
The Historical-Political Semantics of Asymmetric Counterconcepts

Pugnant ergo inter se mali et mali; item pugnant inter se mali et boni; boni vero et boni, si perfecti sunt, inter se pugnare non pussunt.
Augustine, *De Civ. Dei* XV, 5

Names for oneself and for one's family belong to the everyday life of men and women. They articulate the identity of a person and of that person's relation to others. In this process there might be agreement on the use of such expressions, or each might use for his opposite a term different from that employed by the latter. It makes a difference whether mutually recognized names are spoken (e.g., Hans and Liese), or whether these are replaced by abusive nicknames. So, for instance, among relatives there is a difference between the use of "mother" and "son," and "old bag" and "layabout." In the same way, it makes a difference if certain functions are defined as "employer" and "employee" or as "exploiter" and "human material."

In the one case, one's names for oneself and names others call one coincide, whereas, in the other, they diverge. The first case implies a mutual linguistic recognition, while, in the second, the characterization takes on a disparaging meaning such that the subjects, while feeling themselves addressed, do not feel properly recognized. These conflicting classifications, employed only in one direction and in an unequal fashion, are what will here be called "asymmetric" classifications.

The efficacy of mutual classifications is historically intensified as soon as they are applied to groups. The simple use of "we" and "you" establishes a boundary and is in this respect a condition of possibility

determining a capacity to act. But a “we” group can become a politically effective and active unity only through concepts which are more than just simple names or typifications. A political or social agency is first constituted through concepts by means of which it circumscribes itself and hence excludes others; and therefore, by means of which it defines itself. A group may empirically develop on the basis of command or consent, of contract or propaganda, of necessity or kinship, and so forth; but however constituted, concepts are needed within which the group can recognize and define itself, if it wishes to present itself as a functioning agency. In the sense used here, a concept does not merely denote such an agency, it marks and creates the unity. The concept is not merely a sign for, but also a factor in, political or social groupings.

There are innumerable concepts of this kind which, while being concretely applied, have a general utility. An acting agency might, therefore, define itself as a polis, people, party, *Stand*, society, church, or state without preventing those excluded from the agency from conceiving of themselves in turn as a polis, people, and so on. Such general and concrete concepts can be used on an equal basis and can be founded upon mutuality. They are transferable.

It is certainly true, however, that historical agencies tend to establish their singularity by means of general concepts, claiming them as their own. For a Catholic, “the Church” might be only that to which he belongs; similarly, “the Party” for a Communist, and “the Nation” for the French Revolutionary. The use of the definite article here serves the purpose of political and social singularization.

In such cases, a given group makes an exclusive claim to generality, applying a linguistically universal concept to itself alone and rejecting all comparison. This kind of self-definition provokes counterconcepts which discriminate against those who have been defined as the “other.” The non-Catholic becomes heathen or traitor; to leave the Communist party does not mean to change party allegiance, but is rather “like leaving life, leaving mankind” (J. Kuczynski); not to mention the negative terms that European nations have used for each other in times of conflict and which were transferred from one nation to another according to the changing balance of power.

Thus there are a great number of concepts recorded which function to deny the reciprocity of mutual recognition. From the concept of the one party follows the definition of the alien other, which definition

can appear to the latter as a linguistic deprivation, in actuality verging on theft. This involves asymmetrically opposed concepts. The opposite is not equally antithetical. The linguistic usage of politics, like that of everyday life, is permanently based on this fundamental figure of asymmetric opposition. This will be examined in the course of the following discussion.

There is one qualification, however: we will deal here only with pairs of concepts that are characterized by their claim to cover the whole of humanity. Thus we are dealing with binary concepts with claims to universality. The totality of humanity can, of course, also be comprehended without remainder by classificatory couples involving a mutual recognition of the parties involved (for instance, men and women, parents and children, juveniles and adults, the sick and the healthy). These terms comprehend humanity as a whole by introducing their natural structure. Notwithstanding the susceptibility to political accentuation and explosiveness which all these terms once had or will have, it is not possible to directly transfer such naturalistic expressions into political language.

The historical world, by contrast, operates for the most part with asymmetrical concepts that are unequally antithetical. Three will be examined: the contrast of Hellene and Barbarian, Christian and Heathen, and finally, the contrast that emerges within the conceptual field of humanity between human and nonhuman, superhuman and subhuman.

Before we begin to more closely analyze these counterconcepts and the various ways in which their negation is expressed, it is desirable to make three additional methodological points which will enable us to more exactly specify our problematic. The first concerns the relation between concept and history; the second, the historical aspect; and the third, the structural aspect of counterconcepts.

1. Historical movement always takes place within zones mutually delimited by functioning agents, and it is in terms of these zones that the agents simultaneously effect their conceptual articulation. But neither social nor political history is ever identical with its conceptual self-expression. History can only be written if the correspondence between material that was once comprehended conceptually and the actual material (methodologically derived from the first) is made the subject of investigation. This correspondence is infinitely variable and must not be mistaken as an identity; otherwise, every source that was

conceptually unambiguous would already be the history that was sought within it. In general, language and politico-social content coincide in a manner different from that available or comprehensible to the speaking agents themselves.

It is a quality of political language that its concepts, while being related to agencies (institutions, groups, and so forth) and their movement, are not assimilated by them. In the same way, history is not the sum of all articulated namings and characterizations in political language, nor of political dialogue and discussion. Similarly, history is not assimilated by the concepts through which it is comprehended. What is at stake here is the avoidance of a short circuit between conceptual language and political history. This difference between history and its “conceptualization” will be charted with the methods of historicopolitical semantics.

2. Especial care is called for in investigating what are not simply individual concepts but pairs of concepts whose world-historical effectiveness cannot be doubted. One can certainly assume that rigorous dualisms—above all, those which divide all of humanity into two groups with opposing modalities—were politically efficacious and will always be so. On the other hand, the historical record does show that all these global dualisms formerly in use were overtaken by historical experience and to this extent refuted. The suggestively autonomous force of political counterconcepts should not tempt one to regard relations of reciprocity implicit within such couples (and often created by them) as if they continued ever onward in the form of this once-established dualism. Past antitheses have tended to be too crude to serve as categories of historical knowledge. Above all, no historical movement can be adequately evaluated in terms of the self-same counterconcepts used by the participants of such a movement as a means of experiencing or comprehending it. Ultimately, that would mean the perpetuation of a victor’s history by his seeking to make permanent a temporary dominance through the negation of the defeated.

Concepts employable in a particularly antithetical manner have a marked tendency to reshape the various relations and distinctions among groups, to some degree violating those concerned, and in proportion to this violation rendering them capable of political action. The recognition of such a dynamic requires that former linguistic usage must itself be placed in question. A distinction will therefore be made

here between past historical usage of antithetical concepts and the semantic structures they are invested with.

3. The following reflections will not be concerned with historical process or the emergence and articulation of dualistic counterconcepts, their change, and the history of their likely effects. It is obvious that historical investigation cannot dispense with the posing and consideration of such questions. The methodological intention of the following is, however, on a different level: the structure of argument within once historically extant, dualistic, linguistic figures will be examined for the manner in which the given counterpositions were negated.

It must be admitted that the structural aspect implies the historical, and vice versa. In this way, the sources can be read in two ways at once: as the historical utterance of agencies, and as the linguistic articulation of specific semantic structures.

It is characteristic of counterconcepts that are unequally antithetical that one's own position is readily defined by criteria which make it possible for the resulting counterposition to be only negated. This is what makes up the counterconcepts' political efficacy but at the same time renders them unsuitable for scientific knowledge. In Kant's words, "... dividing things in half leads to the placing together of heterogeneous objects and not at all to a specific concept."¹ The recognition of historical bisections in their linguistically asymmetric forms requires the examination of common and distinguishable structures.

Once they had emerged historically, the conceptual pairs Hellene-Barbarian, Christian-Heathen, Human-Nonhuman indicated particular modes of experience and expectational possibilities whose given arrangement could turn up under different labels and in different historical situations. Each of the antitheses to be examined here has its own structures, but it also has structures in common with the others. These structures are continually evident in political language, even if the words or names alter with time. The structure of the counterconcepts does not depend solely on the words from which the conceptual pairs are composed. The words are replaceable, whereas the asymmetric structure of the argument survives.

Considered from the viewpoint of their structure, conceptual pairs can be separated from their original conditions of emergence and their former concrete context: they are historically transferable. This makes possible a history of the effects of concepts, and on this trans-

ferability is based the structural property that certain experiential frameworks are repeatedly applicable and open the way for analogies.

