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An Anthropological Approach to the Contemporary Significance of Rhetoric

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What man is has been formulated as a thesis in countless, more or less formal, attempted definitions. The varieties of what we now call philosophical anthropology can be reduced to one pair of alternatives: Man can be viewed either as a poor or as a rich creature. The fact that man is not fixed, biologically, to a specific environment can be understood either as a fundamental lack of proper equipment for self-preservation or as openness to the fullness of a world that is no longer accentuated only in terms of vital necessities. Man is made creative either by the urgency of his needs *or* by playful dealings with his surplus talents. He is the creature that is incapable of doing anything to no purpose *or* he is the only animal that is capable of an *acte gratuit.*[a] Man is defined by what he lacks *or* by the creative symbolism with which he makes himself at home in worlds of his own. He is the observer of the universe, in the center of the world, *or* he is [literally] "eccentric," exiled from Paradise on an insignificant dust speck called Earth. Man contains in himself the stored-up harvest of all of physical reality, *or* he is a creature of deficiencies,[b] left in the lurch by nature, plagued by residues of instincts that he does not understand and that have lost their functions. I need not go on enumerating the antitheses; the principle by which the list could be extended is easy to see.

As far as rhetoric is concerned, the traditional basic conceptions of it can likewise be reduced to one pair of alternatives: Rhetoric has to do either with the consequences of possessing

the truth or with the difficulties that result from the impossibility of obtaining truth. Plato combatted the rhetoric of the Sophists by suggesting that it was based on the thesis of the impossibility of truth and that it deduced therefrom its right to pass off what people could be persuaded of as what was true. The most influential doctrine of rhetoric in our tradition, on the other hand — that of Cicero — starts from the premise that one can possess the truth, and gives the art of speaking the function of beautifying the communication of this truth, making it accessible and impressive — in short, dealing with it in a way that is appropriate to the object. The Christian tradition vacillates between the two possible consequences of the premise that one possesses the truth: on the one hand, that God's truth has no need of human aids of the kind represented by rhetoric and that it should present itself with as little adornment as possible (a pattern that is repeated in every rhetoric of straightforwardness), and on the other hand, that this same truth is humanized in the housing of the canons of rules of rhetoric. In modern aesthetics rhetoric's implication that it has to do, positively or negatively, with the truth celebrates its final triumph when the connection is reversed: It becomes permissible to infer truth content from rhetorical art, from style, from beauty — or beauty and truth can even become identical. The enmity that Plato postulated between philosophy and rhetoric is defined in philosophy itself, or at least in its languages, as aesthetics against philosophy. Only as aesthetics?

It is easy to see that one can coordinate the two radical pairs of alternatives, in anthropology and in rhetoric, unambiguously with one another. Man as a rich creature exercises his disposition over the truth that he possesses with the aid of the rhetorical *ornatus* [ornament]. Man as a poor creature needs rhetoric as the art of appearance, which helps him to deal with his lack of truth. The epistemological situation that Plato imputed to Sophism is radicalized, anthropologically, into the situation of the "creature of deficiencies," for whom everything becomes part of the economy of his means of survival, and who consequently cannot afford rhetoric — unless he *has* to afford it. A consequence of this anthropological intensification of the initial conditions is that the concept of a rhetoric that is

associated with those conditions must also be formulated in a more elementary or fundamental way. Then the technique of speech appears as a special case of rule-governed modes of behavior that produce something to be understood, set up signs, bring about agreement, or provoke contradiction. Keeping silent, visibly omitting some action in a context of connected behavior, can become just as rhetorical as the reading aloud of an outcry of popular wrath, and the Platonic dialogue is no less rhetorically inclined than the Sophist's instructional discourse, which it opposed by literary means. Even when it is below the threshold of the spoken or the written word, rhetoric is form as means, obedience to rules as an instrument. Nietzsche may have erred in his statement that Plato's struggle against rhetoric is to be understood as a product of envy of rhetoric's influence, but he is right when he says in the same place that with rhetoric the Greeks had invented "form in itself."[1]

Plato's two great rejections, the rejection of atomism and the rejection of Sophism, probably had even more important consequences than the positive dogmas of the part of the history of his influence that is entitled "Platonism" and is thus identifiable. Philosophy's preference for language's semantic relation to reality produced a permanent sensitivity vis-à-vis rhetoric's pragmatic conception of language, a sensitivity that took a turn in favor of rhetoric only episodically, when conceptual language, in forms of Scholasticism, deprived its reference to reality of credibility. The Platonic Socrates's principle (now a commonplace that everyone learns in school) that virtue is knowledge makes what is evident, instead of what is an "institution,"[2] the norm of behavior. No one will want to deny that with this principle Socrates formulated an ideal without the pursuit of which — sometimes confident, sometimes desperate — the European tradition cannot be imagined. But it is equally true that it constituted an excessive demand, and hard on its heels came the resignations — beginning with the catastrophic reverse that the doctrine of the Ideas underwent in Plato's own school as a result of the outbreak of Academic Skepticism hardly a century after the death of the school's founder, and ending with what Nietzsche called "nihilism." The philosophy

of absolute goals did not legitimate the theory of means; instead, it repressed and suffocated it. An ethics that takes the evidentness of the good as its point of departure leaves no room for rhetoric as the theory and practice of influencing behavior on the assumption that we do not have access to definitive evidence of the good. This also affects the "anthropology" that is founded and embodied in rhetoric; as a theory of man outside the realm of Ideas, forsaken by evidentness, it has lost the possibility of being "philosophical," and becomes the last, and belated, discipline of philosophy.

Rhetoric's anthropological importance stands out best against the background of the metaphysics that has been dominant since antiquity, a metaphysics that has a cosmological ground-plan: The Ideas constitute a cosmos that the phenomenal world imitates. Man, however privileged his position may be as an onlooker in the center of the whole, is nevertheless not a pure special case but rather a point of intersection of heterogeneous realities, a compound — and, as such, problematic. In the modernized model of levels, the idea lives on that in the case of man things have come together that have difficulty harmonizing with each other. In principle this metaphysics says that man's thoughts could also be those of a god and that what moves him could be what moves a celestial sphere or what moves an animal. Nature, which otherwise only presents itself in pure form and regulates itself straightforwardly, here confronts us with a complication that can most readily be explained as an accident or a mixture of heterogeneous elements; in which case the problem of conduct is to assign to one of these elements authority over the others — to establish a sort of substantial consistency. In short, the metaphysical tradition at bottom has had nothing special to say about man, with his asserted uniqueness. That is amazing, but it is closely related to philosophy's banishment of rhetoric. For rhetoric starts from, and only from, the respect in which man is unique: it is not that language is his specific characteristic but that language, in rhetoric, appears as a function of a specific difficulty of man's.

