ESSAYS ON THE GENEALOGY OF PRESENCE

THE TRUTH OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL WORLD

FRIEDRICH A. KITTLER

WITH AN AFTERWORD BY HANS ULRICH GUMBRECHT

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1 Poet, Mother, Child: On the Romantic Invention of Sexuality

The Middle Ages had something called the *Clan*. Since the eighteenth century, the code for kinship has been called the *Family*. Clans were connected by the law of exogamy, which linked them and inscribed scions along the axes of generations and races [*Geschlechter*]. Families, on the other hand, introject norms and imagoes into offspring, thereby subverting binary sexual difference [*Geschlechterdifferenz*] and generating souls sexualized by incestuous desire.[1]

When Parzival is born, Wolfram von Eschenbach simply mentions that his mother and her ladies-in-waiting spread the legs of the infant. When they discern the *visselîn* (which translates into today's English as "willie"), they lavish affection on the child. Coded in terms of sex, the boy receives a phallic attribute that symbolically couples desire and power: now he is destined for exogamous alliances and knightly adventures. The clan is governed by the metaphor *visselîn* = *swert* ["sword"],[2] a figure running this way and that—which Freud took up to his own ends and confused with natural fact.

Instead of promoting the play of metaphor, Herzeloyde, out of love and fear, clothes the adventuresome boy in a fool's garb, so that its worldly echoes may bring him back to her.[3] She does so to no avail, however, for an *ars amandi* and law that are one and the same remove Parzival from the double bond with his mother. Condwiramurs (whose name says what it means—"to conduct love") initiates him into strictly exogamous eroticism—and as *amor de lonh* ("love from afar") at that. Taking the place of Parzival's father, old Gurnemanz prohibits the youth from appealing to childhood and motherly words at all, in order to inscribe him into the axis of succeeding generations. Finally, the boy's uncle on his mother's side—who (as in other cultures) wields greater symbolic power than a biological father precisely because he is not the child's actual sire—articulates, in the capacity of father confessor, debts of blood to relatives [*Verwandtenblutschuld*] and, as a genealogist, the alliances between two clans.

Parzival's innocence [*Tumbheit*] ends when the symbolic order, which Herzeloyde has kept silent, is voiced. And because Trevrizent tells Parzival of his expectant mother's dreams, which she never revealed to her son,[4] there is no unspoken remainder that might haunt the hero and open the way for psychology or psychoanalysis. The incestuous double bond vanishes without consequence.

The code governing the conjugal, nuclear family—which emerged in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the intellectual bourgeoisie and became universal in the nineteenth—stands opposed to the code of the clan on every point. Now political, juridical, and economic power are no longer linked to kinship structures. The household becomes the family unit, which assumes all tasks of socializing a small number of children—who, moreover, are planned. Burdened with the responsibility of being more symbolic than ever, the biological father surrenders his preeminent position to the mother. She, in turn, as the new center of the family, takes the place of the nurses of old. (Paradoxically, then, an origin substitutes for a replacement.) Intimacy and education tie the few children in the family to parent imagoes and eclipse the law of exogamy (which Freud interpreted as incestuous itself, if by transference). In order to be able—indeed, in order to wish—to become mothers or fathers, Lessing's virgins dream of a Father and Goethe's youths dream of a Mother. The phantasm of the Family obscures exchange that occurs between many families (which culturalizes them).

In the process, infantile sexuality—which previously was just as public as it was unexamined—becomes worthy of mention in the first place. The nuclear family becomes a complex relay that produces the children's mobile and fragmentary sexualities through records [*Aufschreiben*] made from the standpoint of the conjugal norm. The separation between parents and the world of childhood enables loving mothers and fathers, pedagogues, and psychologists to store the children's declarations of love to the authors of their days. There results, especially for mothers, a microhistorical archive that drills family romances into children as their own "experiences." Children become individuals who interpret—instead of the accidents of birth and race—"developments" and origins "within" themselves according to the rules of "reflection" and hermeneutics.

This coupling—of sexuality that derives from cultural coding and of speech that, when it involves self-declaration and self-interpretation, goes by the name of "poetry"—is to be investigated by means of discourse analysis. Neither social psychology, which presupposes that the discourses in question have already

emerged, nor psychoanalysis, which presupposes the sexualization of children, can analyze how such a link (and nothing else) is bound to texts (and nothing else). In terms of discourse analysis, Romantic poetry is the effect of a semiotechnics that made the conjugal family matrilineal around 1800. The recoding itself was enacted by Novalis's novel, *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*; the effects were articulated in the works of Clemens Brentano, Friedrich Schlegel, Ludwig Tieck, Achim von Arnim, and E.T.A. Hoffmann.

1. Matrilineal Recoding

Klingsohr's tale [*Märchen*] has the function of symbolizing the primary socialization that Heinrich's mother was supposed to narrate at the end of the novel.[5] In a reverse mirror image, it presents the constellation of figures in the work as a whole. Now the patrilineal pattern of initiation that occurs in the *Bildungsroman* is replaced by matrilineal sexualization. For this reason, the tale constitutes a discursive event. For the first time in literature, a family appears that *articulates* all the stirrings [*Regungen*] and regulations that occur between mother and child from "the cradle" (338) up to the consolidation of the Oedipus complex.

Thereby, the bourgeois family obeys a mandate. It must take over the task of cultural reproduction, for the era of dynastic alliances has come to an end. The bourgeois family unit occupies a position between an "afamilial" and barren underworld of archaic mothers, on the one hand, and a heavenly dynasty that has grown sterile, on the other. Dynasties do not produce; they combine: stars and figures—signs and signs. This play of alliances comes to a halt as soon as Arcturus, who "cannot be king alone" (308f.), loses his wife to the bourgeois family and his only daughter—for whom he cannot find a husband of equal birth (cf. 214f.)—to the slumber of death. The order of alliance literally falls apart in its hypergamy: to make known and put an end to Freya's unredeemed status, the ancient hero (a symbolic father) must break the phallic sword of the dynasty.

The end of the law that codifies bodies as signs and punishes transgressions of the code by the sword inaugurates the norm that sexualizes children and makes them into individuals. The bourgeois family does not combine and distribute signs. Instead, it produces: children and imagoes. What is at first a nuclear family—"the Father," "the Mother," and their son, "Eros"—is augmented by Sophia, who comes from heaven, the Scribe or Death (303), Ginnistan or

"Fantasy," and little Fable, whom the Father sires with Ginnistan. Initially, Ginnistan is only a nursemaid for the Son, who makes up for the Mother's lack of milk. Soon, however—and to put matters in Freudian terms—she becomes sensuality [*Sinnlichkeit*], to which the Mother opposes interiority [*Innerlichkeit*] and familial cohesion. Familial eroticism, that is, plays out between the weakness [*Mangel*] of infants (which makes them dependent on others), the inability [*Mangel*] of a mother to nurse, and paternal desire: it couples child care and eroticism. For this reason, the culturalization of children that it effects takes the form of love for the breast—and not of their own mother, but of a Mother (294).

Orality is followed by the mise-en-scène of the phallic-narcissistic stage. In keeping with a pedagogy tailored to children, Ginnistan makes the sword fragment that the Father has found—and the Scribe archived—into a toy.[6] The splinter becomes a magnetic snake that phallically extends to the North; that is, it rouses "Eros" for the future beloved, Freya. Eros himself, in this phallic game, suddenly becomes a youth. The phallus, then—which is synonymous with the name "Eros"—means becoming the object of desire for a/the Mother. This inducts the precocious youth into premature oedipality: into a round dance [*Reigen*] of heterosexual pairings that cycles through all combinations between Father and Son, Mother and Nurse. First, Ginnistan abducts Eros into the bedroom; however, she obeys a wave from Sophia and replaces sensuality with tenderness. The "quiet embrace" (295) between the Mother and Eros, which echoes an imaginary dyad, steers the desire of the Father back to Ginnistan, so that the agent prohibiting incest simultaneously affords an example of its transgression. And because the desire of speaking beings is the desire of the Other (Lacan), the example arouses a forbidden desire in the Son. On the orders of Sophia, the Mother and Ginnistan have to exchange forms so that he "will not be led into temptation" (296). Unlike the gesture of the wave, however, the prohibition is violated although—and because—it is articulated. Since "all barriers are there only to be overcome,"[7] they sexualize the Mother, who was "quietly embraced" previously. The act of uttering the prohibition creates, in the first place, what it declares unattainable: the imago ("gestalt") Mother.

Accordingly, the "Fantasy" of Mother, writ large, stages a play that steers the infantile wish that is "Eros" from the image of the nurturing-washing Mother—by way of a "forbidden thrill [*Rausch*]" (305)—toward the future image of amorous union with Freya. In this process, Ginnistan plays the part of all female imagoes. "Fantasy," then, is not merely the unconscious fantasy of

the author; it symbolizes the sexual rite of initiation itself under the conditions of the nuclear family.[8] The path to reproduction must be staged before the eyes of the speaking being; it does not follow instinct, but fantasy. The infant—whose senses and motor skills are still disorganized after a painful and premature birth—achieves the social identity function [*Einheitsfunktion*] of "I" only when others inscribe it with phantasms and present a deceptive image of integral corporality beforehand. The scenario of Ginnistan offers a historical variant of the mirror stage Lacan describes: her gaze and desire steer Eros's eyes onto the prefiguration [*Vor-bild*] of unity that he does not possess. He "thanks" her "with a thousand delights [*Entzücken*]" (300) for sexualization. Hereby, the Mother, Ginnistan, and Freya—as well as natal and "target" families—become confused.