Of course, specific pairs of concepts change their nature and consequences in the course of time. Experiential spaces shift their ground and new horizons of expectation open up. Linguistic possibilities develop or lapse into disuse, old meanings fade or are enriched, such that temporal sequence is just as irreversible in the usage of pairs of concepts, driving onward their unmistakable singularity.

The methodological antinomy that prevails between the linguistic figures of historical singularity and structural iterability is merely a consequence of what was established above: history is never identical with its linguistic registration and formulated experience, whether this is expressed orally or in writing, but at the same time, that it is not independent of these linguistic articulations. Our counterconcepts then prove the iterability, as well as the novelty, of the situations they refer to. But these situations are themselves at once the same and something other than what their linguistic self-registration can make known.

The following three sections thus are subject to a methodological limitation. The vast quantity of material that is structured and stylized by counterconcepts cannot be exposed here. Instead, the semantic structure of a few politically employed and asymmetrically applicable counterconcepts will be outlined in the course of their emergence. This will make clear how the structure of the first pair, Hellene and Barbarian, continuously reappears; that particular features of the second pair, Christian and Heathen, were contained in the first; and finally the counterconcepts that emerge in the semantic field of Humanity in general contain both Greek and Christian elements without, however, being reducible to them.

The accumulation of temporalities finally makes it possible for the structure of all these counterconcepts to appear together. Today we have both antithetical linguistic figures appearing alongside each other, and the contemporaneity of the noncontemporaneous which is contained within a single pair of concepts, thanks to the historical diversity of the zones of experience that this pair comprehends.

Very roughly, the three pairs can be distinguished in the following way: in the case of the Hellene and the Barbarian, we have, in the first place, mutually exclusive concepts, the groups to which they refer (also in the realm of reality) being spatially separable. The alien other

is negatively marked off but (and this represented a historical achievement) also recognized as being so. The concepts impute naturalistic constants to the relevant groups, and these constants do not appear to be freely disposable. This quickly changes, however. The territorialization of the concepts is followed by their spiritualization, and this was to be continually and variously repeated in the succeeding history.

Second, the counterconcepts are related. That which the Greeks only suggest becomes central for the couple Christian-Heathen. The relation of reciprocity is subject to a temporal loading, which determines a future displacement that can go as far as abolishing the Other. The temporalization of the counterconcepts leads to a shift in the relation of experiential space and the horizon of expectation. From this arises a dynamic which negates the existing Other, a dynamic hardly known to non-Christian Antiquity.

Third, the invocation of humanity involves a claim to generality which is so total that no human being appears to be excluded. If counterconcepts that intend to annihilate the Other emerge nevertheless, they can be characterized by an ideological fungibility which, by definition, departs from earlier concepts. The capacity for differentiating the inner and the outer, which is a property of the first conceptual couple, appears to vanish within the horizon of a unitary mankind. This capacity does, however, creep into the new formation and leads to consequences that we live with today.

Hellenes and Barbarians

“Barbarian” has until the present generally been usable in a neutral scientific language, as well as in a more charged political language. On the other hand, the expression “Hellene,” which had originally defined “Barbarian” negatively, survives only as a historical or specific name for a people.² The classical conceptual couple thus belongs to history, though it displays model-like features which recur throughout the course of history.

The words existed as independent terms before being arranged as polarities. All non-Greeks were treated as Barbarians before the Greeks collectively dubbed themselves Hellenes.³ From the sixth to the fourth centuries B.C. the conceptual couple of Hellene and Barbarian became a universal figure of speech which included all of humanity through assignation to one of two spatially separated groups. This figure was

asymmetrical. Contempt for aliens, stammerers, and the incoherent was expressed by a series of negative epithets degrading the whole of humanity beyond Hellas. The Barbarians not only were formally non-Greek, or aliens, but also, as aliens, were defined negatively. They were cowardly, unskillful, gluttonous, brutish, and so on. For every definition there was empirical evidence: contact with overseas traders, the mass of foreign slaves, devastation of the homeland by invading Persians, and similar experiences could easily be generalized without seeming to need revision.

The Greek intelligentsia was certainly clear-sighted enough to notice deviations from this pattern. For example, Herodotus came to realize the relativity of the concept “Barbarian,”⁴ and Plato criticized the lack of equilibrium in the conceptual couple arising from the divergence of typification and the criterion of division.⁵ The name of one people—the Hellenes—became the counterconcept for all the rest, who were assembled under a collective name which was simply the negative of Hellene. Asymmetry was thus semantically based on this conscious contrast of a specific name with a generic classification.

It was certainly possible for the Greeks to point to features that they had in common and which the aliens lacked: the creation of the *polis* as a civil constitution opposed to oriental monarchy, their physical and intellectual education, their language and art, their oracles and cult festivals—these united the Hellenic peoples but also excluded the Barbarians. Thus there was evidence that appeared to confirm the positive image of the Hellenes as mild, educated, free citizens. The “barbaric” fashion in which Hellenes actually treated themselves and where their self-image was correct, where it was not, and where it was wishful thinking, were described soberly and sympathetically by Jacob Burckhardt.⁶

Aside from the relevance or irrelevance of this dualistic evaluation, the conceptual couple assumed a semantic structure which made political experience and expectation possible while at the same time restricting it. This is apparent in the arguments that were used to justify the differentiation of the two concepts. Plato, with typical seriousness, but certainly with an intention to provoke, reduced the contrast to one of nature. *Physei* the Hellenes are a distinct species that degenerates with increasing intermingling with Barbarians.⁷ From this naturalistic definition he draws the political conclusion that any dispute among Greeks is an argument among brothers (*stasis*), a civil

war, and therefore pathological. A war with Barbarians—*polemos*—on the other hand, is justified by nature. Conflicts among Greeks should be conducted in a mild manner and with minimal force, while wars against Barbarians should aim at annihilation.⁸ This asymmetrical dualism, then, contributes to the creation of a political interior which is shielded from the entirety of the outside world.

This maxim was given greater edge when Aristotle designated the Barbarians as natural slaves and described the Greeks by contrast as optimally combining strength and intelligence and who, if they were to form a single *politeia*, would be able to rule over all Barbarians.⁹ In support of his view that the Barbarians are natural servants, he cited Euripedes' verse, according to which the Greeks are destined to rule over the Barbarians, and not vice versa. This verse could be taken in many ways: as challenging Alexander to subjugate the Persians, but also as being of use internally. The separation of interior and exterior which had initially characterized the spatial contrast of Hellenes and Barbarians was used by Aristotle to give added support to the interior structure of rule. The counterconcepts also serve to illuminate a differentiation of domination from top to bottom. Barbarians reduced to their animal-like natural properties were suited within a *polis* to the work of Perioecians, or slaves.¹⁰ The very same barbarian characteristics that led in the East to the development of tyranny served within the community of citizens to make possible the self-rule of free Hellenes.¹¹ Hellenes and Barbarians had been so widely separated by nature that the distinction assisted in the foundation of both an internal constitution and external politics. Whereas Plato wished to deflect civil war from Hellas to the East, Aristotle restricted the title of legitimation: the asymmetry of the counterconcepts secured the preeminence of the Greek citizen both internally and externally.

The reduction of the contrast to *physis*, dividing humanity into two parts of unequal size and value could itself not be taken too far as a Hellenic argument. Derivations of this nature can be interpreted as claims to self-protection. This ideological-critical view can be found confirmed in the texts of Plato¹² and Aristotle¹³ to the degree that both authors also perceived the Barbarians in a more differentiated fashion. It was not possible to subsume all Barbarians under this dualistic concept. Aristotle had some difficulty in rebutting the sophistic argument¹⁴ according to which Hellenes, Barbarians, and slaves all were naturally equal and distinguished only by law and activity. The given

physical or spiritual properties supposedly characteristic of a free man or a slave by no means always coincided with their actual properties or with the positions they occupied,¹⁵ forming the basis for the expressions “noble heathen” or “northern soul in an eastern body.”

The naturalistic counterpoint of Hellene and Barbarian was probably tempered by archaic and diffuse ethnocentric features which were then taken up by a Greece that was becoming increasingly conscious of itself, used to typify its singularity, and thereby were generalized. This involved a degree of wishful thinking. Nevertheless, contained within this reduction of mankind into two mutually opposed but naturally associated human types is a semantic function of some political effect. The aliens remained recognized as such, even if it was with animadversion; and this is not self-evident. Within the interior of the *polis*, master and slave were related to each other and were, as humans, capable of friendship.¹⁶ Externally, the Barbarians were bound by a constitution which was determined by nature and climate, resulting in the formation of a different sort of people. This form of substantial association between political concepts and natural properties could not be easily displaced or dislodged by the conceptual couple. The constancy of concepts and of the human world, both of which only they made comprehensible, provided the foundation and limit of what could be politically experienced.