If one wants to express this difficulty in the language of the metaphysical tradition, one will have to say that man does not

belong to this cosmos (if in fact it exists); and this is not because of a transcendent "surplus" that he possesses but because of an immanent deficiency, a deficiency of pre-given, prepared structures to fit into and of regulatory processes for a connected system that would deserve to be called a "cosmos" and within which something could be called part of the cosmos. In the language of modern biological anthropology, too, man is a creature who has fallen back out of the ordered arrangements that nature has accomplished, and for whom actions have to take the place of the automatic controls that he lacks or correct those that have acquired an erratic inaccuracy. Action compensates for the "indeterminateness" of the creature man, and rhetoric is the effort to produce the accords that have to take the place of the "substantial" base of regulatory processes in order to make action possible. From this point of view, language is a set of instruments not for communicating information or truths, but rather, primarily, for the production of mutual understanding, agreement, or toleration, on which the actor depends. This is the root of "consensus"[d] as a basis for the concept of what is "real": "We say that that which everyone thinks really is so," says Aristotle,[2] and always has a teleological argument for this in the background. Only a skeptical destruction of this teleological support makes the pragmatic substratum of consensus visible again.

I know that the term "skepticism" is not popular at present. Too much is once again known too precisely for that to be the case, and in such a situation one does not want to play the part of troublemaker. But in the tradition of skepticism (which is mostly below the surface and only occasionally flares up) the anthropology whose repression by metaphysics I have attempted briefly to locate has become especially urgent when the eternal truths had to be scaled down to what is most immediately reliable, and man no longer appeared as the disguised variant of a pure spirit. The first philosophical anthropology that deserved this name was, at the beginning of the modern age, Montaigne's *Apologie de Raimond Sebond.* In the hands of a skeptic who sees himself as prevented from extending his questioning beyond man, a body of material that is mainly conventional gets into a new overall state, in which

the only object of study that is still possible for man forces everything to be, now, only a symptom of this object. This tradition leads, by way of the literature of moralism, to Kant's (explicitly so designated) *Anthropologie.*

The skepticism that is piled up — only for the purpose of definitively disposing of it — in the preparatory phase of theories of knowledge (but also of Husserl's phenomenology) deprives itself of a favorable opportunity to yield dividends for anthropology, dividends that turn on the question of what man is left with if he fails in his attempt to seize pure evidentness and absolute self-foundation. An illustration of this state of affairs is the way in which Descartes disposed not only of his radicalized theoretical doubt but also of the problem of a *morale par provision* [provisional ethics], which was supposed to act as a substitute, until the completion of theoretical knowledge, for the *morale définitive* [definitive ethics] that would then become possible. Descartes's illusion, which is still instructive, was not so much that the *morale définitive* would have to come soon, because physics could be completed quickly, but rather that the intervening period could be a static phase of holding fast to what had always been obligatory. Descartes took no cognizance of the retroactive effect of the process of theory on the supposed interim of the provisional ethics. It is very remarkable to reflect on the consequences of this idea of a *morale par provision* assuming that the eschatology of science doe not arrive, and to recognize in them much of what the final expectations directed at science, which are disappointed again and again, produce as shared characteristics. The fact that Descartes wanted to stage the preliminary situation as a standstill meant that he was not compelled to think through the anthropological implications of this state. Thus he could propose as an example of the provisional ethics a person who has lost his way in a forest, who only needs to go resolutely in one direction in order to get out of the forest, because all forests are finite and can be regarded, in the imagined situation, as unchanging. The recommendation of formal resoluteness in favor of the provisional ethics means a prohibition against considering all the concrete characteristics of the situation and their changes, including how man is equipped for dealing with situations in

which his orientation is uncertain. The "method's" promised final accomplishment gets in the way of man's process of self-understanding in the present and also gets in the way of rhetoric as a technique for coming to terms in the provisional state prior to all definitive truths and ethics. Rhetoric creates institutions where evident truths are lacking.

One could dissolve the dualism of philosophy and rhetoric (which has again and again frustrated attempts at harmonization) in a specific conception, in the philosophy of history, that reshapes Descartes's model by skeptically modifying the implications of the *morale par provision*. What remains doubtful is not only the possibility of completing scientific knowledge, in whatever area, but also the possible profit of such completion for a *morale définitive*. We have almost forgotten that "progress" is nothing but the form of life, adjusted for the long term, of that Cartesian interim for which the provisional ethics was intended. Where Descartes is still correct is in his assumption that there is no sort of preliminary participation, granted in advance, in the success of the whole. To put it differently: Philosophy's program succeeds or fails, but it does not yield any profit in installments. Everything that remains, this side of definitive evidence, is rhetoric; rhetoric is the vehicle of the *morale par provision*. This statement means above all that that rhetoric is an aggregate of legitimate means. Rhetoric belongs to a syndrome of skeptical assumptions. We will not be deceived into overlooking this by the fact that it was only able to defend itself against the charge of being a "mere means" by presenting itself as the means employed by the truth. For even in its victories rhetoric had to proceed "rhetorically": When, in the fourth century B.C., rhetoric had in practice eliminated philosophy's claims, Isocrates, using a Sophistical device, called his Sophism "philosophy." For Jacob Burckhardt, the Greeks' feeling for effect, as opposed to reality, is the basis of rhetoric, which "only momentarily" rose to the level of "eloquence in public affairs" but had been primarily developed "as a means to success in the courts." But the Greeks themselves contrasted persuasion to subjugation by force: in the dealings of Greeks with Greeks, Isocrates says, the appropriate means is persuasion, whereas in dealings with barbarians it is the use of force.

This difference is understood as one of language and education, because persuasion presupposes that one shares a horizon, allusions to prototypical material, and the orientation provided by metaphors and similes. The antithesis of truth and effect is superficial, because the rhetorical effect is not an alternative that one can choose instead of an insight that one could *also* have, but an alternative to a definitive evidence that one *cannot* have, or cannot have yet, or at any rate cannot have here and now. Besides, rhetoric is not only the technique of producing such as effect, it is always also a means of keeping the effect transparent: it makes us conscious of effective means whose use does not need to be expressly prescribed, by making explicit what is already done in any case.