The end of the tale consolidates the child's sexuality, which has been produced maternally: it constitutes the very basis of a new Golden Age. Unlike traditional fairy tales, which simply end with hierogamies, Klingsohr's narrative subordinates the couples—Eros and Freya, Arcturus and Sophia, and the Father and Ginnistan—to Motherly Love [*Mutterliebe*]. Because there is no room for Eros's mother among the couples, Sophia—the Heavenly Mother—promotes her to a position where, present in absence, she stands at the origin of the entire system; that is, the Mother becomes the Mother of All, including figures who have "other mothers." All the characters drink from her ashes in the baptismal ritual; after the fact, this inexhaustible beverage makes up for the Mother's lack of milk and for the pains the children experienced in the process of birth. With delight [*lustvoll*], they feel their *generatio continua* from the Mother, who "underlies" all marriages in the form of imaginary incest. The children's love for each other is love from and for the Mother.[9]

The Universal Mother [*Allmutter*]—continuously giving birth, heightening sensation, and producing phantasms of incest—takes the place of the Symbolic Father who formerly distributed his seed among the races [*Geschlechter*] and generations. Accordingly, the correlate of the Mother's ascendancy is the elimination of the Scribe (i.e., Death), the sole figure the tale fails to assign a place in the final tableau. His textual archive is done away with so that the incestuous nature of the new norm will remain a "secret" to the precise extent that it stimulates (ongoing) orality. Hereby, the Mother becomes the signified for all sounds that are made: "her presence" (315) is felt in the amorous whisperings of the endogamous couples. Orality and the poetry of discourse become one and the same.

2. The Voice of the Mother and the Poetic Individual

Matrilineal recoding follows and celebrates the rules of communication in a culture that "invents motherly love for infants."[10] The coupling of orality and poetry stems from a psycho-pedagogy that, since Locke and Rousseau, has prescribed that mothers themselves should nurse and speak to the being without language (*infans*) in their charge. At the end of Klingsohr's tale, the matrilineal and fatherless siblings/couples sing and whisper instead of performing a speech act that would promise loyalty, and the "milk-blue stream" (300) of the Mother herself replaces that of the Nurse. These narrative events take contemporary critiques of the unmotherly mothers of old literally:

> [They] fulfill these duties, and with exactness, but they do not go beyond them; they neither sing nor speak to the child; they do not seek to awaken its senses; they do not have the intention of developing the sensations it has through . . . the incitements [*agaceries*] of maternal tenderness.[11]

The center of the nuclear family—the Mother—becomes the relay point for a new kind of productivity, which rouses the senses in threefold manner: to individual perception, to sexuality, and to aesthetics. That Romanticism considers poetic discourse to be individual expression and the bearer of elementary sensuality derives from the communicative matrix formed by a nursing, loving, and speaking mother and an infant. Drinking at Ginnistan's bosom, Fable gives thanks for the "unbreakable thread" that "seems to wind forth from her breast" (314) and makes a pure idiolect of poetry. Likewise, Brentano's Godwi nurses at the breast of his beloved as the "source of all sustenance and voluptuousness [*Nahrung und Wollust*]"—"all the power of the word, all the magic of poetry."[12]

Matrilineal recoding changes the status of literature. The poetic function posited by Roman Jakobson—previously a matter of the autonymy [*sic*] of cultural symbols—becomes phatic in nature. Accordingly, in *Heinrich von Ofterdingen,* the "secret word" (or signifier) *Mother* replaces "numbers and figures" (344) and in so doing opens communication between "lovers." As Heinrich Bosse observes:

> While to classical thought the institution of signs rendered possible human communication, it is now the very fact that man communicates with man which will define the signs.[13]

Just as the speech prescribed for new mothers, because it produces linguistic competence in the first place, shares no positive content, poetry itself becomes

a play of sounds [*Lauten*]. That it "speaks in order to speak"[14]—as Novalis puts it elsewhere—brings back the intransitive quality of the initial situation of communication. Sounds melt with nature; noises murmur and whisper with the maternal voice, which induces harking [*horchen*] and not hearing [*hören*] in the infant. The matrix of motherly lullabies—which take the place of less complicated methods of quieting children—gives rise, at the border between speaking and sleeping, to a new lyricism that has existed ever since "Wanderer's Night Song," by Goethe.

To be sure, humanizing [*hominisierend*] speech in order to make (infants) speak had always occurred. Only now, however, was it bespoken—that is, discussed. Herder derived "the I" from learning to feel [*Empfindenlernen*] at the mother's breast, and "the knowing and feeling of the human soul" [*Erkennen und Empfinden der menschlichen Seele*] from acquisition of language in the infant.[15] Such psychologizing of discourse displaced the ontogenetic thresholds of what—and who—can be addressed [*Besprechbarkeit und Ansprechbarkeit*]. Rousseau, in turn, considered self-consciousness the effect of complete alphabetization,[16] and Brentano's traveling student even recalls how he read the first sounds from his mother's lips.[17] Bespeaking initial speech makes it worthy of mention in the first place. It opens space for the free play of little geniuses who arouse admiration, not by performing speech acts that are binding but through toying with sounds [*Lautspielen*] and infantile words.[18] Of course, it is mothers who protect and promote the dreams and dream narratives of their poetic children against the incursions of prosaic or evil fathers.[19]

With this displacement of the threshold of socialization, a parameter of discourse that is corporeal (and not digital) won power over mute bodies. Voice transformed into the *mythos* of a theory of lyric that discerned "the secret-filled depth of human spirit and poetry"[20] in its murmurings; likewise, it whispered originary truth to a linguistic science that explored Indo-European languages as a family—and investigated "language" in general (instead of letters as sounds). The celebration of the voice amounts to the rejection [*Verpönung*] of writing: the voice's presence and individuality deny the absence and the symbolism of the signifier. In Klingsohr's tale, Fable—who sings—unseats and replaces the Scribe (295, 308). Similarly, Brentano's *Chronika des fahrenden Schülers* begins with a mother who teaches her infant to sing and pray, and it ends with a siren whose book lures a youth far away, into erotic ruin.[21]

In poetry [*Poesie*], the poet [*Dichter*] becomes another. If, as Julia Kristeva has claimed, Western literature translated the conjunctive hierogamy of Ori-

ental texts into a disjunction between the One and the Other—the speaking poet and the mute woman[22]—Romanticism marks the moment where the former becomes a childish individual, and the latter a mother. Henceforth, "the dear woman exists" as a "mother" who addresses her words when she talks; she does so, "as everyone knows," in order to "make the speaking being . . . speak."[23] Instead of being defined by the binary code of sex, the poet is defined by his matrilineal individuality. Klingsohr's tale depicts the poet in Heinrich as "little Fable"; that is, it does not portray him as her half-brother. This is also how the possibility of female poets arose: Goethe left the "*aristeia* of mothers"—the blind spot in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*—for Bettina Brentano to write.

If poetry repeats the voice that has sexualized its speaker, then its utterance already contains the eroticism invoked by what is uttered. If it *reproduces* what words merely *represent*, no word can reach where it originates. Poetry is an origin as omnipresent and as hidden as the Mother in Klingsohr's tale: a vocal shadow that the words cast yet never can express directly. Tracking the sexuality that inhabits it as a voice, poetic discourse generates the very thing it claims it cannot say. Such positive feedback between speaking and sexuality occurs in the chapter "Devotion and Jest" [*Treue und Scherz*] in Schlegel's *Lucinde*, where the eponymous character—who is called "a child," after all—is enjoined to "caress" a "motherly" beloved[24]; another instance is the eroticizing confession of incestuous sexuality that Medardus makes as a scribe in *The Devil's Elixirs*, by Hoffmann.[25]

3. Hermeneutics of the Origin and the Norm

According to standing ideas, sexual matters came to penetrate literary discourse to the extent that bourgeois society prohibited their expression. Foucault demonstrated that the opposite is the case. Sexuality is an effect of discourses. To affirm that its origin is unspeakable is to call forth discourses about it—which, because they are sexualized themselves, can never end. Sexuality, then, functions within a machinery that makes bodies speak and incorporates them into a new organization of power and knowledge. In contrast to cultures that let live and make die, our culture—and only our culture—has transformed into "society" [*Gesellschaft*]: it "makes live" and avoids killing [*macht das Leben und läßt das Töten*]. Planning conditions of and for life encompasses fields that did not pass into record under the law of Sword and Alliance. Moreover, it produces and stores knowledge that Aristotle deemed impossible: understanding

what is individual [*das Wissen von Individuellem*]. Accordingly, "man" represents a recent invention in epistemological terms. "He" becomes a "subject" (in the double sense of the word) only through knowledge that declares "him" subject to the conditions of life governing "him" *and*, at the same time, the master who can recognize and change these conditions. Since 1800, literature and the human sciences have treated "phenomena of our being that actually turn out to be us, since they condition us—and we them—each in turn."[26]

The concept of sexuality represents one of many such instances of empirical-transcendental doubling. It relates bodies to a force of production that both precedes them and at the same time is derived from them. Without end, knowledge cycles between sexual origin, where the "human being" (in general) is produced, and the individual, whose origin seems to be unique. The dichotomy between law and transgression transforms into reciprocal reference between the norm and individual deviancy. This gives rise [*zu Wort bringen*] to new situations of communication and hermeneutics: on the one hand, rituals of confession and recollection, and on the other, analyses of the "Unconscious." These discursive events presume that sexuality voices the truth about us—which we cannot express when we articulate the truth about it, which it cannot speak itself.

Klingsohr's tale presents [*konstruiert*] this transformation of knowledge and power. It leads from juridico-political culture into the realm of familiality, sexuality, and productivity. The tale's incestuous norm involves transgressing the law of old, and it culminates in installing the human being on the throne. Eros ascends as "the new king" (314), yet his rule is paradoxical: he reigns only insofar as he is subject to a maternal origin which, for its part, only has "presence" to the extent that it comes to power in Eros. The individual *is* its history. The text reaches back to the cradle and forward to the Golden Age. Thereby, it transfers the ancient myth of the ages of the world [*Mythos der Weltalter*] into a logic of production: when the goal of the Romantic triad is achieved, human beings "dwell" (315) in temples; their sexual productivity is one with physical-chemical nature and organic life.