The whole of the following history is characterized in this way by the recurrence of simplified, dualistic forms encoding ethnic, *ständisch*, popular, or state agencies. These agencies, while recognizing the quasi-natural otherness of the aliens or subjects, might also despise them, but nevertheless accepted them as aliens, or claimed them as subjects. More recently, one can point to Boulainvilliers or Gobineau, whose doctrines of superimposition related to static natural entities;¹⁷ the consequences of the seemingly biological doctrine of race which the National Socialists adopted go far beyond this. Or one might recall Harold Nicolson's remark concerning a French Secretary of State who, “despite his marked francophile tendencies . . . was at heart an internationalist. He recognised that other countries, notwithstanding their barbarity, did nonetheless exist.”¹⁸

The Greeks were aware of an argument that ran counter to the naturalistic reduction and which had the affect of historically relativizing the natural duality. While it served to account for Greek superiority, it remained subsidiary, for it was not provided with theoretical foun-

dation. In Thucydides, Plato, and Aristotle we find repeated comparisons of the cultural difference prevailing between Greeks and Barbarians with that of an earlier time, when the names had not yet been placed in opposition to one another.¹⁹ Then the Greeks had shared the crudity and simplicity of barbaric customs; for instance, they appeared in contests clothed, carried weapons in times of “peace” and practiced piracy, bought women, wrote in a poor style, privileged the accuser in a trial, voluntarily elected rulers with unlimited powers, practiced exchanges in kind—all forms of behavior that are superseded with the advance of civilization and division of labor. “Many other examples could be given of the way in which ancient Hellenes lived according to the same customs that prevail among the Barbarians today.”²⁰

The dualism thus assumed a historical perspective, as we say today. The present contemporaneity of Hellene and Barbarian is perceived in terms of the noncontemporaneity of their cultural levels. Customs that changed over time were endowed with an argumentative force attributable to this elapsed time. The politicocultural comparison was not, then, simply a contractual antithesis; it was, in addition, historically mediated. The attachment of this difference, itself constituted according to origin or *physis* and not to an open future that could be projected in a progressive modality, provided the Greeks with a substantial argumentative element which later was to be quite freely adopted.²¹ Above all, it was the temporal comparison with the past that made a lasting impression.

For Jacob Burckhardt, the “real feature which significantly distinguished barbarism from culture” was contained in the question: “Where in the past and in the present does life, i.e., the distinctive comparison, begin? At what point does the merely ahistorical present cease?”²² Not that Burckhardt could have substantially adopted Greek criteria and applied them, for example, to the Egyptians, a people that he “placed in the vanguard” by virtue of their historical consciousness. Burckhardt instead assumed the Greek potential for the construction of argument. The Greek method of historical comparison was viewed by him as a lasting criterion of distinction with respect to barbarism. In a similar manner, Ernst Troeltsch was able to define the turning away from culture into barbarism as a relapse into ahistoricity.²³ While speaking at a higher level of generality—of culture and barbarism, not of Hellenes and Barbarians—both authors made use of a perception

whose historical perspective had already been opened up by the reflections of the Greeks. The alternative to barbarism was derived not only from physical and spatial properties but also from the past, without ceasing, however, to be an asymmetrical and universal alternative.

In the course of a rapidly passing Greek history, the actual polarities of the conceptual couple—attributable as they were to *physis*—did become less sharp. The Hellenic antithesis was negated by Diogenes when he privately described himself as *apolis*, *oikos*, or *patridos hester-amenos* without, however, becoming a non-Hellenic Barbarian. He coined the universalistic concept “cosmopolite” with the object of transcending the usual dualism.²⁴ The antithesis became appreciably less evident following Alexander’s forcible fusion of Greek and Barbarian. Mankind and its political organization appeared to approximately coincide, first under Alexander and later within the Roman imperium.

Within this new unity and its intellectual apprehension, as *homonoia* (or later as *concordia*) of all humanity, the older dualism was nonetheless preserved; it was simply recast, without relinquishing the continued division of all humanity into Hellenes and Barbarians under identical terms.²⁵ The distinction that had formerly been made spatially came to be deployed horizontally as a universal criterion of differentiation: “Hellene” was a person with sufficient education, whether Greek or non-Greek, who merely had to be able to speak proper Greek; the remainder were Barbarian. Thus, this new antithesis, which was organized around education, no longer derived from natural qualities; to this extent, the counterconcepts were denaturalized and stripped of all spatial connection. Linguistic usage became functionally mobile. The criterion of education was transferable, and the term “Hellene” was applicable to ever more human groups. The directly political function of the dualism—defining and promoting a condition of domination—was lost, and from that point on, the duality instead served as an indirect protection for the role of social leadership of the Hellenic educated stratum, which persisted through the political upheavals of the Diadochi period and Roman occupation.

The striking antithesis of educated Hellene and crude Barbarian could also be employed in reverse, forming an underlying and continually reemerging tradition which was cultivated in particular by the Cynics.²⁶ “Barbarian” here served as a positive contrast to a cultivated existence and its consequences. Features charged with utopianism

were twined around these simple, genuine beings who were close to nature and removed from civilization: the antithesis was turned on its side, its terms were changed, and it was put back into use. The characteristic asymmetry was thus maintained within the same experiential space, except that the counterconcept now performed the function of critique and self-criticism.

The linguistic figure was in this sense, through the exchange of terminology, historically recallable. It is not possible to investigate the analogies here, but one could cite the “noble heathen” honored (not exclusively) by the Christian knights during the Crusades,²⁷ or the *bon sauvage* with which Jesuit and Enlightener placed in question their own society of orders.²⁸ As long as there existed functioning political agencies that typified their consciousness in a movement from internality to externality, or vice versa, this asymmetric linguistic figure survived, and along with it the constantly recast and also positive concept of the Barbarian.

Even the Stoics, who never tired of criticizing the Aristotelian contrast of Hellene and Barbarian as unnatural, and who drew a parallel between cosmic order and the unity of a humanity in a civil community directed by a single ruler, did not renounce the antithesis by means of which they had secured their position with respect to the rest of mankind. Thus, Plutarch rejected even custom and language as criteria of demarcation on the grounds that they were accidental (only, however, to define virtue as a Hellenic quality and depravity as Barbarian).²⁹ The use of terminology in such a moralistic fashion removes its autonomous, systematic force.

In this respect, there appear in the Stoics other dualistic formulations that illuminate their doctrine. These must be mentioned here because of their temporal propinquity to Christianity as well as to a universalistic doctrine of mankind. Disregarding the manner in which their rigorous moral dualism³⁰ led to asymmetric concepts that approached the Hellenistic usage, which equated the educated with the Greeks and the uneducated with the Barbarians³¹ (as, for example, when Chrysippus confronted the *spoudaioi* with the *phauloi*³²), the Stoics did employ a form of doctrine of the two realms, except that the realms were not related to each other by negation.

The Stoics considered the cosmos, governed by *logos*, as their home in which all humankind—freeman and slave, Hellene and Oriental, just as much as the gods and the stars—had a part. Political agencies

were built into this cosmopolis, although the Stoics could never have identified the supervening with the empirical order.³³ The assignation of the earthly realm to megalopolis, to cosmopolis, was conceived as an apparent equality or as mimesis³⁴ which, while diminishing the difference of logos from experience, did not, however, entirely seek to do away with such difference. The cosmic law which guided the Stoics and which provided the basis for a life ruled by reason, when properly understood, also guided the external laws of human society. Even outbreaks of unrest, civil wars, and the sufferings they brought were integrated in a higher order which would, for some time to come, intervene repeatedly. Mediating the tension between cosmic reason and situations of political conflict was, for the Stoics, a constant challenge in their practice of philosophical reasoning. In contrast to the later Augustinian doctrine of the two realms,³⁵ a universal realm was implicit within the possible thought and experience of the cosmologically oriented Hellenes and the Hellenistic Romans. The series *familia* to *urbs* to *orbis* could be arranged as continuous steps determined by its *logos*.³⁶

Within this experiential space, the drastic dual formulations of the Stoics, however much they comprehended the entire human world, performed a function different from that of the contrast of "Hellene" and "Barbarian," or "Christian" and "Heathen." A human being could at the same time be a citizen, but a Christian could not simultaneously be Heathen, or a Hellene, Barbarian. "Duas res publicas animo complectamur, alteram magnam et vere publicam, qua dii atque homines continentur . . . alteram cui nos adscripsit conditio nascendi."³⁷ According to Seneca, the first fatherland was the cosmos, and the second, that to which one was by chance born. "Quidam eodem tempore utrique rei publicae dant operam, majori minorique, quidam tantum minori quidam tantum majori. Huic majori rei publicae et in otio deservire possumus, immo vero nescio an in otio melius. . . ."