As long as philosophy was inclined to hold out at least the prospect of eternal truths and definitive certainties, then "consensus" as the ideal of rhetoric, and agreement subject to later revocation as the result attained by persuasion, had to seem contemptible to it. But when it was transformed into a theory of the scientific "method" of the modern age, philosophy too was not spared the renunciation on which all rhetoric is based. To be sure, it seemed at first as though science's hypotheses were always temporary expedients employed by cognition, instructions as to how to bring about their verification and thus their final guarantee; but the history of science showed in detail how verification, too, represents the pattern of agreement subject to later revocation, and how the publication of every theory implies a request that other people should follow the paths by which the theorist claims that it is confirmed and should give it the sanction of objectivity — without its ever being possible to exclude, by this process, the possibility that by other paths other things may be discovered and the theory contradicted. What Thomas S. Kuhn in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*[5] called the "paradigm" — the dominant fundamental conception, in a scientific discipline, for a long period of time, which integrates into itself all subsequent refining and extending inquiries — this paradigm is nothing but a "consensus," which is able to stabilize itself not, indeed, exclusively, but partly by means of the rhetoric of the academies and the textbooks.

Even if a deficiency of definitive evidence defines the situation both of the process of theory and of rhetoric, nevertheless science has provided itself with the invaluable advantage of being able to put up with the provisional character of its results indefinitely. That is not a matter of course: Descartes would have regarded it as intolerable. But his idea of "method" made it possible to understand science, and to organize it, as an overall process that is always "transferable" [from one person to another] and that integrates individuals and generations into itself as mere functionaries. All action that is based, as "application," on this sort of theory has to share the weakness of its provisional character: that it can have its authority revoked at any time. Theories, too, implicitly solicit "agreement," as rhetoric does explicitly. The decisive difference lies in the dimension of time; science can wait, or is subject to the convention of being able to wait, whereas rhetoric — if it can no longer be the *ornatus* of a truth — presupposes, as a constitutive element of its situation, that the "creature of deficiency" is compelled to act. Thus it is an imitation of the form of the process of science when discussion, as an instrument of public will formation, is regarded as though it were a mechanism for rationally arriving at results, whereas it cannot in fact afford precisely the endlessness (in principle) of rationality in the form that it takes in science. The restricted time allotted to speakers may be only a paltry substitute for rhetoric's rules of form, but even as a substitute it is an essential underlying arrangement for rhetoric; where it is disregarded or unknown, or indeed where its opposite is institutionalized (as in the "filibuster"), rhetoric's character as an alternative to terror becomes manifest. To see oneself in the perspective of rhetoric means to be conscious both of being compelled to act and of the lack of norms in a finite situation. Everything that is not force here goes over to the side of rhetoric, and rhetoric implies the renunciation of force.

In this connection the circumstance of being compelled to act, which determines the rhetorical situation and which demands primarily a physical reaction, can be transformed, rhetorically, in such a way that the enforced action becomes, by "consensus," once again "merely" a rhetorical one. Substituting

that is at our disposal in the place of something that is not. The *animal symbolicum* masters the reality that is originally lethal for him by letting it be represented; he looks away from what is uncanny or uncomfortable for him and toward what is familiar. This becomes clearest where judgment, with its claim to identity, cannot reach its goal at all, either because the demands of its object exceed what its procedure can handle (as in the case of the "the world," "life," "history," "consciousness") or because there is insufficient scope for the procedure, as in situations where one is compelled to act, and in which rapid orientation and vivid plausibility are needed. Metaphor is not only a chapter in the discussion of rhetorical means, it is a distinctive element of rhetoric, in which rhetoric's function can be displayed and expressed in terms of its relation to anthropology.

It would be entirely one-sided and incomplete to present rhetoric only as an "emergency" solution, in view of the deficiency of evidence in situations where one is compelled to act. It is not only a substitute for theoretical orientation for action; more importantly, it can be a substitute for action itself. Man can not only *present* one thing in place of another, he can also *do* one thing in place of another. If history teaches anything at all, it is this, that without this capacity to use substitutes for actions not much would be left of mankind. The ritualized replacement of a human sacrifice by an animal sacrifice, which is still visible through the story of Abraham and Isaac, may have been a beginning. Christianity, through two millennia, has regarded it as quite understandable that the death of one can compensate for the mischief for which all are responsible. Freud saw in the commemorative funeral feast the sons' agreement to put an end to the killing of the tribal father, and instead of that to do — something else. In Bremen, before their journey to America together in 1909, Freud persuaded C. G. Jung, whom he suspected of treachery to his school, to drink wine with his meal (which violated the principles of Jung's first teacher, Bleuler), instead of forcing him to perform an act of submission, the content of which would essentially have been a statement that he did not want to be the father himself. Politically, the rebuke that a verbal or demonstrative

act is "pure rhetoric" is regarded as a serious one; but that is itself part of a rhetoric that does not want to admit (nor does it have any need to admit) that a policy is better, the more it can afford to restrict itself to "mere words." In foreign policy, warnings are most productive when they are pronounced at the moment in which the one who is being warned has in any case abandoned the idea of carrying out the act against which he is being warned. Everything can depend on (as we have become accustomed to saying) "not going beyond declarations," on "talking down" the compulsion to act, when the risk involved in the action is able to disqualify all possible gains from consideration. Here questions relating to the concept of reality become involved, which cannot be dealt with in this discussion.[4]

Lacking definitive evidence and being compelled to act are the prerequisites of the rhetorical situation. But not only substitutive and metaphorical procedures are rhetorical. Being compelled to act is itself not an utterly "real" circumstance, but also depends on the "role" that is ascribed to the actor or with which he seeks to define himself — self-understanding, too, makes use of metaphors, and "to cheer oneself up" is an expression that betrays that the internal use of rhetoric is not a novel discovery. The metaphors of roles that are popular again today are based on a very solid tradition of picturing life and the world as "theater," and it is not equally a matter of course for all of the historical forms of theater that its "roles" are as fixed as we nowadays assume when we use the metaphor. To allow someone, in the course of a conflict, to "save face" comes from a different realm of speech, but it coincides to a large extent with the precept, implied in the metaphors of roles, that one should not force the focal person of a transaction intended to bring about a change in that person's behavior to leave the identity of his role, but instead one should offer him the required change of behavior in the guise of a credible logical development [of his role]. There is no need to give illustrations of the extent to which the policy of great and small powers today can be described with the phraseology of "role definition" and "role expectation" (here the anthropological metaphor is again taken as a metaphor, on a second level), and what pragmatic instructions for dealing with potentially rhetorical be-

verbal accomplishments for physical ones is an anthropological "radical";[c] rhetoric systematizes it. In his *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Ernst Cassirer described man as the *animal symbolicum* [symbolical animal], whose original accomplishment is to reinterpret an external "impression" as the "expression" of something internal, and thus to set up, in place of something alien and inaccessible, something else that is sensuously tangible. Language, myth, art, and science are, according to Cassirer, regions of such "symbolic forms," which in principle only repeat that primary process of the conversion of "impression" into "expression." But this theory of Cassirer's makes no claim to explain why the "symbolic forms" are set up; the fact that they appear, as the world of culture, allows us to infer the existence of the *animal symbolicum*, which manifests its "nature" in its creations. An anthropology of man as "rich" sees the cultural housing of the "symbolic forms" as growing upward, layer upon layer, on the base of a secure, or at least unquestioned, biological existence. The enrichment of naked existence has no functional continuity with what makes that existence possible. But to the extent that philosophy is a process of dismantling things that are taken for granted, a "philosophical" anthropology has to address the question whether man's physical existence is not itself only a result that follows from the accomplishments that are ascribed to him as belonging to his "nature." The first proposition of an anthropology would then be, It cannot be taken for granted that man is able to exist.