The tale performs the matrilineal recoding of characters/figures in simultaneous and transparent fashion. Thereby, it erects a dispositive that other works of Romanticism can cycle through in anamnestic and asymptotic ways. The maternal origin—which the tale names and at the same time places within the figures' interior lives [*Innerlichkeiten*]—becomes both the historically "sunken" *movens* and the goal for endless hermeneutic explorations. Following this shift

from simultaneity into temporal profundity, the originary Family dwells within the Individual as its secret. Romantic works do not, like courtly romances, affirm genealogical identities through a succession of parents' and children's lives. Instead, they posit identity by means of an empirical-transcendental folding of the individual. As the process unfolds, however, it reveals just how much the sexualized family serves instances of power and knowledge.

Tieck's "Eckbert the Fair" offers a direct continuation of Klingsohr's tale. Both works transfer the conjugality of the fairy-tale form, which Klingsohr's predecessor and model, Goethe, had preserved, into endogamy. Whereas Novalis locates incest at the end of the narrative, as codification that occurs through Mother Sophia, Tieck makes it the unthinkable beginning of events, which is only (re)discovered later. Eckbert and Bertha have always already had the same father and been siblings—except that this fact is decoded only at the very end, by a witch, who is herself the vanishing point for all the childless couple's phantasms. The Witch is a Mother who can display both female and male traits, and therefore dominates the patrilinearity that the narrative preserves genealogically.

The same also holds on the level of events in the tale. A single witch replaces both foster parents to whom Bertha's father has given her, an illegitimate child. The dominant party is the foster father, who wants to raise Bertha only for work. Bertha, however—like the heroine of "The Elves"—flees into a fairy-tale world that the foster father's word(s) cannot reach. The world of childhood is one of the phantasms that derive from socialization in the nuclear family; here the distinction between adults and children[27] is reproduced in the wish to stay a child forever[28]—a matter that remains a phantasm because the children fall prey to an unsymbolized Mother. Just as Novalis equates childhood "development" that occurs without parental intervention and "education" that the father "has left entirely in the hands of the mother" (326), the Witch dominates the "small family circle" consisting of Bertha, the dog, and the bird. Accordingly, Bertha—their "daughter"—cycles through pre-oedipal sexualities. The animals, as "well-known friends,"[29] become narcissistic mirror images because a Mother coordinates [*inszeniert*] identification with them. Here differences are so slight that love can abruptly turn into paranoia. The bird—which lays eggs containing pearls and sings a song whose "words are constantly repeated" like dream poetry and lullabies[30]—displays both anal and oral traits.

Likewise, in Achim von Arnim's "Isabella of Egypt," the dyad between the parentless Bella and a witchlike foster mother produces narcissistic doublings

such as the Golem Bella, anal beings like Bearskin [*Bärnhäuter*], and phallic ones like the gold-finding Mandrake [*Alraun*] (whose marriage concludes in thumb-sucking).[31] These worlds—the grotesque one and the fairy-tale one—both *are* and *have* productivity. Bella's lover, a ruler under the conditions of early capitalism, prefers polymorphously perverse and productive sexualities to the love of, and marriage to, Bella. Similarly, in Tieck, the fairy-tale bird makes possible what Bertha "only dreamed of in childhood": to bestow (her father's) "wealth"[32] on her foster parents—the measure by which they had evaluated her and found her lacking. Regression to the archaic Mother, then, is what enables the child to fulfill the mandate of productivity that the discourse of others has instilled [*einfleischte*].

Like her act of theft and her flight from the Witch's house, Bertha's narrative about events is subject to [*untersteht*] the discourse of others. Only for the sake of intimacy, whose norm is the Family, does Bertha tell parties other than Eckbert about her childhood. Beings possessed of interiority [*Innerlichkeiten*] who think that they "share themselves entirely [*sich ganz mitteilen*]" when they recall their origins embody the compulsion to repeat a situation of infantile communication: time and again, they speak about the family circle in order to integrate strangers *into* it as "friends."[33] At the same time, however—and in line with the operations of the mirror stage—narcissistic identification transforms into paranoia. Eckbert murders the man who has heard Bertha's confession, and he flees the party who has heard his own confession of killing because he fears the "misuse" of a "confidence [*Vertraulichkeit*]" that he himself has produced.[34] Communication that only intensifies feelings and reproduces the intimacy of nuclear families is just that paradoxical. In Novalis's novel, it entails eliminating a writer (the Scribe) for whom endogamy would still mean endogamy, and in Tieck's tale, it entails the murder of witnesses who might make the phatic speech of the endogamous couple into a public "text" capable of transmission.

The matter without precedent, however, is that hermeneutics of the Family addresses the very instance of power whose initial speech it interprets. Bertha's auditor mentions, in passing, a detail from childhood that escaped her: the name of the dog that had been her playmate. This item of inexplicable knowledge makes the man a member of the Family—indeed, it makes him the incarnation of the Witch. In the idiolectal name "Strohmian," the maternal point of origin [*der mütterliche Ursprung*] catches up with the girl who has fled and confessed. "A letter always arrives at its destination."[35] With a word that proves

meaningless as a signifier, the Mother—in Romanticism—signals her status both of being the origin and of commanding speech. The phantasm is pathogenic and lethal: Bertha suffers a hysterical fit and dies.

The same thing befalls her brother and husband. The course of flight from confession and murder—which is meant to erase the traces of confession and murder—leads straightaway to the Other, whom Eckbert can neither murder nor flee because she gives chase and deals death herself. The Witch reveals that all parties who have heard the fugitives' confessions were incarnations of her, and that Eckbert and Bertha are siblings. Her genealogical discourse makes words fail Eckbert [*ihr genealogisches Wort macht Eckbert das Wort verwirken*]: mad and in the throes of death, he hears the voices of Mother Nature and his own phantasms melting into one. He could not have so much as "suspected [*ahnden*]"[36] incest, because language has always already commanded him. Indeed, it named him in the first place: "Eckbert" and "Bertha" are half homonymous.[37] "One is only ever in love with a name [*On n'est jamais amoureux que d'un nom*]."[38] Spellbound to their family through Christian and pet names, those who interpret them meet with death—death that occurs through words alone. A victorious Mother speaks first and last.

Matrilineal recoding, then, has the function of extracting [*entreissen*], from its products, the words it has beaten into [*einfleischen*] them. It is a machine that generates admissions and confessions—and, in so doing, generates the particular form of individuality which Romanticism deemed productive. When father confessor Trezvirent tells Parzival of a dream that was never revealed to him, he inscribes the youth into the Symbolic. Naming a forgotten [*entfallen*] name, however, performs the function of individuation because a family's memory [*Familiengedächtnis*] "spills" what it formerly declared secret. To ascribe meaning to the words and events of childhood to the extent that they are ("objectively") insignificant means making the family into the archive of criminological clues and sexological norms. It is not important whether the recollection of forgotten details from childhood affirms guilt or denies it.[39] It is itself a discursive event, and only the interiority that it has generated can call it a faculty [*Vermögen*] of its own. When interiority speaks, a culture speaks—one that accords the Family the production of all "meaning" to the same extent that other functions vanish.[40]

The matrilineal family becomes a relay for transmitting knowledge and power. The compulsion to confess—which ties Bertha to infantile sexuality, and sexuality to a mother—is no fairy tale. "Mademoiselle de Scudery," by

Hoffmann, continues Tieck's fairy tale in the framework of the institutions of Law and Psychology. The series of murders in Paris that undoes the holiest of bonds—that is, once more, that of the Family[41]—escapes the torture of the ancien régime. In contrast, what manages to get behind them is a speech act that answers for deeds forbidden by law. What escapes the established conception of truth are individual and unconscious motivations, which prohibit verdicts based on deeds alone, as well as productive aspects of criminals that promise future improvement and utility. Accordingly, the jurisprudence of Enlightened Absolutism decides to have the accused confess—without chains or witnesses—to a female writer who counts as a mother to him. When Mademoiselle de Scudery recognizes a child she once cradled, the psychology of crime is born.

The psychological account is itself familial. Once more, a mother has encoded what a mother in turn decodes. The goldsmith Cardillac—whose identity the accused man concealed, as if out of love for a father—has robbed his patrons and customers and stabbed them to death. He has done so in order to repeat a prenatal scene. Cardillac's mother, while pregnant with him, was seduced by the sight of jewels presented by a nobleman she had previously rejected—an embrace that lasted forever because death befell her lover. Now the son "embraces" and murders noblemen as they make their way to assignations with their mistresses. The newly minted pervert eliminates the libertine of the ancien régime because he unites criminality and productivity. Jewels, as the object of the mother's desire, entail fetishism of the same.

From childhood on, Cardillac has plied his trade/craft [*Handwerk*] as an art. The jewels the mother desired—as the phallus of a lover (and not of her husband)—led Cardillac to identify with her desire. Consequently, he embraces as a lethal mother. Matrilineal, then, are a craft that undoes borders between estates and a crime that does not occur simply for gain. The eccentric [*Sonderling*]—for whom the law makes no provisions—becomes the norm, and this entertains no relationship with repression whatsoever. The primal scene, perversions, and matrilineal art both *are* and *enable* juridical, psychological, and aesthetic forms of individuation. A culture that claims to be able to say how a "narrative" [*Erzählung*] told by a mother makes her child productive can optimize the choice of profession without invoking the order of estates. That said, it does well to have the mouths of "wise men" (as in *The Serapion Brethren*) offer instruction about the power of primal scenes—which it then confirms through the ears and writings [*im Ohr und Dichten*] of wise mother confessors.

4. Romantic Texts and Knowledge of the Soul

"The doctor is a second father confessor," one of Hoffmann's many personal physicians exclaims to a princess—who has reserved the sexual secret of her hysteria for priests. The alliance between the nobility and the church, whose statutes view bodies only in terms of blue blood and sinful flesh, yields to the alliance between family, psychology, and medicine, which investigates the "putty" [*Kitt*] sticking together "body and soul"[42]—the individual and sexuality. *The Devil's Elixirs* describes an endogamous family that brings forth eccentric souls [*Ausnahmeseelen*] and artists, revealing their—and its—productivity orally to "ingenious" psychiatrists and monks who cannot read genealogical texts.[43] Only in the newly established madhouse,[44] and not in the royal dungeon, can knowledge be obtained about knowledge that has been bought at the price of incest.