We do not here have mutually exclusive concepts but rather supplementary concepts of varying magnitude, which are intended to mediate between the political tasks of the day and the general philosophical apprehension of the world. The stylistic dualism does not depend upon negation.

This is likewise the case for Marcus Aurelius,³⁸ who as Antonius had Rome as a fatherland, and as a human being had the cosmos, without having been able to attempt a union of the two orders (for

instance, by conferring civil rights on all subjects). As a citizen, Epictetus also was conscious of two *polis*—one a member of the cosmos to which gods and humans belonged, and the other a member of the political community, which he conceived of as an image of the cosmic polis.³⁹ Metaphorically, each refers to the other, even if the superordinate *polis* embodied those laws of reason that provided a more important precedent for life than did the immaterial things of the city. The emperor might see to the securing of external peace, but one's own peace was to be found within.⁴⁰

This and similar dualisms stemming from the later Stoics, who had a more distanced relation to politics, have resonances that affected the antithesis of Christian and Heathen.⁴¹ No epochal experience, no common signature of Stoic and Christian language can, however, conceal the fact that different conceptual couples are involved here. The Stoics did not consider the cosmically ordained order as polar to the political world; dualistically formulated concepts served solely to render their tension discernible and bearable and ultimately reveal it as irrelevant. No matter how much a Christianity adapted to an inner world took up such arguments to justify its God, the Paulinian-Augustinian conception of the world led to series of negations which placed in question everything the Stoics had previously sought to mediate.

Long before this, the contrast of Hellene and Barbarian had grown dim. It was relativized with the entry, after the Romans and the Christians, of a *tertium genus*⁴² into the domain of action represented by the Mediterranean. Cicero had emphasized that the distinction of *graeci* from *barbari* was either purely nominal and hence devoid of meaning, or that it related to customs, in which case Romans and Greeks were equal.⁴³ The triad of Roman, Hellene, and Barbarian became widely used.⁴⁴ Barbarians once again retreated beyond the borders of the Empire that supposedly coincided with the known *oikumene*. There then emerged Germans and alien soldiers, described as *barbari* and proud of the name.

Since then, the chain can be extended: to the Middle Ages with its "barbaric" Saracens, Avars, Hungarians, Slavs, and Turks and farther to modern times with their imperial ideologies. The linguistic figure was preserved to the degree that there was a pole opposite Barbarian which was open to occupation, and which thereby shielded or extended one's given position through negation.

Christians and Heathens

The entry of the Christians into Mediterranean world history rendered the former characterizations inaccurate. Even when their sects were regarded as “barbaric,” Christians could not be comprehended by the dualism Hellene-Barbarian. They recruited from both camps. Not only was the meaning of this traditional antithesis superseded by the new religion, but also the semantic structure of the counterconcepts coined by the Christians was novel.

Within the immediate expectations of the apostolic communities there was at first no concept for “Christians,” who regarded themselves as incomparable with Romans, Hellenes, or Jews (the name was given to them by others [Acts 11.26]); neither did the name “Heathen” initially exist as a collective term for non-Christians. At first, use of available dualities or counterconcepts continued, although they were related in a different manner. The linguistic usage of the Pauline mission no longer included concepts of division and distinction, but rather collective concepts for “all men” to whom the Gospel was directed (1 Tim. 2.4; Rom. 5.18).

Thus, as far as the Jews were concerned, Paul divided men according to whether they were circumcised or uncircumcised, but to all of whom he appealed impartially (Gal. 2.7). From a Hellenic point of view, he distinguished between Greeks and Barbarians (which Luther translated as *Ungriechen*, non-Greek), or between the wise and the unwise, to whom he was equally indebted (Rom. 1.14). He used another formulation in gathering together humanity as Hellenes and Jews, in which, rather than referring to Hellenes, he used the term *ethnai*, those coexisting with the Jewish people (*laos*). It was humanity in general that was continually the subject of address; human differences were erased so that the way could be opened from “Jewish Christians” to “Heathen Christians.”⁴⁵ Jews and Hellenes are different addressees of the mission, but they are not divided by the alternative that Christianity offers them.

The real antitheses derive from true belief, for instance, when Paul, initially considering internal divisions, distinguishes between believers and unbelievers in a heretical community (1 Cor. 14.22) and when he goes a step further and introduces the separation as a criterion of true belief: “For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you” (1 Cor. 11.19).

Proper receptivity to the Gospel of Christ constituted the basis upon which a negative series could be built and which ultimately characterizes all unbelievers negatively: they are *asbeia*, rooted in *adikia* (Rom. 1.18), or Hellenes and Jews “all under sin” (Rom. 3.9). In the words of Karl Barth, “Whoever says mankind, says unredeemed mankind.”⁴⁶

Hence, mediation is possible between the contrasting figures drawn from belief and traditional terminology. Paul went further, however, in the use of counterconcepts which proved to be of assistance in the foundation of his mission through their comprehension of all humanity. He developed from them linguistic paradoxes which were enriched by apocalyptic imagery. These paradoxes provided the outline for the claim of exclusivity which later had an influence on the empirically founded antithesis of Christian and Heathen.

Paul consciously confronted the noncomparable so that the implausibly apparent might come into being through negation of the empirical world. In Col. 3.11 and Gal. 3.28, there is a general denial of the usual dualities, of all the counterconcepts which signify the totality of humanity: through belief in Christ, one is neither Hellene nor Barbarian, circumcised nor uncircumcised, Barbarian nor Scythian, freeman nor servant, man nor woman.⁴⁷ All positions and negations of humanity, people, order, race, and religion are transcended for those redeemed by Christ. The Pauline negation is more radical than previously appeared possible. The linguistic antithesis of Christian and all humanity is no longer asymmetric; the denial of asymmetry accompanies it so that the certainty of salvation might be assured. The contrast between all of humanity and the baptized is not any more quantifiable, after the fashion of former categorical names; what happens instead is that the reference group is doubled. Every person should become a Christian if he wishes to evade eternal damnation.

The Pauline dualism—here, all of humanity; there, those saved by Christ—permits of only one solution if the paradox is not to remain in place. The Christian, or more precisely, he who lives in Christ, is the new man who has done away with the old (Col. 3.9, Eph. 4.24). In this way it is possible to negatively confront the totality of previous humanity with the (potential) generality of Christian humanity. “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. . . . Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (2 Cor. 5.14, 17)

The Pauline negation is no longer organized spatially, but is predominantly temporal.⁴⁸ By contrast with the Greek perspective on the past, which merely deduced the ruling contrast of Hellene and Barbarian historically, temporal tension structures the Pauline antithesis itself. All the existing peoples—Hellenes, *ethnai*, *gentes*, and so forth—who became defined in a Christian perspective as “Heathens,” *gentiles*, or *pagani*, belong as such to the past. By virtue of the death of Christ, the future belongs to Christians. The future bears the new world.

It is this temporal implication that differentiates the Pauline dualism from those considered previously. The parties involved were, in principle, not reducible to territory, as was initially the case with Hellene and Barbarian. The contrast was just as little interpretable as a comparison, as was suggested by the antithesis of educated and uneducated and as was implied by the later form of Hellene and Barbarian. The Pauline dualism likewise is not susceptible to elaboration as a universal and as a concrete, specific meaning, as was the Stoic opposition of man and citizen.

The history that was approaching shows that it was these three other predetermined, experiential frameworks, manifested in the form of linguistic antitheses, which continually resurfaced. Antitheses coined using the concept of the (Pauline) Christian were also impregnated by them. In proportion to the degree to which the church institutionalized itself, its doctrine became morally based, and its believers disciplined; it became more difficult to redeem the Pauline paradox. Alternative positions were adopted from which new negations could be developed by resurrecting older linguistic possibilities.

In this way the counterpoints of Christian and Heathen could be territorialized as soon as the spiritual concept of the Christians was established in the form of a visible church. This is as true of the Constantinian theology of the imperial church as of the period of the Crusades. Alternatively, the relation of the Christians to the (still existing) world was spiritualized to such an extent that the Stoic pattern of inner and outer worlds became usable once more.⁴⁹ One could remain a Christian without ceasing to be Hellene or Barbarian, Frank or Roman, king or peasant, freeman or slave, man or woman. The territorial or spiritual reformation of the Pauline paradox contained the basis of its chance of survival.

