of things lies enthusiasm, and at the end there remains mythology. Whatever stays at the midpoint possesses the character of life to the point of sexual differentiation. Mysteries are, as I said before, female; and orgies seek, in the happy exuberance of their male strength, to overcome everything around them or fertilize it.

138. Precisely because Christianity is a religion of death, it could be treated with the greatest realism, and could have its orgies just as the old religion of nature and life did.

139. There is no self-knowledge except historical self-knowledge. No one knows what he is if he doesn't know what his contemporaries are, particularly the greatest contemporary of the brotherhood, the master of masters, the genius of the age.

140. One of the most important concerns of the brotherhood is to remove all outsiders who have insinuated themselves into its ranks. Bunglers should be thrown out.

141. Oh, how wretched are your conceptions of genius (I mean the best among you). Where you see genius, I often see a wealth of false tendencies, the very center of incompetence. A little talent and a lot of humbug are things everyone praises, and which even lead everyone to proclaim that genius is incorrect, must be incorrect. So, this idea is gone too? Isn't the thoughtful man the one who is fittest to perceive the language of the spirit? Only the spiritual man has a spirit, a genius, and every genius is universal. Whoever is merely representative, merely has talent.

142. Like the merchants in the Middle Ages, the artists of today should band together into a Hansa in order to mutually defend themselves in some measure.

143. There is no great world but the world of artists. They live nobly, though they still lack a proper sense of decorum. But decorum would develop wherever everybody expressed themselves openly and cheerfully, and felt and grasped the value of others completely.

144. You demand, once and for all, original understanding from a thinker, and even allow a certain measure of inspiration to a poet. But do you really know what that means? Without being aware of it, you have trespassed on holy ground; you are ours.

145. All human beings are somewhat ludicrous and grotesque simply because they are human; and in this respect too, artists probably are doubly human. So it is, so it was, so it will be.

146. Even in their outward behavior, the lives of artists should differ completely from the lives of other men. They are Brahmins, a higher caste: ennobled not by birth, but by free self-consecration.

147. What constitutes the free human being per se, what to the unfree man is the standard of all things, is his religion. There is a profound meaning in the expression that something or other is his God or his idol, and in other expressions of the sort.

148. Who unlocks the magic book of art and frees the imprisoned holy spirit? Only a kindred spirit.

149. Without poetry, religion becomes murky, false, and evil; without philosophy, extravagant in its lewdness and lustful to the point of self-emasculation.

150. You can neither explain nor understand the universe, but only intuit and reveal it. Only stop calling the system of empiricism the universe, and if you haven't yet understood Spinoza, discover for the present the true religious conception of the universe in the *Talks on Religion*.

151. Religion can assume all the aspects of feeling. Here wild rage and the sweetest melancholy touch, devouring hate and the childish smile of happy compliance.

152. If you want to see complete humanity, then look for a family. In the family, minds organically grow into a unit, and for precisely that reason, the family is pure poetry.

153. All self-sufficiency is radical, is original, and all originality is moral, is originality of the whole man. Without originality, there is no energy of reason and no beauty of disposition.

154. Absolutely candid, carefree, but straightforward speech becomes possible for the first time when one speaks of the highest.

155. I have expressed a few ideas pointing toward the heart of things, and have greeted the dawn in my own way, from my own point of view, from my standpoint. Let anyone who knows the road do likewise in his own way, from his own point of view, from his standpoint.

156. *To Novalis:* You don't stay at the threshold of things. On the contrary, your spirit is deeply suffused with poetry and philosophy. It was closest to me in these images of uncomprehended truth. What you've thought I think; what I've thought you will think or have already thought. There are misunderstandings that only serve to confirm the greatest shared understanding. Every doctrine of the eternal Orient belongs to all artists. I name you instead of all the others.

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