When literature becomes family hermeneutics—that is, when it investigates the sexualization of children and the hysterization of women in confessions, autobiographies, crime stories, and novels of the soul [*Seelenromanen*]—it has the same address as psychology. That makes psychoanalytic readings of Romantic texts possible, and tautological.

Displacing the threshold of addressability onto the mother-child dyad makes authors and characters "psychoanalyzable" in the first place: Freud's decodings of infantile sexuality begin exopoetically with Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* and endopoetically with Hoffmann's "Sandman." A fortiori the connection between author and characters becomes possible only when discourses [*Reden*] are referred to individuals and not to systems of symbols. In this manner, the appearance results that biographies explain texts—even though familial relations [*der Familiarismus*] in the one simply double those in the other.

Psychoanalysis inhabits the same space of discourse that invented and implemented the power of primary socialization. It is only on this basis—as is the case for Cardillac[45]—that text and interpretation coincide. Deciphering imagoes of the nuclear family in texts and the discourses that constitute them is merely a matter of rediscovering the sediments of codification that, around 1800, ascribed a meaning to the Family and especially to the Mother—a process that Freud considered "of paramount importance" for the "whole" of "later life."[46] At the same time, however, sexualization is subject to biotechnologies and forms of knowledge that made the Family into the "mother" of all imagoes in the first place. In *The Devil's Elixirs,* incestuous wishes—which

are forgiven and then archived in monasteries—are aroused by portraits of the ancestral mother [*Ahnmutter*] that these same cloisters display. Likewise, when Heinrich's natal family is depicted in Klingsohr's tale, parental imagoes split between sires and scribes, sensuality and tenderness, only to be correlated, allegorically, to psychic faculties (338). It follows, then, that the multiplication of parental imagoes represents the stratagem of a kind of psychology that forms bodies through images and makes them into addressable souls. When Freud excavated such a process of image production from Hoffmann's "Sandman," he abandoned literary study along the lines of hermeneutics and empathy [*Einfühlung*]—but not the space of rhetorical invention [*Rede-Erfindungen*].

If pre-oedipal sexualization constitutes a program and the Oedipus complex represents a staging of "fantasy," then they are subject to a discourse [*einem Reden*] and not to a desire. In order to function, Romantic texts presume that objects of transference be spoken and heard; after mothers and psychologists, psychoanalysts join in. That hides the productivity of sexualizing discourse from exegetes. Psychoanalytic approaches to literature read Romantic texts as expressions of forbidden wishes and as compensation for social constraints. However, the joy that psychoanalysis has in such discoveries conceals a double blindness. An "individual" is assigned wishes that are actually technologies of socialization [*Sozialisationstechniken*]. Likewise, "society" is assigned prohibitions that are, in fact, obsolete. It is not the ancient law of the Symbolic Father—to which Freud reduced all forms of infantile sexuality—but rather the Norm that governs the texts. It contains positive figures that collaborate [*mitschreiben*] in the production of productivity [*Produktion von Produktion*] and extend invitations to enthrone the same fantasy that already wields power.

Finally, a trait of the psychoanalytic method of decoding is itself tautological. The search for conditions that constitute "the human being"—which at the same time this being makes—renews and prolongs the empirical-transcendental folding that has already occurred in Romantic texts. When Klingsohr's tale posits matrilineal sexualization for the public *Bildungsroman*—splitting and displacing family imagoes in the course of representing it—the work erects the hermeneutic dispositive that Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* transferred into the scientific sphere. Even under the changed parameters that make the articulation of Romantic texts possible and disintegrate their transcendentalism—because writing has replaced the voice, the signifier the signified—interpretation remains a matter of the interplay between the latent and the manifest, the spoken and the unspoken, and "fantasy" and "reality."

Yet discourses have no depth wherein their substance might lie [*in der ihre Sache läge*]. They are surfaces—the juxtaposition of familial coding, maternal memory, poetry, and psychology around 1800. Here, in intertextual space without shadow or shade, is where the philology that Nietzsche discovered could operate: the philology of rhetorical inventions.

2 Nietzsche (1844–1900)

So you think you can tell Heaven from Hell.
— Pink Floyd

The name of "literature"—and its theory—emerged alongside a public sphere that discoursed reasonably on culture, and alongside a philosophy that recognized an epistemological subject behind literary works. Nietzsche identified this constellation and brought about its disintegration: he withdrew fiction from philosophical judgments that concern truth, and he introduced a conception of the public sphere whose element is not reason but the production and consumption of media. For all that, the subversion he performed has affected literature itself (Artaud, Benn) more than its study.

Uncoupled from recognition/knowledge [*Einsicht*], literature entered relations with corporeality and power. Taking away the mandate of representing the ideas of Reason—or indeed, Absolute Spirit itself—meant passing beyond the borders that Kant and Hegel had imposed on both the productive energies of the body and on violence [*Gewalt*]. Nietzsche's literary-theoretical fragments articulate an aesthetics of production that recognizes no limits to creation and destruction. It replaces authorial psychology with the physiology of the artistically creative body, the theory of effects and affects in aesthetic education with the semiotics of sensory media, the philosophy of literary history with the genealogical analysis of discursive instances, and transcendental hermeneutics with philology.

1. Language, Fiction, Truth

Any project of philosophical aesthetics must, first and foremost, determine the relationship between philosophy and its object: art. Nietzsche did so by theorizing language as rhetoric. He placed literature and philosophy alongside each other on a field to which they both belong as forms of articulated language. This pragmatic-linguistic radicalization of Kant's critique of metaphys-

ics undid the very distinction that had made it possible for philosophy to set the knowledge of things above literary discourse made to specific addressees—that is, it undid the difference between Concept and Metaphor. According to Nietzsche, all words are metaphors in a double, and literal, sense. First, they make nervous stimuli—which do not correspond to a thing but to a corporeal relation—into sounds; second, they transmit these sounds to an addressee.[1] The first instance of transfer has no priority over the second: the differentiation between stimuli is learned for the sake of others—indeed, consciousness itself is "only a means of communicability [*Mittel der Mitteilbarkeit*]" that has "developed in exchange" (*Nachlass* III 667). Rhetorical figures illustrate the matter clearly: a synecdoche like "sail" (instead of "ship") names a feature that stands out to communicating parties; it does not name the "thing itself" (*Rhetoric* § 3; *Collected Works* V 298f.).

As an "artistic transfer" (*Truth* § 1, III 315) from one medium to another, language expunges the ideas of Wholeness, Truth, and Authenticity. "There is no such thing as an unrhetorical 'naturalness' of language to which one might appeal. [. . .] *Language is rhetoric*, for it wishes only to transmit *doxa*, not *episteme*" (*Rhetoric* § 3; *Collected Works* V 298). The origin of linguistic rhetoric is not significant—indeed, it "originates" in an act of replacement; rather, its function is important. Rhetoric constitutes a form of elementary mnemotechnics. It operates as a machine for selection by setting up an environment that is memorable and ready-to-hand—one that, nevertheless (or for this reason), has no calculable utility. Rhetoric, which was a regional doctrine of art in antiquity, becomes universal; and "man," that "inscrutable animal [*das nicht festgestellte Tier*]" (*Beyond* III § 62, II 623), becomes one with the "drive to create metaphors" (*Truth* § 2, III 319). Nietzsche's effort to define [*bestimmen*] literature as language ultimately performs a reversal: language itself is literature—the fabrication of fictions.

Indeed, for Nietzsche, the scope of fiction extends so far that it changes status. That, in the final instance, deception means truth and simulation insight/knowledge follows from the passage of language to writing and concepts—which represent two further "technologies" of semiotic selection. By "jumping over" most words (*Beyond* V § 192, II 650), reading transforms verbal matter into "thoughts." Consequently, only the philologist still "reads words" at all (*Works and Letters* V 268). Thoughts and concepts—as "residues of metaphors" (*Truth* § 1, III 315)—subsume a verbal multiplicity, just as words subsume a swarm of sensations. In this way, the second selective operation, as if it were a

primary function, erases the reference to the body that the voice has in speech. This accounts for Nietzsche's inimical relationship to writing (which separates him from his grammatological inheritors). Modern book culture rejects and eliminates embodied rhetorical techniques—what, *per antiphrasin,* we call "ancient literature" (*Greek Literature* III § 1; *Collected Works* V 209ff.). Accordingly, the modern *cogito*, in its state of disincarnate transparency, rests on something that remains unthought; its claim to knowledge is belief in grammar, whose tropes it parrots and forgets (*Nachlass* III 577).

It would appear, then, that Nietzsche's theory is still inscribed in the matrix of transcendental thinking: as the rehabilitation of language and rhetoric against Reason, which is hostile to them, philosophy would be the recollection of what thinking does not think, on the one hand, and the critique of this oblivion, on the other. Ever since Herder, the originary linguistic productivity of mankind has counted as the "unthought," which manifests itself in poetic speech and ultimately yields conceptual discourse.[2] However, Nietzsche leaves such transcendental anthropology behind in two ways.

First of all, production neither occurs in a mythical space where signs and referents are one, nor does it take place within a subject oblivious of what it has created (and creates). Instead, languages and fictions number among the many and disparate events of corporeal being. Their lack of "truth" does not lead theory to skepticism or positivism, but to Ariadne: "the path of the body" [*Leitfaden des Leibes*]."[3] Secondly, the deception and forgetting that are called "truth" and "insight/knowledge" are not sluggish figures whose aporias reflection might resolve. If the systems of signs necessary for life—instead of merely giving rise to interpretations [*Auslegungen*]—are already interpretations themselves, then no act of interpretation can reveal the "transcendental signified" underlying them.[4] Accordingly, Nietzsche's philosophy abandons the principle of critique and sides with the powers that inscribe and erase signs through the act of interpretation [*auslegend*]. It begins the ruse-filled game of naming *and* performing fictions—turning interpretation against interpretation, and rewriting the rhetoric of concepts as concepts of rhetoric. Regional concepts of literary theory (e.g., fiction, fable, interpretation) achieve the operative and strategic status of not just describing but also enacting "how the 'true world' finally became a fable" (*Twilight* IV, II 963).