Characteristic of this rising, repeatedly rethought and rearranged bilaterality, is the ambivalence of the concept of *christianitas*. This sig-

nified both the functioning unity of the believers (“Christendom”) and the extent and nature of the actual belief (“Christianity”) that was not susceptible to firm territorial or institutional association.⁵⁰

Nevertheless, the temporal implication of all conceptual couples derivative of Christianity was preserved, and this has been decisive for subsequent history. With respect to a future containing the Last Judgment, a judgment which would enact the last division of all, every counterconcept originating from “Christian” contained a lasting principle of distinction and distribution.

Beyond this, it was inherent temporal tension that made it possible for the antithesis of humanity and Christianity to continually transform itself. The chronological range between “old world” and “new world,” despite and because of the impossibility of realizing it on earth, rendered the Pauline mode of expression particularly usable and transformable. It could be adapted to all situations without having to sacrifice any of its effectiveness. This will next be shown for a few linguistic expressions which subsequently emerged.

The Christian people—in Tertullian’s words, *gens totius orbis*—for all their expectation and indeed certainty of salvation, occupied the very same world that was ruled by unbelievers, even if they thought the world due to be transformed. Consequently, the occupants of this earth necessarily had to be organized into two mutually exclusive categories. It is a measure of the slow pervasion of the Christian view that the previous counterconcepts were, as a whole, reversed in their polarity. Thus the polytheistic Hellene became simply a Heathen. “Hellene,” already a name for a people and an index of education, was (in spite of the continued use of these semantic elements) ultimately theologized into a counterconcept for “Christian,” the way being prepared by Paul. “Hellene” became synonymous with *apistos*, *paganus*, and *gentilis*; *hellenismos* then meant “paganism,” and *hellenizein*, “to be paganistically disposed.”⁵¹ Following this reclassification of the word, the Hellenes of Constantinople, once they were Christianized, had to rename themselves: they became *rhomaioi*, despite having resisted this name for centuries. Only in this way were they able, as Christian citizens, to combine the title of legitimacy of the Roman Empire with the salvational claim of the general Church. The success of the new antithesis is demonstrated by the fact that, in the fourth century, even “Hellene” and “Barbarian” could converge. The fact that former “Hel-

lenes” and “Barbarians” were followers of many gods place them in the same category within and beyond the frontier.

Because the continued existence of the two human groups had been distinguished only along theological lines, geographical difference was transformed into chronological difference. The groups’ spatial contrast had to be chronologically arranged in such a way that the victory of Christianity could be secured in advance. This is shown in the henceforth customary trinity (Christian–Jew–Heathen) by means of which the whole of mankind was comprehended until the Late Middle Ages.⁵² Ultimately, this is a matter of a duality which is differentiated only along a temporal dimension. By believing in God the creator and sharing the Old Testament, Jews and Christians move together; theologically, however, they are so joined only to the point of Christ’s appearance. Up to this point, Jews had the same advantage as the Heathens, but the challenge of the Gospel and their refusal of it places them in the same camp as the Heathens. The valency of the concepts alters according to historical situation: *sub specie Dei* Jews and Heathens are confronted with the same alternative: be converted or perish.

The polemic conducted by Origenes against Celsus demonstrates the extent to which it was precisely this eschatological dimension that proved capable of illuminating anew the hypostasized but unrealized unity of the world at peace.⁵³ Celsus considered it desirable that all peoples—Hellenes and Barbarians, Europeans, Asians, and Libyans—might live united under a single law. Confronted with the impossibility of fulfilling this hope, he gave it up. Origenes declared that this state of peace, described, for instance, in Zeph. 3.8–9, could be achieved for all men possessing reason, but only subsequent to the great turning point marked by the future Judgment, however temporary such a turn might be considered. In this way, Origenes, in his diagnosis of the disputed reality, moved very close to Celsus; a unity of the world is not possible, he said, but added, “not yet.” Prophecy went beyond this. In the state of things to come, all would be peaceably united.

The emergent difficulties apparent in spiritual, territorial, and eschatological interpretation of the contrast of Christ and the world were solved by Augustine. This was effected by his doctrine of the two *civitates*, providing a surprising, relatively coherent, and thus lasting solution. He was primarily responding to a specific situation.

The singularity of the situation—the invasion of the principal world city by the Goths—imposed a similarly unique problem upon the

Christians, who had for the past century concerned themselves with inwardly adapting to the Roman Empire. This sudden flood of historical events rendered the Christians apparently responsible for the catastrophe: Paganism had made Rome great, whereas Christianity had brought it down. An exonerating response was as hard to find as this *post hoc ergo propter hoc* explanation was self-evident. The Church had assimilated itself to pagan myths and, following the sound ideas of a Eusebius or a Prudentius, had attached the rule of Christ to the persistence of Rome. This situation not only robbed Christians of an easy answer, but the capture of Rome by Barbarians seemed to confirm the accusation. Even Christians saw their Church placed in question, because eschatological speculation had focused on the end of Rome; and with the actual end of Rome the Last Judgment failed to materialize.

Augustine developed his historical theology in opposition to both fronts, and in this way he was able to transcend all previously formulated solutions. So that it might be possible to free Christianity from the charge of responsibility for the fall of Rome, the situational challenge demanded that the rule of Christ and that of an earthly entity, such as the Roman Empire, be not in any way identified. His response to this problem was to attempt to demonstrate that peace on earth and the peace of God could not in any way be identical.

Thus, Augustine developed his doctrine of the two *civitates*, which comprised both Church and worldly organization and which was neither reducible to nor assimilated by them. The empire of God holds sway over the world and is present in the Church, but the inner community of believers is constantly on a pilgrimage; their empire is merely built upon hope.⁵⁴ The worldly empire, by contrast, is based on property: “Cain, quod interpretabitur possessio, terrenae conditor civitatis . . . indicat istam civitatem et initium et finem habere terrenum, ubi nihil speratur amplius, quam in hoc saeculo cerni potest.”⁵⁵

The empires relate asymmetrically to each other. They are not empires founded upon a Manichaean opposition but rather constitute—both of them still being entwined within the hierarchical laws of a created cosmic order⁵⁶—a processual occurrence whose certain but chronologically indeterminate demise will lead to the triumph of the *civitas Dei*. In this way, all worldly occurrences remained relativized, without, however, losing their singularity before the Final Judgment. Within the space of the earthly world, exposed to sin, every event assumed, in view of the final verdict, the status of a preliminary

adjudication. This amounted to a temporalization of the asymmetrical structure. Not every malefactor becomes good, but no one can become good who has not first been bad.⁵⁷

In concrete terms, this meant that the Roman Empire was transcended by the mystic unity of *civitas terrena*; it is only one, if a particularly splendid and outstanding, articulation of the sin that rules on earth. The fall of this empire is thus indicative of an unsurpassable meaning: that of the salvation one can find in *civitas Dei* and for which the believer has good cause to hope, precisely in the moment of catastrophe. The real answer Augustine gave to the decline of the universal Roman Empire did not play down earthly affliction or involve a flight to the realms of eternity, but rather was an eschatological conception of two realms that were unequally contrary. The deterritorialization or dislocation of both *civitates* and their consequent spiritualization were never taken so far that their irreversible course toward the Last Judgment, a course that was registered historically, could not be maintained. The chronological course and its irreversibility were both constitutive of the process that was to present worldly affairs to the coming Judgment, without Augustine having to concern himself with a genuine world history, which, in any case, was completely removed from his perspective. Augustine's eschatology thus became a persisting response to all worldly, historical situations that retained their singularity only in view of the ultimate division of the two realms.

Within this chronological perspective, even antitheses that are empirically perceptible assume their own valency. Augustine outlined a hierarchy of counterconcepts. Evil struggled against evil, and good against evil; only the good, to the degree that it is complete, knows no dispute. The existential order of good and evil laid down in Antiquity can also be found within this sequence, between the *civitates*. The hope of a secure existence for mankind is an illusion of Original Sin which reproduces itself. All the units of rule that Augustine had taken from the Stoics—*domus*, *urbs*, and *orbis*—are marked by the fact that no lasting conclusion to mistrust and betrayal can be found in them at a stage higher than war and, at the level of universality, civil war. Even in the highest sphere, where the believer might hope to find peace with the angels, he is not exempted from covert temptations of the Devil.⁵⁸ Despite the hierarchic arrangement of stages, therefore, the cosmos is fundamentally fissured. That universalism dissolves into the process of the two realms, within which process men are inde-

terminately entangled. Men live in a *civitas permixta*, and while their disengagement is preserved within God's decree, it is not realizable *hic et nunc*. The non-Christian also is tied to a godly order, just as, by contrast, the Christian is not absolutely certain of being saved. While the persecution of Christians by Heathens is unjust, the persecution of Heathens by Christians is, on the other hand, just.⁵⁹ The judgments handed down by God do, however, ultimately remain unknown; in secret they are just, and justifiably they are secret.⁶⁰ Quite obviously, suffering is the same for all in the world; only the sufferers are differentiated.⁶¹ To this extent, Augustine can say that whoever does not belong to the *civitas Dei* is consigned *e contrario* to eternal damnation. But this contrast remained concealed to the last.