The prototype for such a line of thought can be found in the modern social contract theory that deduces the necessity of establishing man's "civil" condition from its finding that his "natural" condition contradicts the conditions of the possibility of physical existence. For Hobbes, the state is the first artifact, which does not enrich (in the direction of a "world of culture") the environment in which man lives, but rather eliminates its lethal antagonism. What is philosophical about this theory is not primarily that it explains the appearance of an institution such as the state (still less that it explains the appearance of the *absolutist* state), but rather that it converts the supposed definition of man's *nature* as that of a *zoon politikon* ["political animal" — Aristotle] into a functional description. I see no

other scientific course for an anthropology except, in an analogous manner, to destroy[f] what is supposedly "natural" and convict it of its "artificiality" in the functional system of the elementary human accomplishment called "life." A first attempt of this kind was made by Paul Alsberg in 1922 in his book — to which too little attention was paid, because of its misleading title and language — *Das Menschheitsrätsel* [the riddle of humanity]. Then in 1940 Arnold Gehlen — with his work *Der Mensch*, which, though questionable in its intention, was nevertheless fundamental — developed the beginning of a theory of perception and of language, and since then has carried it further by founding a doctrine of "institutions." With Gehlen's absolutism of "institutions," anthropology returns, in a certain way, to its point of departure in the model of the social contract. The discussion of this anthropology has not yet settled the question of whether that fateful return is inevitable.[g]

Man's deficiency in specific dispositions for reactive behavior vis-à-vis reality — that is, his poverty of instincts — is the starting point for the central anthropological question as to how this creature is able to exist in spite of his lack of fixed biological dispositions. The answer can be reduced to the formula: by not dealing with this reality directly. The human relation to reality is indirect, circumstantial, delayed, selective, and above all "metaphorical." How man copes with the excess of demands made on him by his relation to reality was laid out a long time ago in the Nominalists' interpretation of judgment. Predicates are "institutions"; a concrete thing is comprehended by being analyzed into the relationships by which it belongs to these institutions. When it has been absorbed in judgments, it has disappeared as something concrete. But to comprehend something *as* something is radically different from the procedure of comprehending something *by means of* something else. The detour by which, in metaphor, we look away from the object in question, at another one, which we imagine may be instructive, takes the given as something alien and the other as something more familiar and more easily at our disposal. If the limiting case of judgment is identity, the limiting case of metaphor is the symbol; here the other is entirely other, which delivers nothing but the pure possibility of putting something

havior are contained in this description. Georg Simmel suggested that the metaphor of roles is so productive only because life is an "early form of the dramatic art"; but Simmel, especially, knew when he said this that these metaphors no longer have anything to do with the implication that it is a question of illusion, of a theatrical double life, with and without masks, with and without costume, so that one would only need to expose the stage and the actors in order to catch sight of the reality and put an end to the theatrical intermezzo. The "life" of which Simmel speaks is not incidentally and episodically an "early form" of the dramatic art; rather, being able to live and defining a role for oneself are identical.

Now I assert that not only is this talk of "roles" metaphorical, but the process of definition that goes with the role concept — a process upon which the consciousness of identity depends, and with which it can be damaged — is itself rooted in metaphor and is asserted and defended, both internally and externally, by metaphor. The case of defense, in particular, makes that clear: Erving Goffman's *Stigma* (1963) substantiates it abundantly. The "agreement" that has to be the goal of all "persuasion" (even of self-persuasion) is the congruence — which is endangered in all situations and always has to be secured afresh — between one's role consciousness and the role expectations that others have of one. Perhaps "agreement" is too strong a term, because approval would always already go beyond what is called for. Fundamentally, what is important is not to encounter contradiction, both in the internal sense, as a problem relating to consistency, and in the external sense, as a problem relating to acceptance. Rhetoric is a system not only of soliciting mandates for action but also of putting into effect and defending, both with oneself and before others, a self-conception that is in the process of formation or has been formed. Viewed in terms of scientific methodology, the metaphorically conceived "role" performs the function of a hypothesis, which is "verified" by every act that does not falsify it. The residue that still remains of all the rhetoric about the teleological value of "consensus" as something guaranteed by nature is the ensuring of the non-contradiction, the non-breakage of the consistency of what is accepted — which people therefore like

to call, in the current political jargon, a "platform." It is understandable, in view of this state of affairs, that a need for a "basis of shared convictions" becomes virulent again and again, and in the form of one new proposal after another. People may go on calling "consensus" an "idea" of the effect aimed at by rhetoric, but in the anthropological analysis of rhetoric's function it is redundant.

Rhetorical substitution, in situations in which we are compelled to act, and the rhetorical shielding of self-presentation as "self-preservation" have in common the fact that while they do indeed presuppose creative acts (the creation of symbols, the conception of roles), nevertheless as pure creativity they remain impotent and without any function. Here the question immediately arises whether the connection, so sought-after today, between the aesthetics of production and the aesthetics of reception[3] does not point to an analogous structure. "Every art has a rhetorical level," Nietzsche wrote in 1874 in a fragment on Cicero.[4] The "invention" of the substitutive symbol, for example, can be the most harmless, the least imaginative act in the world; it has to be brought to the point where it is recognized, and for this — in contrast to the aesthetic product — it contains, materially, not the slightest inducement. But this recognition is, in effect, everything; only it has consequences. Remember the classical political formula that trade follows the flag; today one can reverse it and say that the flag follows trade: states that do not even maintain diplomatic relations conclude trade agreements in the expectation that the other mode of relations will follow. The reversal of the old proposition is at the same time an expression of the complete devaluation of the symbol of the "flag," which is finally only able to ornament the realities. When it is said (as it used to be) that the respect shown to substitutions is based on "convention," that is both correct and tautological. The convention is a result. How does it come about? Doubtless by being offered and canvassed for. This holds even for the most abstract case in the history of science, the successful promotion of symbolic systems for formal logic; the canvassing rhetoric goes into details or consists of asserting in public, regarding notional forms that one does not like, that one will never comprehend them. The

less it is the case that political realities can still be "created" outside the sphere of economics, the more important become "diplomatic recognition," questions about names of countries, treaties in which one relinquishes what is in any case no longer possible, and proceedings in which one struggles mightily about what is in any case already well established. As soon as what was once considered to be "real" no longer exists, the substitutions themselves become "the real."