Following the path of corporeality, philosophy becomes physiology, and by reinterpreting interpretations, it becomes genealogy.

2. On the Physiology of Aesthetic Media

The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music—the first and last closed "book" that Nietzsche wrote—names the link between physiology and genealogy in the title. A literary genre is declared born as a body. For all that, it takes two to conceive—and by extension, to give birth; here, matters differ from affairs of personal constitution. Physiological aesthetics disarticulates the unity of how both Art and Concept are conceived. A single origin is replaced by an "opposition that the shared word 'art' only seems to bridge," which is "tied" to aesthetics in the same way that "generation depends on the duality of the sexes." Inasmuch as it is sexual in nature, aesthetics cannot yield "logical insight" (§ 1, I 21). To express what is at issue, mythical names—"Apollo" and "Dionysos"—are required, as well as a physiological parallel: Nietzsche presents the opposition between the visual arts, on the one hand, and acoustic-gestural arts, on the other, as corresponding to the states of dreaming and intoxication. Dreams produce entoptic images that appear to the sleeper as defined shapes; intoxication produces sounds, rhythms, and dance figures, which emerge and vanish endlessly.

Following Schopenhauer, Nietzsche assigns dream to the realm of "representation," and he assigns intoxication to a desire that he and his forebear both call "will." The senses and the arts function neither as epistemological capacities that synthesize manifolds of perception, nor—as historians of art would have it—as canvases that imitate nature, nor, finally, as physiological filters that select relevant stimuli. The priority of ecstatic states over conscious perception activates specific modes of production:

> Apollonian intoxication keeps the eye stimulated above all, so that it receives the power of vision. Painters, sculptors, epic poets are visionaries *par excellence.* In the Dionysian state, on the other hand, the entire system of affects is roused and intensified, and so it discharges its means of expression all at once. (*Twilight* IX § 10, II 996)

Senses that are endogenously stimulated give rise, in dreams, to a hallucinatory "world of seeing"; in a state of intoxication, they produce a "world of hearing" (*Untimely* IV § 5, I 389). They form, in physiological but not in technical terms, media in the modern sense. Media escape the standards of knowledge: only materiality counts—the conditions of emission and reception, and the frequency of signs. In the Apollonian state, "the extreme calm of certain intoxicating sensations" creates the illusion that the images are autonomous, detached from the body that produces them (*Nachlass* III 785); in the Dionysian state,

the tempo of semiosis increases until all signs are eclipsed by the nonsignifying body.

From its inception, modern aesthetics has traversed this double meaning. That is, ever since Baumgarten, who coined the term, the doctrine of the beautiful has also been a matter of the senses. Nietzsche, therefore, as Heidegger demonstrated,[5] was continuing a tradition. In contrast to his predecessors, however, he cancelled the senses' reference to knowledge/insight, which had hierarchized them and placed their point of culmination in the eye's immaterial receptivity. When sensory media operate autonomously, sight loses its priority. Translated into the opposition between the Apollonian and the Dionysian, the pairing of the beautiful and the sublime changes status. Whereas Kant had declared that the beautiful can be taken in, and that the sublime defies any such efforts, Apollonian *opsis* forms only one part of a process of sign production whose paradigm is acoustic and gestural. Nietzsche's integration of the Dionysian into the theory of art puts an end to the reign of representation.

The matter is evident in Nietzsche's relationship to Schopenhauer. The equation between music and will, on the one hand, and the coupling of the other arts and representation, on the other, had prompted the latter to affirm that music is the "representation" and "imitation of a model [*Nachbild eines Vorbildes*] that itself cannot be immediately pictured."[6] But if one seeks only incitement to dance in music, one escapes the aporias of aesthetics conceived in terms of *mimesis*: "Aesthetics is nothing but applied physiology [. . .]. And so I wonder: what is it that my entire body wants of music in general? For no soul exists" (*Nietzsche contra Wagner* II, II 1041). The end of representation also puts an end to aesthetic psychology.[7] Dreams and intoxication reduce the "soul" to a "spiritualized eye, ear, etc." (*Works and Letters* II 255). Thereby, both the representations that occur and the subject who experiences them disappear as well. That is to say, the two concepts that sustained aesthetic discourse in the nineteenth century vanish:

> The whole opposition (which even Schopenhauer still uses to divide the arts as if it were a criterion of value) between the subjective and the objective does not belong to aesthetics at all . . . since the subject . . . can only be conceived as the enemy of art, not as its origin. (*Birth of Tragedy* § 5, I 40)

For a discourse of the media-producing body, the subject itself becomes a mere "medium." Physiology, instead of humanizing the arts, equates their seeming masters—human beings—with "images and artistic projections" that refer to a

producer within consciousness [*diesseits des Bewußtseins*]. Such decentering of the subject—which amounts to an appearance [*Scheinbild*] produced by scattered affective tensions—displaces the method of aesthetics and the site of art.

Access to arts that are produced by a subject cannot occur by means of reflection:

> Our whole understanding of art [*Kunstwissen*] is fundamentally altogether illusory because, when we know, we are not one and identical with that entity that affords itself, as the sole creator and spectator of that comedy of art, an eternal pleasure. (ibid.)

Aesthetic "knowledge" derives from fixing borders that the body has always already transgressed when, in one, it produces *and* enjoys media. Aesthetics had been defined as a judgment of taste (Kant) or as "contemplative observation" that does not seek to "call forth" works but rather "to recognize scientifically, what art is" (Hegel).[8] Nietzsche deprived such "public" conceptions of knowledge and education of their franchise [*entzieht . . . das Wort*]. He marked the displacement that, historically, led to the mediated public sphere. Not for nothing is *The Birth of Tragedy* dedicated to Wagner, whose medial *Gesamtkunstwerk* "no longer speaks the educated language of a caste" (*Untimely* IV § 10, I 428). Nor is it for nothing that talk of the Apollonian—which is "fundamentally nothing more than an image of light cast on a dark wall" (*Birth* § 9, I 55)—sounds like a theory of film avant la lettre.

Nietzsche's decentering of consciousness refers the theory of art to the relationship between culture and bodies. Unconscious production provides its historical a priori—the site from which Nietzsche and psychoanalysis advanced their claims.[9] Freud formulated, on the model of the dream, how unconscious desire and the law of culture [*Kulturgesetz*] achieve compromises in the rhetorical complexity of texts. Literary fantasy animates—with replacements and sublimations—a scenario whose only rule is the universal law declared when familial associations [*Familenverbände*] were founded. Accordingly, the Oedipus complex permits works to be inscribed within a representational scheme—that is, to be interpreted textually and in terms of content; it also enables one to analyze the author individually—that is, to locate him in the conflict between the normal and the neurotic.

Nietzsche, however—in notes he made late in life—also formulated the Apollonian on the model of intoxication. Intoxication does not yield representation—a scenario—and it rejects hermeneutics. Because the dream uncouples desire and corporeal motorics, it forms an open system: "psycho-motoric in-

duction" (*Nachlass* III 754) carries it from body to body. Accordingly, it exceeds—and not just endopsychically—"all family life [*Familientum*] and its venerable statutes" (*Birth* § 2, I 27); it openly injures the norms of the public sphere and communication. Correlated with psychosis and conspiracy,[10] art undoes the opposition between the normal and the pathological. It proceeds from collective and forbidden bodily techniques [*Körpertechniken*]: the sexual and alcoholic practices of Dionysian revelers, the narcotic activities of initiates at Eleusis, and the St.-Vitus dances performed during medieval epidemics (*Birth* § 1, I 24). For this reason, transgression—both as the praxis and as the contents of art (*Birth* § 9, I 55–60)—belongs to the way culture itself functions.

3. On the Genealogy of Literature

Genealogy, for Nietzsche, names the process of reading history as series of prohibitions and transgressions, struggles and tensions.[11] *The Birth of Tragedy* is the result—and deployment—of combat in and about discourse. In the struggle between the Dionysian and the Apollonian, sound and image, and words and meanings, the unity of literature vanishes along with the unity of its medium. Here, Nietzsche inscribes, into discourse, the split that linguistics will later make between "signifier" and "signified." Unlike Saussure's taxonomy, however, his position "sides" with the signifiers, stressing the innumerable and suprasegmental elements of language: intonation, rhythm, speed of delivery. All that "fades away" [*verklingt*] when conceptuality emerges, literature expresses [*bringt zur Sprache*] (*Collected Works* III 229).

The medial definition of literature subverts both the signified, understood as the integral meaning of words, and the idealistic poetics of semantic "content"—which vanish in the immortal parodies of the Faustian idea and Wagnerian materialism that Nietzsche stages. Literature means taking up communication [*Kommunikationaufnahme*]; consequently, it is regulated by bodily performances [*Redemomenten*]. Nietzsche accepts the classical triad of genres—epic, lyric, and drama. He rejects, however, the dialectic between subject and object involving normalized acts of narration, self-expression, and dialogue (Hegel).[12] Instead, processes of assuming-power [*Bemächtigungsprozesse*]—whereby the Apollonian and the Dionysian take the stage in a literal sense [*das Wort im Wortsinn ergreifen*]—constitute the trinity.

In Homeric epic, the Apollonian overcame pre-Greek states of ecstasy and, on the dismembered bodies of Titans, erected an Olympus of illusion and im-

ages. Epic poetry stands as a "monument of a victory" and does not represent the naïve beginnings of literature—as Schiller held (*Birth* § 3, I 31f.). Greek lyric, in turn, heralds the return of Oriental cults. Sound conquers image, and "desire [*Begierde*]" (§ 5, I 36) runs through all registers "from the whispering of inclination to the bellowing of madness" (§ 6, I 43). Such suprasegmental registers of the voice designate neither a subject nor a name, but rather the Dionysian body.

Nietzsche does not simply assign the two genres to Apollo and Dionysos; instead, they exist in a play of difference that subverts dichotomies.[13] Epic images are bounded only because of the counterweight provided by what is measureless; conversely, lyrical *melos* finds expression only after translation of "dream scenes" (§ 5, I 37) that occur neither in images nor in concepts. When Heidegger conceives works of art as reciprocal [*gegenwendig*] relations between world and earth,[14] he continues this nondialectical tension that Nietzsche posited: works are beautiful in keeping with forces that are not reconciled so much as made to bend under a yoke.