In this fashion, Augustine created for himself a flexible potential for argument that could judge all misery at once and also be able to explain it as justified by God. The asymmetry of the contrary positions made it possible to present as just the success of evil or the misery of the good, and, of course, the reward for the good and punishment for the evil.⁶² This was possible only because the final date was not known, as was the Judgment which would separate the truly elect from the damned. The doctrine of the two realms was thus sufficiently formal to permit every concrete experience a dualistic interpretation, without renouncing the tension of a future salvation in which the true separation would be made.

Transferred into the language of politics, the Augustinian argument lent itself to a variety of uses.⁶³ The course of development of a European Church led to a change in meaning for the doctrine of the two realms, which was being applied (within) to spiritual and temporal force as well as being used (without) in a geographically more comprehensible sense as an indicator of the opposition of Christian and Heathen. The asymmetrical structure of the counterconcepts remained temporally structured: the course followed by the struggles of the two powers was not reversible.⁶⁴ "Christianity does not seek belief in Jewry; rather, Jews should seek belief in Christianity," as it was put by Ignatius of Antioch, who coined the term *christianismos*.⁶⁵ The relation of Christian to Heathen was also chronologically irreversible. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Mat. 24.14).

As Guibert of Nogent described the Crusades after 1100, "Ubi nunc paganismus est, christianitas fiat,"⁶⁶ in which spatial expansion was

thought to be temporally irreversible. It was precisely this ambivalence in a concept of Christianity apprehended in both temporal-spatial and spiritual domains which, confined within the sequence of time, lent it a particularly acute force. William of Malmesbury commented in these terms on Urban II's call for a crusade against the *inimicos Dei*. In so doing, he transformed a Stoic dual formula in a Christian fashion, encouraging the Crusaders to spare no heathens: "Nullum natalis soli caritas tricet, quia diversis respectibus Christiano totus est mundus exilium et totus mundus patria; ita exilium patria, et patria exilium."⁶⁷

One should not be overly concerned with life, but rather direct efforts toward the liberation of Jerusalem. Aside from this contemporary point, the conceptual couple in which this world was related to the next reveals the manner in which claim was laid to the whole world, to the degree that one was able to rise above it as a Christian existing in exile. The counterconcepts as alternatives were so narrowly defined that no legitimate place remained for the Heathens. By contrast with the Stoic idea of dissolving all external ties so that one might be inwardly free and at home throughout the world, this universal, dual formulation assumes here an activist, expansive sense of exclusivity directed toward the future.

Everyone was a potential Christian, as an addressee of the mission; but once one became a Christian, it was impossible to revert to being a Heathen; the backslider became, rather, a heretic. For this reason, it was necessary, according to Aquinas, to proceed more severely with heretics than with Jews and Heathens who were still at the beginning of the path to God.⁶⁸ Expressed temporally, the Heathen was "not yet" a Christian, whereas the heretic was "no longer" a Christian: as such, they had different qualities. Thus the eschatological horizon contained a processual moment in the arrangement of the counterconcepts which was capable of unleashing a greater dynamic than that inhering in the ancient counterconcepts. The Spanish Inquisition can be viewed as an extreme form of this processualization, which did not permit Jews to survive even as converts (*conversos*). This clearly can be attributed to the appearance, in the Court of Heresy, of an argumentation based on physique and race that differed from the terms of the formerly prevailing and historically transcendent eschatology.⁶⁹

Notwithstanding the temporal interpretive framework, which lent the contrast of Christian and Heathen its force and direction, the concepts were at the same time subject to an increasing territorialization,

which had as an apparently surprising consequence the concept that the Heathen could be revalued. At the beginning of the Crusades, in the eleventh century, we still find in the *Song of Roland* the formulation which presupposes unilateral exclusiveness: Christians are in the right, and Heathens are not. (*Paien unt tort e chretiens unt dreit*).⁷⁰ This simplified but nonetheless eschatologically interpretable contrast was at the same time susceptible to spatial calculation. First came the pressure of the Arabs, and then, following the counterstrokes which the occidental Christians delivered with the Crusades, the concept of Christianity consolidated its territorial association. Gregory VII could therefore refer concretely to *fines christianitatis*, and Innocent III could speak of *terrae christianorum*⁷¹ which, according to Augustine, would have meant a referral to the domain of Cain, based on *possessio*.

Similarly, pre-Christian linguistic models emerge which qualify the contrast in terms of regionality in the same way that Aristotle drew the distinction between Hellene and Barbarian. The inhabitants of Europe are described as noble and brave and who, because they live in a mild climate, are destined (following the division of the earth between Noah's children) for superiority over the sons of Ham in Africa and of Sem in Asia.⁷² Even the Barbarians reemerge, existing as non-Christians without the *christianitas*.

The opponents were indeed discriminated against in the literature of theological dispute by a long series of negative judgments: they are *infideles, impii, increduli, perfedi, inimici Dei*, enriched by the sorcery of the Devil, and moreover have black skin. To kill such Heathens as one would a dog is to do God a favor.⁷³ A growing and changing experience leads, however, to a shift in the valency of these Heathens. At first they are thought of not only in terms of theological topoi but also of ancient Barbarism: they are, as in the early knightly epics, cowardly, treasonous, monstrous, and the like. The actual designation of the enemy, however, makes lesser use of the general theological concept of the Heathen: Franks are opposed by Saracens, and one fights with Persians and Turks, but above all with persons, or with heroes, which the leading enemies eventually become.

If the opponent was initially bad because he was a Heathen, he could later become good despite being a Heathen, and in the end be noble because he was a Heathen.⁷⁴ Whether this was because one's reputation is increased if one fights with an equal foe; because a certain common honor arose which covered both fronts; or because of the

need for treaties with the superior forces of the Mohammedans: for whatever reason, recognition developed in the course of the Crusades. This was apparent in interconfessional marriages or interconfessional enfeoffment, both of which belonged to the stirring themes of courtly epic. If, in the *Song of Roland*, the corpses of the enemy were separated out, so in Wolfram the enemy bury their dead in common.⁷⁵ Praise for the noble Heathen at last became fashionable.

Not only by virtue of their territorialization, but also because of their spiritualization, the counterconcepts (as regarded by the “Christians”) took on other valencies. This can be illuminated by a comparison with the Stoic couple of man and citizen. The paradoxical claim of exclusivity which initially prevailed between the Christian and worldly realms did not fundamentally disappear here. It could be actualized at any time.

Thus it was Augustinian usage to employ “spiritual” and “worldly” together so that a Christian standard might be brought to bear on *ständisch* tasks and duties. It was then possible to confront a peasant, citizen, knight, cleric, or prince engaged in worldly doings with their Christian task. In 384, Ambrosius taught Valentinian that a ruler did not belong to the Church only in a private capacity but was by virtue of office a soldier of God [*advocatus ecclesiae*], as it was later known. His politics were to be arranged according to divine instruction, as mediated by the Church.⁷⁶ Involved here is an asymmetrical usage of the conceptual couple Christian and Ruler similar to that of the two-person doctrine of Man and Citizen associated with the Stoics: the concepts which are applicable to the same person are limited in such a way that an external state is defined in accordance with an inner judgment (on the part of philosopher or cleric).

In his definition of worldly opponents, Gregory VII went further when he developed the claim to exclusivity implicit in the couple of Christian and worldly men, for purposes of polemic. In 1081, he directed the doctrine of two persons against Henry IV, not only with regard to a bilateral elaboration, but also antithetically. Furthermore, he pushed the antithesis to the point at which the opposing position disappeared. He opined that it was in fact more fitting to speak of good Christians than bad rulers as kings.⁷⁷ The former—that is, the kingly Christians—rule themselves through their search for the glory of God. The latter are against this and, pursuing their own pleasure, are their own enemies and are tyrannical toward others. The former

belong to Christ, the latter to the Devil. *Hi veri regis Christi, illi vero diaboli corpus sunt.*

Instead of subordinating the external function—that of the ruler—to a Christian judgment, so that the king might be qualified or disqualified as Christian, Gregory reserves the title of king for the true Christian so the worldly function of his opponent might be placed in question. This usurpation of the counterconcept may be attributed to his situational political rhetoric, but it was possible only because Christians were called to assimilate and renew the entire world. The established and institutionalized contrast of spiritual and worldly forces is distorted in this linguistic figure to such a degree that those who are of the world are no longer allowed their own space. Though still bound to a specific meaning of “Christian,” this represents an anticipation of the future opposition of man to king, which was to be the general characteristic of Enlightenment polemic against the monarchy.