In aesthetics, with the surrender of all kinds and degrees of relation to an object, the proposal that something should be accepted as a work of art — or even only as what is "called for" after the end of all art — can only succeed at the cost of a great expenditure of rhetoric. It is not primarily the work's need for commentary that asserts itself in texts that accompany and come after it, but rather its being declared a work of art or a work of what has succeeded art; to that extent, harsh criticism by a competent critic is still acceptance into a relationship to a history in which art has again and again been produced against art, with the rhetorical gesture of making an end of what has been and a beginning of what is to come. Even the disavowal of rhetoric, here, is still rhetorical; even the kick that is administered to the conventional viewer who strives to "understand" demonstrates to him that what he doesn't understand is legitimate and indeed that it occupies the "position" of what one was once supposed to understand, or what is now understood by competent authorities. The "reoccupations"* of which history is composed are carried out rhetorically.

Rhetoric also has to do with the fitting together of actions in time. Acceleration and retardation are elements in historical processes that have so far received too little attention. "History" is composed not only of events and the connections between them (however these may be interpreted) but also of what one could call the "overall situation" with regard to time. What has been designated in our tradition as "rationality" has almost always benefited the element of acceleration, of the concentration of processes. Even dialectical theories of history accentuate the factors promoting acceleration, because they propel the process toward the critical point where it makes its sudden turning and thus bring it noticeably closer to its final state (thus

confirming the law that is asserted to govern the process). The many-layered phenomenon of technicization' can be reduced to the intention of saving time. Rhetoric, on the other hand, is, in regard to the temporal texture of actions, a consummate embodiment of retardation. Circumstantiality, procedural inventiveness, ritualization imply a doubt as to whether the shortest way of connecting two points is also the humane route from one to the other. In aesthetics, for example in music, we are quite familiar with this type of situation. In the modern world excessive demands result not only from the complicatedness of circumstances but also from the increasing divergence between the two spheres of (on the one hand) material exigencies and (on the other) decisions in regard to their temporal texture. A disproportion has arisen between the acceleration of processes and the feasibility of keeping a "feel" for them, of intervening in them with decisions, and of coordinating them, through an overview, with other processes. Certain auxiliary functions that technical equipment can perform for human action have an assimilating effect: Where all the data are quickly available, a quick decision seems to have a special appropriateness to the case.

The desire to keep developments under one's control, or to get them under our control again, is dominant in our critical reflections on progress, to the extent that they are not pure romanticism. Operations analyses supply optimal problem solutions, but they never also eliminate doubts as to whether the problem was correctly posed — and such doubts already characterize action as something that goes before its theory and does not follow from it as a mere result. There is a clearly recognizable increased accent on delaying factors in public dealings. It is not an accident that such an outmoded word as "reflection" could be renewed as a catchword. There is a need for an institutionalized catching of breath, which sends even majorities that are competent to make decisions on long rhetorical detours. One wants to make it evident that one is not "driven" (by whatever it might be) and that one does not intend merely to sanction what has been decided long since. The acceleration of processes is after all only a variant of the "stimulus overload" that the biologically impoverished creature,

man, is constitutionally exposed to and that he deals with by institutionalizing his behavior. Here verbal institutions are by no means a zero-grade instance of more massive regulatory processes; their potency must be measured against the ideal of decisionistic theories, which consists in taking up only a point in time.

There is something like the expediency of what is not expedient. Today we observe an extremely rapid dismantling of "obsolete" forms by critical proceedings in which everything that exists carries the burden of proving that its existence is justified; but at the same time we see at work an exuberant inventiveness in the fresh construction of intricate procedures, which are only distinguished by soberer titles like "rules of procedure," "supervisory agencies," "operational systems," and the like. Whatever time is saved is always immediately used up.

We must increasingly abandon the idea of a model of education or culture [*Bildung*] that is governed by the norm that man must always know what he is doing. In former times a doctor was supposed to know not only the conditions of the functioning of the organs, conditions whose failure constitutes illness, and the mode of operation of the therapies and medications that he prescribed, as well, but also the derivation of the foreign words that he continually used to label all of this and the use of which was evidence of his being initiated into the guild. A captain was not only supposed to be able to use the sextant and the trigonometric formulae that went with it but also had to know how the instrument functioned and how the formulae could be derived, so that he would be a potential Robinson Crusoe who could start out *ex nihilo* [from nothing] if the already manufactured auxiliary means were lost. As opposed to this, the idea has for a long time been gaining ground that the technical world needs trained functionaries who react appropriately but do not understand its functional connections in every respect. Fewer and fewer people will know what they do in the sense that they know *why* they do it that way. Action shrinks to reaction the more direct is the path from theory to practice that is sought. The cry for the elimination of "useless curricular material" is always a cry for "facilitating" functional implementation. Of course the circumstantiality that goes with

the claim to know what one is doing is not in itself a guarantee of humane or moral insight, but as a pattern of delayed reaction it is potentially also a pattern of "conscious" action.

I suggest that "education and culture," whatever else they may still be, have something to do with this delaying of the functional connections between signals and reactions to them. The result is that their contents, their "values" and "goods," become secondary. The discussion about these values is usually conducted with an unexamined distribution of the burden of proof: one who defends traditional cultural "goods" is supposed to prove what they are still worth. If we assume that in themselves they are worth nothing at all, their "rhetorical" character becomes evident: they are figures, required exercises, obligatory detours and formalities, rituals, which impede the immediate utilization of man and obstruct (or perhaps only slow down) the arrival of a world of the shortest possible connection between any two given points. If classical rhetoric essentially aims at a mandate for action, modern rhetoric seeks to promote the delaying of action, or at least the understanding of such delay — and it does this especially when it wants to demonstrate its capacity to act, once again by displaying symbolic substitutions.

The axiom of all rhetoric is the principle of insufficient reason (*principium rationis insufficientis*). It is a correlate of the anthropology of a creature who is deficient in essential respects. If man's world accorded with the optimism of the metaphysics of Leibniz, who thought that he could assign a sufficient reason even for the fact that anything exists at all, rather than nothing ("cur aliquid potius quam nihil"), then there would be no rhetoric, because there would be neither the need nor the possibility of using it effectively. The rhetoric that by its dissemination is the most important in our history, the rhetoric of prayer, already had to rely — contrary to the theological positions associated with rationalistic or voluntaristic concepts of God — on a God who allowed himself to be persuaded, and this problem recurs in the case of anthropology: the man whom it deals with is not characterized by the philosophical overcoming of "opinion" by "knowledge."