The third genre exercises the greatest force by harnessing vision and intoxication. Nietzsche—in a move that scandalized philological contemporaries such as Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf—derived Attic drama from the dance, music, and dithyrambs of Dionysiac revelers. His claim, that the Doric word *drama* does "not mean 'to do' at all" but rather refers to a hieratic event (*Case* § 9, II 921), contests Aristotle's definition of tragedy on every point. Drama, according to Nietzsche, is *mimesis* only in the archaic sense of the word: as dance,[15] it does not imitate action but rather *is* action. What seems to be represented—the mythos of heroes—is hallucinated by a chorus that techniques of inducing ecstasy have made productive. The duality of protagonist and antagonist incarnates the sole hero of dithyrambs: the god they celebrate is "Zagreus"—"dismembered body" (*Birth of Tragedy* § 10, I 61).

Nietzsche's genealogy of drama interprets neither content nor form; it describes the "that" of its emergence. The community of worship is producer and spectator in one: ecstasy transports its members into the chorus, and it exalts the chorus into the god whom the transfigured community in turn beholds. This circular process does away with the poetics of effect and affect [*Wirkungspoetik*] as a separate matter. Tragedy does not purify one of affects (Aristotle), nor does it ennoble them into compassion (Lessing):

> One can disprove this theory in the most cold-blooded fashion: namely by measuring, by means of a dynamometer, the effect of a tragic emotion; and one gets, as

> a result, what only the absolute mendacity of a systematist can misrecognize: that tragedy is a tonic [*tonicum*]. (*Nachlass* III 829)

The experience of the audience [*Rezeption*] is a single affirmation of productivity [*Produktion*], which, in tragedy, "still includes the pleasure of destruction within itself" (*Twilight* X § 5, II 1032). Only when such pleasure requires legitimation do poetics of effect/affect arise. Their emergence—which fixes the borders between the author and the public, between hero and actor—Nietzsche describes as a scene occurring between the last tragedian and the first dialectician. The fact that the author Euripides wrote under the "censorship" of Euripides qua "first great reader" (*Greek Literature* III § 1; *Collected Works* V 218)—who stood, in turn, under the "censorship" of the spectator Socrates—subjected tragedy to a philosophy that equated "true" pleasure and knowledge, to a psychology that calculated the effects of art, and to a poetics of "content" that presumed the existence of a text. As a result, language representing concepts took over [*Das Wort als Begriff ergreift das Wort*]. Socratic dialogue and Platonic discourse put an end to tragedy.

Genealogy, then, describes the emergence *and* the decline of Greek literature. It places it within a force field where the death of tragedy coincides with the birth of science. Accordingly, Nietzschean genealogy reads the first philosophical poetics only as polemical gestures [*Kampfschriften*]. Instead of practicing science, genealogy uses tragedy methodologically to pose the "problem of science"—upon which science itself cannot reflect (*Birth*, "Attempt at Self-Criticism," § 2, I 10). Thereby, Nietzsche issues a succinct rejoinder to the "end of art" announced by Hegel: philosophical discourse, which declared the matter a truth, in fact made the end occur by announcing it.

4. The Type of the Artist and the Production of Signs

In terms of overall design, *The Birth of Tragedy* remained within the discursive space of the nineteenth century: it discussed literature in terms of the system of all the arts—its foundation [*Stiftung*] in Greece and subsequent historical evolution. When the book closed, however, Nietzsche changed his approach to genealogy and physiology. Now he started with details.

In this perspective, the distinction between "truth" and "fiction," instead of being a matter settled once and for all, turns into an endless and open struggle. "Culture" names the various means of drilling [*einfleischen*] a soul and spirit into bodies, which subject these bodies to the conditions of truthfulness and

sincerity in discourse [*Wahrhaftigkeits- und Ernsthaftigkeitsbedingungen des Sprechens*] (*Genealogy* II § 1f., II 799–801). Instead of legitimating such rules by way of a theory of speech acts, however, genealogy focuses on the violence with which they are inscribed. An operative conception of writing proves necessary inasmuch as genealogy entertains inimical relations with alphabetized interiority and exteriority. The question is not what acts of speech say, but rather who programs them.[16] And the answer does not concern individuals, but rather power formations [*Herrschaftsgebilde*]. Discourses are symptoms—or as Nietzsche puts it, "semiotics"—that reveal the origin, condition, and power of speakers.

As ever, poets represent an ambivalent type. They participate in the bloody task of making bodies hear and obey. Verses provide an instrument that fixes speech mnemotechnically, steers bodies rhythmically, and guards against disturbances in channels of discourse. Inasmuch as hexameter—according to legend—saw the light of day in Delphi (*Gay Science* II § 84, II 94), poets are "valets [*Kammerdiener*]" of priestly morality (*Gay Science* I § 1, II 34). Those who actually speak when poets open their mouths are the *others* who invented the categories that—through the autonym "true" and the heteronym "mendacious"—permit power to be mastered (*Genealogy* I § 5, II 776). At the same time, however, the valets are tricksters. The fact that the rules of discourse object less to what is untrue in lies than to what is harmful in them (*Truth* § 1, III 311) admits the possibility of fiction; this, in turn, yields the pleasure of lying at the price of "interiorization" (*Nachlass* III 418).

Deception needed to be sufficiently drilled in, over the course of generations, so that, ultimately, it became a dominant instinct, an end in itself. The fabrications of poets betray their origins in the lower orders, where one survives by means of mimicry and breaks with the idea of "character."[17] Poetry derived from the pressure for "truth"—just as the flourishing of the arts in Greece stemmed from slavery (*Greek State* III 277). Literature comes into being when the "slave intellect, that master of dissimulation, is permitted to celebrate its Saturnalia." It is transgression, which speaks "in nothing but forbidden metaphors" and constitutes a kind of parody that "dashes apart, throws this way and that, and ironically reassembles" the "scaffolding [*Bretterwerk*] of concepts" (*Truth* § 2, III 321). In the slave—whose work determines culture, and whose transgressions determine its festivities—the artist has his model. As much is evident in the Greek word *techne*, which makes no distinction between art and craft [*Handwerk*] (*Greek State* III 277).

Modern theories of production—which celebrate the "dignity of labor" in economic terms (ibid.) and the autarchy of works in aesthetic ones—only mask this slavery. "Taken into service" by an alliance between the state and sciences (*Untimely* III § 6, I 330), literature became "propaganda for reforms of a social and political nature" from the eighteenth century on. "The Author" and his "Oeuvre"—which has the task of "generating interest" (*Nachlass* III 509) for his person—both enact and *are* the educational system that invented the interpretive essay (*Future* II, III 201), as well as the public that consumed [*auffängt*] literary works in a critical and historical fashion (*Untimely Meditations* II § 5, I 242). Nietzsche opposes the "fabrications" (e.g., "Author" [*Nietzsche contra Wagner* IX § 1, II 1056f.]) from which modern literature arose—and not just the way that literature has been viewed in terms of social milieu (as was the case for Sainte-Beuve and Hippolyte Taine).[18]

Accordingly, he describes the way literature functions in a "history of 'education' [*Bildung*]" that is, in fact, a "history of narcotics" (*Gay Science* II § 86, II 96). In modern times, two complementary social types have emerged ensuring that work and leisure will remain separate: the Romantic artist, who produces sedatives instead of stimulants, and the philologist, who teaches the young how to "cram—the first precondition for robotically performing duties in the future (as a civil servant, husband, bureaucratic slave, newspaper reader, soldier)" (*Nachlass* III 630).

The poetics of "authorship" and "oeuvre" possess an erotic charge: only a sense of shame makes them conceal production as if it were the act of conception itself (*Greek State* III 277). In fact, "only one kind of power" exists, and it "is one and the same in art and the sexual act" (*Nachlass* III 924). By introducing sexuality, Nietzsche banishes *theologumena* from the aesthetics of production. Art is not *creatio ex nihilo,* but rather erotic invention. For this reason, it is anything but imaginary:

> We would err if we rested at its power to lie: it does more than simply make images [*imaginieren*]: it displaces values themselves. And it does not just move the "feeling" of value: this lover is worthier and stronger. Among animals, such a condition brings forth new weapons, pigments, colors, and forms: above all, new movements, new rhythms, new calls, and seductions. It is no different among human beings. (*Nachlass* III 752)

Eroticism and art are not restricted to being vehicles of expression or aims; their "power of transformation" (ibid.) produces expression and objectives in the first place. Bataille, a reader of Nietzsche, coined the term "expenditure" for

this process/event. A "generous [*abgebende*] and overflowing fullness of bodily vigor" constitutes the "aesthetic state" (*Nachlass* III 535), which is, "so to speak, bred into a 'person' in the artist" (*Nachlass* III 715).

The positivity of creation [*Schaffen*]—which refuses to be reduced to fantasy—occurs as semiosis. The materiality of signs links erotology and medial aesthetics. If signs are not based on signifieds or referents, nothing and no one prescribes what all can be a sign or the sign of a sign. The artist stands in for this unlimitedness. His vigor involves the "extreme acuity of certain senses: so that they understand—and create—a wholly different language of signs, the same one that seems to be associated with certain nervous illnesses" (*Nachlass* III 716). Accordingly, all the arts are languages, and all languages are media that are their own message, since only the "excessive wealth of the means of communication [*Überreichtum an Mitteilungsmitteln*]" defines them. Through two complementary artistic capacities—positing signs in what is, as yet, uninscribed [*im Zeichenlosen*] and reading them there—"languages have their source [*Entstehungsherd*]: languages of sound, as well as languages of gestures and gazes" (*Nachlass* III 753). Being an artist is a function of physiological force, for force (i.e., "will-to-power") involves working with differences and producing them, "where otherwise, for a normal person, all distinction is lacking" (*Nachlass* III 784). Distinction, in turn, represents the necessary, determinate quality of a data set [*Zeichenmenge*] to signify when signs no longer simply represent something else. During the age when physiologists (Helmholtz, Fechner) identified threshold values for sensory perception, Nietzsche described the production of meaning [*Sinnenproduktion*] in terms of differences and intensities.