As a final example of dualistic Christian usage that not only negates the opposing position but seeks to exclude and abolish it, we can turn to the Puritans. Richard Hooker investigated the divergent linguistic techniques by means of which the Puritans sought to establish their position.

This hath bred high terms of separation between such and the rest of the world; whereby the one sort are named The brethren, The godly, and so forth; the other, worldlings, time-servers, pleasers of men not of God, with such like. . . . But be they women or be they men, if once they have tasted of that cup, let any man of contrary opinion open his mouth to persuade them, they close up their ears, his reasons they weigh not, all is answered with rehearsal of the words of John, “We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us:” as for the rest, ye are of the world.⁷⁸

Hooker develops out of biblical exegesis an analysis of the behavior of those who employ biblical texts to deduce a sense of rectitude transcendent of this world, but which at once obliges and enables them to act in this world.

This linguistic model deciphered by Hooker in terms of a critique of ideology survives unbroken, with a change of antitheses, to this day. It testifies to an experiential framework, shot through with Christianity, simultaneously negating and laying claim to this world. In this way, dualities arose whose paradoxes should disperse *sub specie futuri*. The way this would happen was altered early on, according to the

power-position of the Church, which came under the influence of sect, order, and heresy, which in turn provided new impulses. The antitheses did, however, draw their overwhelming force from anticipation of the future; since this was not susceptible to refutation through contrary experience, it was constantly open to repetition. That which today is ruled out by negation will be regarded in the future as superseded. A dualism temporalized in this manner sorts out possible experiences and opens up a horizon of expectation that is quite elastic. Out of this emerges impulses for historical movement unlike those emitted by the counterconcepts of Antiquity. Without having to introduce a thesis of general secularization, we have in the temporally arranged counterconcepts a form of experience which, once articulated linguistically, has outlasted by far original impulse and point of departure.

Mensch and Unmensch, Übermensch and Untermensch

It will not be possible in what follows to trace the history of the concept of *Menschheit* and its equivalents. Instead, a few dualistic linguistic figures will be introduced as emergent from the constitution, or rather experience, of *Menschheit* as a politically intended unity. *Mensch* and *Unmensch*, and *Übermensch* and *Untermensch*⁷⁹ are such conceptual couples, disclosing and articulating new political possibilities with their linguistic potential for argument. The asymmetrical nature of these counterconcepts, deeply polemical in form, is characterized by a semantic structure different from those outlined up to now, even though it can be shown that elements of the figures “Hellene and Barbarian” or “Christian and Heathen” enter into them or affect them.

The dualistic criteria of distribution between Greek and Barbarian, and between Christian and Heathen, were always related, whether implicitly or explicitly, to *Menschheit* as a totality. To this extent, *Menschheit*, *genus humanum*, was a presupposition of all dualities that organized *Menschheit* physically, spatially, spiritually, theologically, or temporally. It will now appear that *Menschheit*, up to this point a condition immanent in all dualities, assumes a different quality as soon as it enters into argument as a political reference. The semantic function of distributional concepts alters as soon as a totalizing concept—for this is what is involved with *Menschheit*—is brought into political language, which, in spite of its totalizing claim, generates polarities.

Among the Stoics, where *genus humanum* can be addressed most honestly as a political entity, the adjective *inhumanum* already appears as a means of defining the boundary at which a person ceases to be a member of universal human society. Cicero had refined all the transitional routes from the family to universal society to such an extent that, placed as they were under the one *lex naturae*, all distinction between an internal and an external morality escaped him. *Qui autem civium rationem dicunt habendam, externorum negant, ii dirimunt communem humani generis societatem*. Any tensions that might arise between the claims of different agencies would be easily solved. He who placed his own self-interest before the interest of others behaved inhumanly, against the law of nature. Whoever consigned his action to the scales of common interest was permitted to kill tyrants, with whom no community could exist. “Hoc omne genus pestiferum atque impium ex hominum communitate exterminandum est . . . sic ista in figura hominis feritas et immanitas beluae a communi tamquam humanitate corporis segreganda est.” A tyrant, an animal in human form, is not only an enemy of the commonality, but also of the human species in general.⁸⁰

To the extent that *Menschheit* is introduced into language as a political reference it requires an additional qualification: for example, the *Mensch* as citizen, which itself is not derivable from the linguistic usage of *Mensch*. Who was Christian or Heathen, Hellene or Barbarian, could be deduced from the prevailing positivity of a concept, and even the negative counterconcepts had an intelligible and immanent meaning. He who appeals to *Menschheit* is placed under a linguistic drive toward occupation, for anyone who wishes may appeal to *Menschheit*. It is, therefore, necessary to define exactly who and what *Menschheit* might be so that the concept can be qualified in political fashion. Whoever fails to do this falls under the suspicion of promoting ideology. As a consequence of the ambivalent possibilities arising out of the claim of universality, linguistic usage rapidly degenerates into uncertainty: it can be directed to all *Menschen*, excluding no one—or it can gain a certain quality (for instance, that of *humanitas* [humanness, *Menschlichkeit*]), such that exclusions which do not yet inhere in the word become possible.

The ambivalence of the concept of Christianity, whereby it is at once both qualitatively and quantitatively readable, becomes critical in the use of the concept of *Menschheit*. It is possible for substantial

and numerical determinations to converge (for example, in Bentham's proposal for the greatest happiness of the greatest number), but it also implies that a calculable minority are excluded from the identified human objective.

Before we proceed to the dualities which can be attributed to the concept of *Menschheit* (or which can be deduced from the concept itself), three long-term, world-historical factors will be identified which permit the concept of *Menschheit* to advance to a central position. The revival of the Stoic doctrine of *societas humana* in early modernity also takes a place within this context of effects, realizing *Menschheit* as a political concept.

First, it seemed that with the discovery of America, and thereby the discovery of the globality of the earth, the Christian Gospel finally achieved *usque ad terminos terrae*.⁸³ The annexation of space and temporal fulfillment could now converge, in the same manner in which Columbus thought of his voyage as a way of accelerating the promised end of the world. The challenge turned out surprisingly different, consisting instead in the need to integrate within experience a number of alien peoples not foreseen by the account of the Creation. It was the growing apprehension of planetary finitude which, in the course of succeeding centuries, drew attention to *Menschheit* as referent, indeed, increasingly as the intended acting subject of its own history. In Kant's words, it is the "global form" of the earth upon which men "are not able to infinitely disperse themselves, but must eventually tolerate one another." In this fashion, an intersubjective and closed space of action emerged that was sufficiently small that "an infringement of right in one place on the earth is sensed everywhere."⁸⁴ However *Menschheit* might be interpreted, it has since then been linguistically available as an empirical substratum.

Second, parallel to this process, it became ever more difficult to divide the totality of *Menschheit* into Christian and Heathen, for the concept of Christian itself became disputed. The annexation of lands overseas, which had as a consequence the empirical gathering of *Menschheit*, came about as a struggle between Christian voyagers. One was Catholic, Calvinist, Lutheran, or whatever: judgments concerning heresy, civil war, and warfare between states were unable to produce a new unity among the Christians. The concept of *Menschheit* grew in proportion into a negative counterconcept which provided a minimal definition comprehending the Christians who were themselves divided.

Thanks to its generalization in terms of natural law, it was likewise directed at the overseas peoples.

Third, the figure of God the creator, previously apprehended theologically as a counter to sinful humanity, slowly moved out of the domain of argument constructed around political theory. Henceforth, the “earthly gods” could become the presumptive acting subjects of a history which was no longer the history of God with his humanity, but rather the history of “*Menschheit* itself.” Characteristic of this insidious shift in the meaning of *Menschheit* is the recession of the previously theological meaning of the concept. Until the Enlightenment the expression possessed, above all, a religious quality (in German usage)⁸⁵ that implied the humanity of Christ, the Son of God, whose incarnation in human form was a pledge of salvation. The fading of this meaning before a quantitative and before a qualitative meaning (the latter freighted with neo-humanist or revolutionary significance) is an index of the claim to autonomy which has, since the eighteenth century, been implicit in the concept of humanity. Addressee and subject of itself, *Menschheit* became a political concept whose new opposing figures will be outlined in the following.