But the principle of insufficient reason is not to be confused with a demand that we forgo reasons, just as "opinion" does not denote an attitude for which one has no reasons but rather one for which the reasons are diffuse and not regulated by method. One has to be cautious about making accusations of irrationality in situations where endless, indefinitely extensive procedures have to be excluded; in the realm of reasoning about practical activities in life, it can be more rational to accept something on insufficient grounds than to insist on a procedure modeled on that of science, and it *is* more rational to do this than to disguise decisions that have already been made in arguments that are scientific in form. It is true that euphoria about the provision of scientific advice in public affairs has faded away somewhat; but the disappointments in regard to this alliance are due to a failure to understand that lacking definitive evidence of the truth of their findings, committees of scientists themselves cannot proceed differently from the institutions they advise — that is, they must proceed rhetorically, aiming at an actual consensus, which cannot be the consensus of their theoretical norms. It is also a norm of science that one should clearly indicate the modality of one's statements. If one affirms apodictically, or even merely assertorically, what can only be affirmed problematically, one violates this norm. Anyone who is affected by public actions or who has to agree to them has a right to know what is the dignity of the premises that are presented as the results of scientific consultation. Rhetoric teaches us to recognize rhetoric, but it does not teach us to legitimate it.

What is at stake is not only the relation between science and political authorities but also a realm of statements that have very important practical consequences, consequences that cannot be suspended, although in their theoretical status these statements are based, perhaps forever, on an insufficient rational foundation, or may even be demonstrably incapable of being verified. The positivistic proposal, that questions and statements that contain no directions as to how they could be verified should then be extirpated, involves bringing practice — which depends on such premises — to a standstill, and thus becomes illusionary. A decision in such questions as whether

man is by nature good or bad, whether his character is determined by his heredity or by his environment, whether he makes or is made by his history, can indeed be deferred by science, but cannot be deferred in practice and cannot be declared to be meaningless. Thus every kind of pedagogy is already in the midst of a practical process and cannot wait for the delivery of its theoretical premises, so that it is forced to accept quasi-results from among the theoretical generalizations offered by biology, psychology, sociology, and other disciplines. In this boundary zone remarkable processes of a rhetorical type take place, processes in which rationality and realism seem to diverge; for here one is not only compelled to act (as before), one is also forced to make axioms of premises without which a theory that is meant to apply to situations in which one is compelled to act would be paralyzed and condemned to sterility. I think, however, that these decisions have nothing to do with the cynicism of a *liberum arbitrium indifferentiae* [free will of indifference], and certainly nothing to do with existentialist self-positing.

In the realm in which the principle of insufficient reason holds, there are rational decision rules that do not resemble science in their form. Pascal provided a model of this in his *argument du pari* [argument of the wager], an argument that we no longer find convincing because (and only because) it compares the prospect of a transcendent infinite gain with the risk of a finite stake,[a] but that remains valid in that man has to wager the whole stake of his practice, at whatever risk of error, on the particular prospect, as between two theoretical alternatives, that is favorable to his self-assertion and self-development. No theoretical doubt about the validity of the principle of causality or about the possibility of proving it conclusively can alter in any way the fact that in our conduct we wager on its unrestricted validity. One of the most momentous declarations from the realm of various sciences would be an answer to the question of the extent to which man's modes of behavior are determined by, and therefore modifiable through, endogenous or exogenous determinants. Although one may regard this complex question as scientifically still largely undecided, still it is easy to see that methodological

considerations favor an endogenous determinism — just as, quite independently of empirical findings, they imply, in the theory of evolution, that Darwinism will be preferred to the various kinds of Lamarckism. The theory that restricts itself to a few kinds of factors that, methodically, can be neatly isolated and exhibited has a better chance to become a "paradigm" in Thomas Kuhn's sense than the theory that has to offer a range of factors that cannot be separated out as well and that are diffusely distributed. That science will draw closer to a result of the kind typified by the Darwinistic theories seems to me to be inevitable and theoretically well founded.

This development would have far-reaching effects in many areas of public and private life: in education and the administration of justice, in social prophylaxis, even in people's everyday dealings with each other. In fact, however, the preference that is given to certain practical axioms seems not to be governed by what scientific theories are predominant. This is a fact that Kant discovered when, in the doctrine of the "postulates," in his *Critique of Practical Reason*, he assumed the independence of moral positings from theoretical proofs. For Kant it is the classical chief principles of all metaphysics — man's freedom, the existence of God, immortality — that, in the form of postulates, "are inseparably attached" to the practical law. The logic of this inseparability becomes clearer when one sees that only someone who disregards the law has an interest in citing his unfreedom and the futility of law-abiding behavior as far as well-being is concerned. We would count the postulates, entirely apart from metaphysics, as part of the rhetoric of ethics: they sum up what makes up the consensus of practical axioms, through persuasion and self-persuasion — what produces assent to public and private efforts and gives meaning to improving the conditions for a life that is free of crime and conflict and to trusting in the possibility of repairing backward or misguided lives. We act "as though" we knew that efforts and expenditures of this sort, for the benefit of man, are not in vain and are not called in question by science. In our practice we turn into an axiom, as a "postulate," what provides a motive for taking advantage of the more favorable prospects for humanity. Here rhetoric is also the art of persuading ourselves to ignore what speaks against betting on these prospects. The depressing results of genetic research on twins have not been able to discourage the adherents of theories of the influence of environment — and properly so. However narrow the zone of the uncertainty of scientific statements may become, it will never disappear entirely, and we will bet on it where theory appears to be more than can be demanded of, and intolerable for, practice. Since Kant, the practical postulate stands against the overwhelming determinism of the world of possible scientific objects.