For artists, both creating [*setzen*] and reading signs represent unavoidable and coordinated matters. They cannot *not* communicate, and they cannot *not* interpret: "Wanting to say all that is capable of signifying [*Das Redenwollen alles dessen, was Zeichen zu geben weiß*]" and "needing to imitate, which already occurs when signs are sensed and represented [*das Nachahmen-Müssen, das einen Zustand nach Zeichen schon errät und darstellt*]" (*Nachlass* III 716), generate a positive feedback loop between affects and signs. Such is the effect of art:

> All distinct matters, all nuances, insofar as they recall the extreme heightening of force that intoxication produces, retroactively awaken this feeling of intoxication—the effect of works of art is the *arousal of the state of artistic creation*, i.e., intoxication. (*Nachlass* III 784)

Instead of idealistically mediating production, works, and reception through consciousness, Nietzsche short-circuits bodies and signs. Moreover, he holds

that encounters with art bypass meaning and understanding and follow the signs themselves: "One hears with the muscles, one even reads with muscles" (*Nachlass* III 754). Literature constitutes a "mosaic of words, where every word, as a sound, as a locus, as a concept, exudes its power to the right and the left over the whole"; therefore, it also forms an economy where a "minimal extent and number of signs" achieves a "maximum . . . of energy" (*Twilight* X § 1, II 1027).

Like the works they produce, the arts themselves are correlations of signs. First, they exist only because of semiotic processes that have preceded them. Contra theories declaring that the ends identified in rule-based poetics constitute the actual origins of literature, Nietzsche objects: "Every mature art has a fullness of convention at its basis: to this extent it is a language" (*Nachlass* III 754). Secondly, different arts—for example, lyric and music—are correlated by acts of instituting signs [*Zeichenstiftungen*]. Whereas *The Birth of Tragedy* called music an "immediate language" that "speaks directly to interiority and comes from interiority," genealogy holds that it was music's "ancient connection with poetry" that inscribed "so much symbolism" in the first place (*Human* I § 215, I 573). As a corollary, the genealogical perspective holds that ancient, quantitative verse was founded in the optical medium of dance steps—whereas modern, qualitative verse is based in signified content (letter to C. Fuchs, at the end of August 1888; III 1314f.). The arts, as they are conventionally understood, are historically variable and conventional connections between bodies of signs without any "immediacy [*Unmittelbarkeit*]" (*Human* II 2 § 168, I 940).

Finally, the production of signs collapses the cultural distinction between producers and consumers [*Rezipienten*]. When artists layer and connect semiotic systems, they act as interpreters; conversely, interpreters act as artists, too. Failing an *Urtext* to which all interpretations would have to refer, "forcing [*Vergewaltigen*], adjusting, abbreviating, omitting, filling-in, inventing [*Ausdichten*], falsifying"—all different terms that parody the notion of essence—become "the *essence* of all interpretation" (*Genealogy of Morals* III § 24, II 890). "That unspeakably more lies in what the things are called than in what they are" demonstrates the identity of interpreters and "creators" (*Gay Science* II § 58, II 77f.). Thereby, the very notions of tradition and oeuvre undergo a change. For Nietzsche, the erstwhile philologist, literary tradition amounts to a series of misunderstandings and falsifications,[19] and interpretation yields a strategy that—like all strategies—relies on two tactics: disciplining subjects [*Untergebene*] and combating opponents (*Daybreak* I § 84, I 1067f.).[20]

Such a subversive interpretation of the act of interpretation has a recursive impact on the praxis of the newly conceived philosopher. Healed of the philological deficiency of his ancestors, he does not equate understanding with actions performed by a subject because "interpretation itself is a form of the will-to-power" (*Nachlass* III 487). The answer to the question, "Who is interpreting [*wer legt aus*]?" must be: "our affects" (*Nachlass* III 480). For all that, however, Nietzsche gauges affects only in terms of the intensity and complexity that their semiotic practices create. Their measure is aesthetic. Art-creating affect—which makes "existence eternally justified" (*Birth* § 5, I 40)—operates without reducing complexity: "To depict frightful and questionable things is itself already an instinct of power and the majesty of the artist: he does not fear them. . . . Art affirms [*bejaht*]" (*Nachlass* III 784). If, then, the difference between pleasure and pain exists without "fixed norms" (*Nachlass* III 873), pleasure turns into a variable that stands open for inventing and naming [*Bezeichnen*]. Alternately—as the difference between grades of minimal displeasure [*minimaler Unlustreize*]—it constitutes a sign itself. With that, art and pleasure escape the aporias of aesthetic systems that, up to Adorno, have claimed to be able to identify what pleasure is and can only accept fiction, cruelty, and death in dialectical mediation. Art takes its pleasure [*hat ihre Lust*] in the "that" of "showing." Tragic pleasure admits no negation and no opposite. It lies in the creation of signs itself, which never does not occur.

3 Lullaby of Birdland

For Mimi

1.

> When we entered the highest chamber, he said: "Long ago, with my servant, I spent eight summer days in this room, and I wrote a little poem on the wall. I should like to see the poem again. If the day is noted beneath, when this occurred, please be so good as to record it for me." Straightaway I led him to the southern window in the room; there, on the left, it stood:
>
> *Über allen Gipfeln* / *Over all the peaks*
> *Ist Ruh,* / *It is calm,*
> *In allen Wipfeln* / *In all the tree-tops*
> *Spürest du* / *You feel*
> *Kaum einen Hauch;* / *Hardly a breath;*
> *Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.* / *Birds are quiet in the woods:*
> *Warte nur, balde* / *Just wait; soon*
> *Ruhest du auch.* / *You will rest, too.*
>
> D. 7 September 1780, Goethe
>
> Goethe read these few lines, and tears flowed down his cheeks. Very slowly, he drew his snow-white handkerchief from his dark brown coat, dried his tears, and spoke in a gentle, mournful tone: "Yes, just wait, soon you, too, will rest!" He fell quiet for half a minute, looked once more through the window into the gloomy spruce forest. Then, he turned to me and said: "Well, let us go!"

Thus Christian Mahr reports how Goethe, on the evening before his last birthday, visited, one more time, the hunting lodge on the Kickelhahn mountain near Ilmenau.[1] The scene is not just historical. It made history, too—literary history. Here an author, near the end of his life, ceremoniously archives his beginnings. To the letter, Goethe follows the rules that in the years around 1800 produced the new, author-based kind of text called "literature."

These rules were also formulated in Goethe's *Bildungsroman*.[2] There one reads of Wilhelm Meister's relationship to the poems of his youth:

> Up to now he had carefully preserved everything that had flowed from his pen since his mind began to develop. His writings were tied up in bundles which he had hoped to take with him on his journey. [. . .]
>
> When we open a letter that we once wrote and sealed on a particular occasion but which never reached the friend it was sent to, and was returned to us, we have a strange feeling as we break the seal, our own seal, and converse with our different self as with a third person. Just such a feeling it was that gripped our hero.[3]

In the same spirit—as the archivist of his own authorship—the eighty-one-year-old poet ascended the Kickelhahn. "The old inscription was recognized,"[4] Goethe notes in his journal apropos of the last journey he has made. The journey fetches back messages to the sender—messages that, unlike letters, are not fulfilled when they reach their addressees. They are "literature" in the new sense of the word, and that means that they remain the property of their author forevermore.[5] That said, what is new is the division of labor. Whereas the aspiring poet Wilhelm Meister—in order to establish [*statuieren*] his authorship "since his mind began to develop"—must gather and order "the papers in chronological sequence,"[6] Goethe, the old man, can build on the goodness of a geologist: Mahr takes note for him when a text was written—whose youthful author had already dated and signed it in anticipation.

However, something strange occurs. Just as the archivist Meister experiences a "strange feeling," the autobiographer and "clerk [*Kanzlist*] of his own interior"[7]—which Goethe has become in his old age—experiences a stream of tears that puts an end to the literary anagnorisis. Once more, rereading one's own writings becomes a conversation "with our different self." The reader lends his voice to what is written; he repeats and affirms what "Wanderer's Night Song" says. Thereby, he himself enters the chain of beings to whom the verses promise rest: first, the mountains and birds, then the writer, and finally, after fifty-one years, the reader, "too." Through the flow of tears, the archiving of the text becomes its return: everything—the view of the summits and the spruce forest, the self-address, the silence at the end—it all happens once more, just as the faded pencil lines at the southern window have described, and prescribed.

No one cries at his own words—if only because there is no such thing as "words of one's own." Only when someone else has written them does one read and cry. What literary scholars call the "lyrical I" does not exist at all. If the reader is promised calm, then this occurs for a "you." Fifty-one years ago, for the writer, it was no different.

The statement, "I rest," is a pragmatic paradox. No mouth can voice it, be-

cause sleep and death exclude speaking—just as speaking excludes sleep and death. The only exception to the rule is no exception: when the magic of animal magnetism enables the dead Mister Valdemar—in Poe's tale of the same name—to hold on to language and to answer the question about his condition by declaring, "I am dead," he promptly dissolves, in the blink of an eye, into a stinking mass "for which no language has a name."[8] For this mass, the word "corpse" is still a euphemism.

Absence occurs only in speech, but no speech occurs in absence. The verses on the Kickelhahn speak of this law. They are discourse about the site that excludes speech—and the site that speech excludes. "Wanderer's Night Song" does not mean that at the poem's end, "even the most restless being—man—must rest."[9] Instead, it means, simply, and without humanist add-ons, that the end of spoken speaking beings is at hand [*daß es mit den gesprochenen sprechenden Wesen zu Ende geht*]. The one who says that mountains, trees, and animals are mute will fall silent himself—and that means: he will become one with them.

Because it is discourse about discourse and discourse about the end of discourse, the text refers all its parameters to speaking—both to the speaker and to what is spoken about. Naming a final "breath" in the treetops means turning the work into a metaphor of respiration and voice, which are the Real of language and make it the sibling of sleep. To say that crepuscular birds "are quiet [*schweigen*]" means hearing their song as discourse [*ihr Singen wie ein Reden hören*], because (as Heidegger observed) "only in true speech is it possible actually to say nothing [*nur im echten Reden ist eigentliches Schweigen möglich*]."[10] Therefore, the poem invokes an acoustic twilight in which the voices of nature and speaking, sounds [*Laute*] and words, become indistinguishable. The last word—a vanishing [*verhallend*] "too"—explicitly puts an end to the difference between them. Sounds and speaking melt together in the moment when both cease. At its end, the poem performs what it speaks about: what is uttered and the utterance coincide. Any speech that dreams away its difference from sound(s) must end.

Therefore, it is Another who speaks. Where the text passes from the sounds of nature to the speaker who hears them, there appears, in his stead, a subject of utterance [*Äußerung*] that is a "you" for the implicit speaker-I. A nameless voice enters into play, without which the poem could not exist at all: the voice of a promise [*Zuspruch*], which calls the unspeakable end of speech a "rest."

Emil Staiger once observed that one would destroy "Wanderer's Night Song" by replacing "you feel" with "you notice."[11] One would destroy it even more

effectively by replacing "you" with "I." For the promise of the Other—a fact to which Goethe's tears bear witness—is the discursive event in "Wanderer's Night Song." Because no one can perform the paradoxical speech act of naming his own absence in absence, spoken beings are absolutely reliant on alien discourses [*sind die gesprochenen Wesen auf fremde Reden schlechthin angewiesen*]. The law holds all the more for words such as "rest" [*Ruhe*], "sleep," and "death": they derive from the discourse of the Other. Neither deixis nor introspection could ever have dreamed them up.

If this oneiric (and therefore universal) law governs the absent party—that he "was already dead and just did not know it yet"[12]—then words, which is to say the appearance [*der Schein*] of knowledge about this law, belong to the Other alone. The nameless voice that surfaces at the end of "Wanderer's Night Song" articulates the unarticulated and speaks the unspeakable—and not because it knows but simply because it says anything at all. That falling-silent will be rest and not disappearance [*Vergehen*] (which is what the verses promise), whether or not a return will occur (the question posed by the tears), and the affirmation that the one who rests will be the same as the one who wakes (the comfort offered by the "you")—the words that are voiced can say all this only because it was once promised [*zugesprochen*] to them. Accordingly, the simple act of utterance grants the nameless voice the same calm [*Beruhigung*] of which it speaks. A guarantee that itself has no guarantee—because there is no Other of the Other[13]—ferries stupefied bodies over Absence.

To be sure, everyone takes up words [*jeder nimmt die Wörter in den Mund*] that name the body and its absences. The same hand also added the last two lines to "Wanderer's Night Song." But since "the subject . . . receives from the Other even the message he himself sends,"[14] they are repeated [*nachgesprochen*] and derive their power only from repetition [*Nachgesprochensein*]. There is further evidence of this occurrence in Goethe's works. Werther, in love for Lotte, speaks in the same way that "Wanderer's Night Song" does when it follows the words of a nameless voice:

> Yesterday as I was leaving she gave me her hand and said, "Adieu, dear Werther."—Dear Werther! It was the first time she had ever called me dear and it pierced me through and through. I repeated it to myself a hundred times and last night, getting ready for bed and muttering all sorts of things, I suddenly said, "Goodnight *dear* Werther"—and laughed out loud to hear it.[15]

This nocturnal exchange between an I and its double derives all its power from a promise. It rests on the symbolic gift of the Other, who alone can bid good-

night. The "third person" with whom Wilhelm Meister compares "our different self," then, is anything but a simple allegory; it rules the "self" itself—the very self that turns out to be imaginary. It is just that difficult to find rest on one's own. Only the pledge of Lotte's words makes Werther "dear" to himself. He—who is not lying with her body—falls asleep to the echo of her speech instead. In dreams, the hypnagogic discourse of the Other fulfills the desire of a love that was always already the wish to be loved. Werther's love for Lotte, after all, is "constituted not by [his] biological dependence, but by [his] dependence on her love, that is, by [his] desire for her desire."[16] And precisely on this point—as the novel declares explicitly—Lotte is the "image [*Ebenbild*]" of her mother.[17] The lonesome wanderer on the Kickelhahn and the lonesome sleeper in Wahlheim: both experience a literal pacification [*Stillung*] when the hypnagogic voice of the Mother returns. They get what Werther himself says he "needed" from the beginning: a "lullaby."[18]

2.

> Indeed, the children's nurses know the virtues of lilies in the nursery, heavenly theriacs, sedatives [*Requies Nicolai*], garlic potations, and opium—and when nothing else is to be done, humming and rocking.

The bitter scorn of an anonymous reform pedagogue says it: Western lands did not always employ such gentle methods of inducing sleep as "Wanderer's Night Song" takes for granted. At the end of the eighteenth century, when the gaze of the new anthropological sciences [*Menschenwissenschaften*] discovered where infants lay, it saw that naked violence surrounded them. Nurses and attendants calmed the cries of children by means that no friend of mankind could approve. Venerable methods of making children sleepy and putting them to bed included drugs, such as spook about in disreputable medicines (which is to say, once they shed their masks, opium), and a method called *Steckwickeln*, which involved placing the child on a board the length of its body, swaddling it tightly, and making a kind of mummy.[19]

Finally, methods involved the cradle, of which another reformer declared:

> Far more mistaken is the generally prevalent custom among the peasantry . . . to force the children to sleep: one seeks to achieve this through constant, reckless rocking, by swinging and shaking, through bearing up and down and vigorous singing; these methods are sooner suited . . . to produce, at most, a passing daze, which gives the first inducement to stupidity and idiocy.[20]

Received means of putting children to bed and getting them to sleep did not acknowledge the soul of the child. The infant was treated as a body like any other. Practices did not take into account a relationship that, ever since the Age of Goethe, has given rise to innumerable celebrations and hymns: the interaction between mother and child. This is why, in the eyes of the pedagogical and psychological reformers who at the end of the eighteenth century discovered the infant as the main task of all cultural work,[21] prevalent methods all led "to stupidity and idiocy"—such are the attributes of a simple [*schlicht*] body when the gaze of psychologists assesses it. The children of nascent European states needed a soul, and so reform was a straightforward matter of declaring mothers "irreplaceable"[22] and putting them where for centuries nursemaids and attendants had stood.

With that, all the methods of pacification and putting-to-rest changed. The cradle fell into disuse. Twenty-five years after being lulled to sleep in "an oversized cradle of walnut inlaid with ivory and ebony," Goethe shared with his mother "that such rocking cribs have fallen out of fashion altogether"[23] because of the new freedom accorded to children. A great campaign of enlightenment against swaddling babies was initiated. Drugs were replaced by the gentle voice of the Mother.

A mother's gentle voice is a multipurpose instrument. It "records over" [*überspielt*] what is already there and puts harmony where differences otherwise tear at Occidental schemes of knowledge—the senses and the intellect, instinct and art, bodily discipline and cultivation of the soul [*Körpertechniken und Seelenherstellung*]. Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, who not only founded the modern elementary school system [*Volksschulwesen*] but also "elevated" the "relationship between mother and child to the prototype of pedagogical relations in general,"[24] explicitly declared as much. Inasmuch as the new rules of infant care are taken to heart—that is, nursemaids and attendants are excluded—"the child first hears" (and hears only) the voice of its mother[25]: "The first feeling of a sound's relationship with the object that produced it is the feeling of connection between your voice and you, Mother!" (317).

This rule of an originary and indelible inscription is to be taken to heart by the mother and promptly applied:

> Bring forth tones yourself, clap, strike, stamp, speak, sing—in short, make sounds so that [the child] is happy and clings to you, so that it loves you; may lofty grace flow from your lips: please him through your voice, too, as no one else does, and do not believe that you need any particular art for this. The sweetness of the speech that flows from your heart is infinitely more valuable for the education [*Bildung*] of your

> child than any art of song—wherein, in any event, you will always stand behind the nightingale. (319f.)

First of all, the maternal voice—whose "grace" [*Anmuth*] and sweetness [*Lieblichkeit*] inspire love in return—stands in marked contrast to the "vigorous singing" of nurses and maids. It has an immediate effect on the body of the child. This voice *is* nature and yields nature [*ist Natur und geht auf Natur*]. For this reason, the nightingale alone is its standard—and it offers the model for all birdsong:

> Mother! with whom I speak—as soon as the child recognizes your voice as yours, then the circle of what it understands enlarges, and it gradually recognizes the connection between the song of birds and the bird, barking and the dog, whirring and the spinning wheel. (318)

At the same time, however, a mother's voice represents that unique and paradoxical aspect of nature, which by itself and without undergoing any alteration, can make its own transition to art, education, and culture:

> Your instinct does not force you just to babble [*vorlallen*] notes to cheer and distract [your child]; this same instinct compels you to speak before, and to, him, and to pronounce words to him, even though you know that he does not yet associate a thought [*Begriff*] with them. (268)

Instinct makes the mother speak; that is, it makes her pass beyond instincts. Bodily desire [*Körperlust*] makes the infant hear; that is, it induces the child to receive concepts that will go beyond its body and articulate it. In this way, reformers' message of *antiphysis* glides miraculously from instinct to instinct. All violence seems to have been excluded from the acquisition of language. Indeed, all efforts aim for precisely such banishment. The words that motherly instinct instills in the instinct of the child represent the exact opposite of inherited educational practices [*überliefertes Bildungsgut*]. Whereas school makes the child "parrot whole sentences to itself and to the teacher in a language that it has not learned and that is not at all the language it speaks daily" (321), maternal instruction begins with what is nearest to the child and altogether everyday—with the field of perception and the child's own body. Pestalozzi's *Book of Mothers*, his guide for learning to notice children and speaking to them, begins by "teaching the mother to show her child the outer parts of his body and to name them."[26] Articulation is linked to deixis, which takes away all power from the sovereign willfulness [*Willkür*] with which a given culture articulates—that is to say, dismembers—bodies.[27]