Rhetoric has to do not with facts but with expectations. That which, in its whole tradition, it has called "credible" and "verisimilar" has to be clearly distinguished, in its practical valence, from what theory can call "probable." That man "makes" history is a prospect on which, after detours through philosophy of history, the modern age has wagered. What this proposition means can only be understood if one perceives the "reoccupation" that is accomplished by means of it. I introduced and explained this concept in my *Legitimacy of the Modern Age* (1966 [English translation, 1983]), but I did not yet see that it implies a rhetorical transaction. In our tradition's system of the explanation of reality there is a "position" for this historical subject, a position to which vacancy and occupation refer. The accomplishment and establishment of the reoccupation are rhetorical acts; "philosophy of history" only thematizes the structure of this process, it is not the agency responsible for it.[8] Not accidentally, the act by which the subject of history is determined and legitimized has borne the name of a fundamental rhetorical figure, as *translatio imperii* [transfer (or: trope, metaphor) of power]. "Carryings over,"[9] metaphorical functions, again and again play an essential role here. Alexander conceives his historical project by reversing Xerxes's march across the Hellespont. The God of the Old Testament transfers his sovereignty in history by means of a covenant. The citizens of the National Convention, in the French Revolution, take metaphors of the Roman Republic literally, in their costume and their speech. "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly

encountered, given and transmitted from the past," Marx writes in the *Eighteenth Brumaire*.[6] The deeper the crisis of legitimacy reaches, the more pronounced the recourse to rhetorical metaphor becomes — it is not inertia that makes tradition but rather the difficulty of living up to one's designation as the subject of history. So one contents oneself more easily with participating in the role of the subject of history: one *is* not the subject, but one is *part* of it, or one would have to be part of it if only things went properly. Rhetorically, both attributions of responsibility and excuses are always equally readily available.

I am not celebrating rhetoric here as an innate creative gift that man possesses. To illuminate it anthropologically is not to demonstrate that it gives man a special "metaphysical" distinction. As a behavorial characteristic of a creature that lives "nevertheless" [trotzdem], it is literally a "certificate of poverty." I would hesitate to call it a "cunning of reason"; not only because it would then be in even more questionable company but also because I would like to hold to the idea of seeing in it a form of rationality itself — a rational way of coming to terms with the provisionality of reason. It may be that the provisionality of theory that it avails itself of and profits from is only a grace period for it, if it does not prove to be the case that there is no irrevocability in theory. Against all rhetoric that is not "an elegant and clear expression of the conceptions of the mind," Hobbes recommended the use of "right reason." This phrase resembles the one that is going around currently: "critical reason." That is all very well, but what else could judge whether the "right" reason is being employed in each case, except reason once again — except "right reason," in fact? For Hobbes, one of the most important objections to democracy is that it cannot manage without rhetoric, and consequently arrives at decisions more *impetu animi* [by a certain violence of the mind] than *recta ratione* [by right reason], because its orators are guided not by the "nature of the things they speak of" but by the passions of their listeners. "Nor is this fault in the *man*, but in the nature itself of *eloquence*, whose end, as all masters of rhetoric teach us, is not truth (except by chance), but victory; and whose property is not to inform, but to allure."[7] A re-

markable proposition, which explicitly absolves men of responsibility for the effects of an instrument that they invented and use only on account of those very effects. An especially remarkable proposition when one confronts it with the type of rationality that Hobbes's theory of the state represents: self-preservation, as the rational motivation of the contract of submission, risks, in the undetermined and undeterminable will of the absolute ruler, every *impetus animi* [violence of the mind] that Hobbes disparages as the correlate of rhetoric.

Hobbes's pathology of rhetoric traces the excitement of the passions back to the "metaphorical use of words." For him, too, metaphor is the distinctive element of rhetoric: in his opinion it is "fitted to the passions" and thus "separated from the true knowledge of things." What is the basis of this relationship between metaphor and the passions which Hobbes suggests to us here as something self-evident? For him, metaphor is opposed to concepts: by excluding the instruments of reason, metaphor opens the field to everything that traditionally is curbed and controlled by reason, everything that likes to escape from the exertion of concepts into the ease of orientation by images. In this passage Hobbes admits an eloquence (*eloquentia*) that abstains from metaphor and arises "from the contemplation of the things themselves," an eloquence that consists only in the elegance with which one expresses what one has grasped. When it is compared to the "nature of the things," as something that one could possess, rhetoric does indeed appear as an eccentric and artificial means. Yet if one considers Hobbes's theory of concepts, one is surprised to find that his rejection of metaphor depends on crediting the human intellect with more than he is able to grant it in this theory. For the concept, too, is only an artificial means, which has nothing in common with that "nature of the things."

It is not incidentally, here, that I point out this inconsistency in Hobbes's critique of metaphor as the essential element of rhetoric. It suggests the conjecture that Hobbes's critique of metaphor with reference to its affinity to the passions is based on the contradiction between the idea of the absolute state and a rhetoric that Hobbes describes, in opposing it, as "necessary to a man born for commotions." Now metaphor is in fact not

only a surrogate for concepts that are missing but possible in principle, and should therefore be demanded; it is also a projective principle, which both expands and occupies empty space — an imaginative procedure that provides itself with its own durability in similes. As Alrich Meyer has recently shown,[9] the absolute state that is rationally deduced from the principle of self-preservation is caught between metaphors of the organic, on the one hand, and of mechanism, on the other. Such key metaphors have their own power of persuasion, which reacts, precisely through its possible extensions, on the core metaphor: for example, the possibility of an organic philosophy of history reinforces the organic model of the state. Hobbes himself overlooked the contradiction between his organic metaphor of the "state as a person" and the artificiality of the state's origin — and this is especially instructive, because the prohibition of metaphor makes it more difficult to perceive its actual background function.[p] Even the prohibition of rhetoric is a rhetorical transaction, which, then, only the others perceive as such. The example of Hobbes shows that in the modern age antirhetoric has become one of the most important expedients of rhetorical art, by means of which to lay claim to the rigor of realism, which alone promises to be a match for the seriousness of man's position (in this case, his position in his "state of nature").

Rhetoric is an "art" because it is an epitome of difficulties with reality, and reality has been pre-understood, in our tradition, primarily as "nature." The reason there is so little perceptible rhetoric in a surrounding reality that is extremely artificial is that it is already omnipresent. The classical antirhetorical figure of speech, "Res, non verba!" [Things, not words!] then points to states of affairs that themselves no longer have any of the sanction of what is natural, but instead already have a rhetorical tincture. On the other hand, this easily makes the emphatic recommendation or presentation of rhetoric's stylistic means a little (or more than a little) ridiculous. One then ascribes this difficulty to one's higher degree of realism. Rhetoric's modern difficulties with reality consist, in good part, in the fact that this reality no longer has value as something to appeal to, because it is in its turn a product of artificial pro-

cesses. Thus one enters the specifically rhetorical situation of securing an exhortatory cry for oneself so as not to let the others have it: "Ad res"; "Zur Sache und zu den Sachen!" [To the matter at hand, to the things themselves!] It is rhetoric when one suggests to others, as a premise, that it is necessary to think and to act once again — or to do so for the first time ever. If reality could be seen and dealt with "realistically," it would have been seen and dealt with that way all along. So, much more than with the reality that it promises, the attitude of the *retour au réel* [return to the real] has to concern itself with the explanation of the illusions, deceptions, and seductions that have to be disposed of in connection with it. Every rhetoric of realism needs the conspiracies that have prevented it until now. Plato's allegory of the cave, in which because of the shadows playing on the wall the captive people never come to know what is truly real unless they are freed from the cave by force, is the model of such unmasking. It is directed against rhetoric, because the machinators of the shadow world are the Sophists, as "makers of images"; and it is itself rhetoric, since it is based on an elementary metaphor of "coming into the light" and expands it into a simile for an absolute reality, whose promise of definitive evidence cannot be fulfilled. Philosophy's turning from the shadows to reality was usurped by rhetoric and then by aesthetics. Jean Paul reflected this, ironically, in two sentences in the *Unsichtbare Loge* [invisible lodge]: "Alas, we are only trembling shadows! And yet one shadow wants to tear another one to pieces?"

In the *Critique of Judgment* Kant declares that rhetoric, as "the art of playing for one's own purpose upon the weaknesses of men, . . . merits no respect whatever."[10] This "insidious art" deals with "moving men in important matters like machines to a judgment." Now it is not at all in dispute here that man's constitutive dependence on rhetorical actions is always also a susceptibility to being influenced by rhetoric; there are enough dangers of and pressures toward his becoming a machine. The theory of rhetoric has always exposed people's intentions of taking advantage of these "weaknesses of men," at the same time that it served them. In an anthropological localization of rhetoric the issue is these weaknesses, not those intentions. In

that connection, anthropological approaches to rhetoric converge on a central descriptive statement: Man has no immediate, no purely "internal" relation to himself. His self-understanding has the structure of "self-externality." Kant was the first to deny that inner experience has any precedence over outer experience; we are appearance to ourselves, the secondary synthesis of a primary multiplicity, not the reverse. The substantialism of identity is destroyed; identity must be realized, it becomes a kind of accomplishment, and accordingly there is a pathology of identity.

What remains as the subject matter of anthropology is a "human nature" that has never been "nature" and never will be. The fact that it makes its appearance in metaphorical disguise — as animal and as machine, as sedimentary layers and as stream of consciousness, in contrast to and in competition with a god — does not warrant our expecting that at the end of all creeds and all moralizing it will lie before us revealed. Man comprehends himself only by way of what he is not. It is not only his situation that is potentially metaphorical; his constitution itself already is. Montaigne's formulation of the result of his anthropology as self-experience is that the worst place that we could choose is in ourselves ("la pire place, que nous puissions prendre, c'est en nous").[11] He refers to the Copernican revolution, which as a trauma of man's interiority in the world metaphorically strengthens skepticism about his interiority in himself. Self-persuasion underlies all rhetoric in external relations; it makes use not only of the very general, practically effective propositions of which I spoke earlier but also of self-understanding through self-externality. So the most daring metaphor, which tried to embrace the greatest tension, may have accomplished the most for man's self-conception: trying to think the god absolutely away from himself, as the totally other, he inexorably began the most difficult rhetorical act, namely, the act of comparing himself to this god.[e]

Notes

1. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. R. Oehler, M. Oehler, and F. C. Würzbach (Munich: Musarion, 1920–1921), vol. 6, p. 105.

2. Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics* 1172b36–37, trans. W. D. Ross, in *Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. R. McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), p. 1095.

3. Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

4. Nietzsche, "Cicerofragment," *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 7, p. 385.

5. On this see H. Blumenberg, "Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie," *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 6 (1960) (reprint Bonn: Bouvier, 1960), pp. 88–105.

6. Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels, *Selected Works* (New York: International Publishers, 1968), p. 97; original: Marx/Engels, *Werke* (Berlin: Dietz, 1957–1972), vol. 8, p. 115.

7. Thomas Hobbes, *De Cive*, X, 11; from Hobbes's own English version [which has also been used for the bracketed translations of quotes from the Latin original], in *Man and Citizen*, ed. B. Gert (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1972), p. 231.

8. Hobbes, *De Cive*, X, 12; pp. 253–254.

9. Alrich Meyer, "Mechanische und organische Metaphorik politischer Philosophie," *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 13 (1969): 128–199.

10. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, sec. 53, trans. J. C. Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), p. 193.

11. Michel Montaigne, *Essais* II, 12 ("Apologie de Raimond Sebond"), *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. R. Barral and P. Michel (Paris: Seuil, 1967), p. 236.

Translator's Notes

a. "Gratuitous action": André Gide's famous notion.

b. *Mängelwesen*, a term introduced by Arnold Gehlen in his *Der Mensch. Seine Natur und seine Stellung in der Welt* (1940; 4th ed. Bonn: Athenäum, 1950).

c. *Institution* is used by Blumenberg in a special sense (introduced by Arnold Gehlen in his *Urmensch und Spätkultur* [Bonn: Athenäum, 1956]) that stresses the "pre-given," habitual, unquestioned character of certain behavior patterns and modes of thought (as in the Latin *institutio*, "custom") — rather than, and as opposed to, their being intentionally "founded" (as in one of the main senses of *Institution* or "institution" in ordinary usage). Awareness of this special usage should clarify the contrast here between "institutions" and norms that are based on what is "evident" (and with which one's compliance is presumably conscious and intentional).

d. Blumenberg has *consensus* in italics throughout this piece — even though the term is used not uncommonly in contemporary German — because he wants to remind us that it is a technical term, which was introduced into philosophy and rhetoric by Cicero: I have used quotes for the same purpose.

e. A "radical" in a sense analogous to that in linguistics, where the term refers to a root word or word element, a base to which other things are added.

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14

Charles Taylor

Introduction

In the introduction to his recently published *Philosophical Papers*, Charles Taylor describes his work as a contribution to philosophical anthropology. His initial approach was largely polemical. He attacked the view that the natural sciences should serve as a model for the methods and procedures of the human sciences. Whether in the form of classical behaviorism, functionalism, AI-based psychology, or any other reductivist explanatory strategy, "naturalism," Taylor argues, is inappropriate to the "sciences of man," because they must incorporate into their explanations the common meanings that are embedded in social institutions and practices as well as in agents' self-interpretations. Thus, in contrast to Rorty and others who contend that "there is no interesting split between the *Natur-* and the *Geisteswissenschaften*," Taylor revives this classical distinction on the grounds that the latter necessarily include a hermeneutic dimension in a way the former do not. At the same time, Taylor's critique of naturalism and its underlying conceptions of the self, language, and knowledge has led to the development of an alternative that draws heavily on the expressivist tradition of Hegel and Romanticism.

Taylor's defence of the autonomy of the human sciences depends importantly upon his conception of human agents as "self-interpreting animals": who and what we are is partly constituted by our self-understandings and self-descriptions, by