In the era of Enlightenment, the appeal to men or to humanity had a critical, even a negating function with respect to the counterposition. This was aimed in three directions: against the various churches and religions, against the *ständisch* degrees of rights, and against the personal rule of princes. Within this social and political context the valency of the expression *man* or *humanity* altered itself. That which literally is a general name comprehending all humans—*Menschheit*—became within political usage a negating counterconcept. The negation contained the title of legitimation suitable to fundamentally question ruling institutions, religions, or persons. Whoever concerned himself with *Menschheit* could thus lend to himself the greatest degree of generality contained *eo ipso* in the concept *Menschheit*. He who confronted men with the king, or religions with *Menschheit*, made use of two heterogeneous entities to play off against each other, without the concepts being initially susceptible to relation on the same level. Here lies the effectiveness of the Enlightenment technique of negation, but at the same time its ideological restriction. The appeal to *Menschen* contained a claim which no one could evade, for who wished to deny being human? It was precisely this initially unpolitical meaning of the word *Menschheit* which facilitated the claim to that greatest possible univer-

salinity which, as justification of political critique and political action, could no longer be outbid. The numerical aggregate of all men—*Menschheit*—switched, without a change of word, into political self-legitimation, which did not, however, have to be identified as such. To this extent, the political usage of the expression *Mensch* or *Menschheit*—as long as it was not qualified in terms of constitutional law—delivered an ideological surplus which was not contained in the more concrete concepts of Greek and Barbarian or Christian and Heathen.

Accordingly, the moral weekly *Der Mensch*, in 1755, carried the following statement, still embellished in a Christian manner: “All *Menschen* remain *Menschen*, they may believe or think as they wish. . . . in Jews, Turks and Heathens I see *Menschen*: he is my neighbor; I wish to love him and through my love to shame him.”⁸⁶ In 1769, Herder nonetheless composed a series of comprehensive negations: “What a wonderful topic—to show that to be what one should be, one might neither be Jew, nor Arab, nor Greek, nor savage, nor martyr, nor pilgrim.”⁸⁷ Or, as Kotzebue caused to be proclaimed from a stage in 1787, “The Christian forgot the Turks, the Turk forgot the Christians, and both loved *Menschen*.”⁸⁸

What becomes quite apparent in these counterconcepts is the analogy with the Pauline paradox, according to which the totality of all people is negated through its difference, to the advantage of those who had found salvation in Christ. But while this analogy has a meaning shaped in terms of the history of its transmission, to the extent that we have here a transformation of the Christian claim to generality, this is not made necessary by the actual nature of the linguistic figure: the general concept of *Menschheit* becomes the counterconcept of particular concepts that are implicit within it, a situation which did not arise in the opposition of Christian and Heathen. The polarization is now sustained by rhetorical polemic. The illogical asymmetry prevailing between *Mensch* and specific religious adherents was set in play provocatively; it can no longer be derived theologically, as was the conceptual couple of Christian and Heathen. If one fails to hear the polemical, negative thrust, a proposition such as that by Freemason Blumauer becomes an empty tautology: “that the greatest dignity of a *Mensch* is—to be a *Mensch*.”⁸⁹ Within the negation of previously dominant religions is contained a negation of the component of *Menschen* creative of meaning. It was only with the qualification of *Menschen* as rational or virtuous

beings—however inadequate this might be—that a position could be defined.

This was also true for the critical remarks addressed by the Enlighteners to society and the *Stände*—for example, when Salzmann criticized in 1787 “factories” (*Fabriken*) as places where men were forced “to behave as *Nichtmenschen*, as machines.”⁹⁰ Here, the concept of *Menschen* is itself negated so that the guilt can be attached to an economic institution that stands in the way of *Menschen*—to be allowed at minimum to be *Menschen*. Thus, Moritz, in 1786, referred to “*Menschheit* oppressed by bourgeois relations” because of the way that differences of *Stand* led to inequality between those who “labored” and those who “paid.”⁹¹ *Menschheit* is on the side of the oppressed, not on the side of the oppressor. It is always the negative force of the general concept of *Menschheit* that expresses the critical function.

The same holds in a more confined political domain. “The prince is *Mensch*, the slave is free, the golden epoch is approaching,”⁹² runs the student rhyme that joins two concepts which are contraries along diverging dimensions. As liberty is by definition the opposite of slavery, so the prince moves suggestively in the counterposition to *Mensch*. Rousseau expressed this more clearly in confronting King with *Mensch*: if a king were to renounce the throne he would rise to the status of a *Mensch* (“il monte à l’état d’homme”).⁹³ The antithesis of Man and King, continually varied by the Enlighteners, makes it especially clear that this is a matter of an asymmetrical linguistic figure whose references are quite heterogeneous. More or less consciously incomparable entities are confronted with each other so that the ruler, measured against *Menschen*, can be declared to be an *Unmensch*. This is certainly an extreme case of Enlightenment polemic, but it does demonstrate the semantic structure of a conceptual couple which had not previously been available in this form.

Whereas the Stoic approach to *Mensch* and citizen served to further mutual illumination, *Mensch* and prince are in this case introduced as mutually exclusive entities in which the invocation of *Mensch* renders the prince superfluous. While the critical usage of Christian and prince is based on a two-person doctrine present in the world order which has only to be properly followed for a ruling function to be substantively qualified, the conceptual couple employed by the Enlighteners dissolves this connection. The critical function of their conceptual couple is no

longer, as with Christian and Ruler, immanent in a *Stand*, but directs itself to the rule of *Stände* in general.

For colloquial purposes and in general usage, a king remained a *Mensch* however bad a king he might be. As Frederick the Great remarked ironically of Louis XV: “He was a good, but weak, *Mensch*; his only mistake was to be king.”⁹⁴ By contrast, the Enlighteners made use of the undifferentiable, general concept of man for the purpose of discriminating against a political office. The asymmetry of an antithesis which, from one concept to the other, changed its plane of reference was linguistically structured so that it became functionally accessible for one’s own political intention.

This form of polemic is certainly open to historical explanation. The analogy of God and King, overlaid as it was by absolutism, placed *Menschheit* in the potential position of a counterconcept. It is thus no surprise when Harrington, following the death of Charles Stuart, effected a transfer and characterized the new sovereign as “King People.”⁹⁵ In the succeeding century, Adam Smith was to observe that the treatment of monarchs as in all respects men—for instance, to engage in discussion with them—required a decisiveness of which few men were capable.⁹⁶ His contemporary, Johnson, familiar with the Court, dispensed with this;⁹⁷ and Blackstone, in his *Commentaries*, drew the following skeptical balance: “The mass of mankind will be apt to grow insolent and refractory, if thought to consider their princes as a man of no greater perfection than themselves.”⁹⁸

A polemical reversal of this position arises with Jefferson’s definition (borrowing from Cicero) of a “class of lions, tigers, and mammoths in human form” called kings.⁹⁹ Enough of these examples from the English language; as long as divine attributes were claimed for monarchs, it was not difficult to constitute *Menschheit* as a counterconcept to King. As Schubart somewhat drastically formulated in 1776: “Despotism has choked *Menschheit* for so long, that its tongue will soon hang out and it will want to cry out: I want to be an animal.”¹⁰⁰

The situating of man in a relation of tension between animal and God had been since Antiquity a topological fact. What is peculiar to the eighteenth-century opposition of Man and King is the lack of alternative it left to the Prince. It is neither possible to place him, as had once been possible, “above,” nor (seen from the standpoint of men) “below.” Rather, he becomes, in the name of a simple moral exclusiveness of *Menschen*, an enemy who has to be destroyed. Louis

XVI was to learn this when he sought in his defense to argue that he also was only a man: “Je dis l’homme quel qu’il soit; car Louis XVI n’est plus en effet qu’un homme, et un homme accusé.”¹⁰¹ But I, retorted Saint-Just: “et moi, je dis que le roi doit être jugé en ennemi, que nous avons moins à le juger qu’à le combattre.”¹⁰²

This fractured even the appearance of the asymmetrical conceptual figure of Man and King. The concrete identification of an enemy that had remained veiled in the previous linguistic technique of the Enlightenment became quite open. The King, considered as a *Mensch* to be an *Unmensch*, had to be removed. There certainly existed enlightened and republican legal doctrines that traced the office of king to a politically definable characterization of man as citizen. In this context, however, we are interested in demonstrating that, with the linguistic figure of Man and King, a new structural element entered into political counterconcepts which can be distinguished from all previous forms: it was from the beginning a linguistic means functionally deployed by various, distinct interests; likewise, it was from the beginning under a compulsion to politically consolidate in order not to be disclosed as ideology. It was valid as an ideological means of struggle, while at the same time becoming an element in ideology. The reason for this was contained in its property of confronting heterogeneous categories in a way that made it possible, through the negation of the apparent counterconcept, to effect the annihilation of the given opponent. The totalizing concept of *Menschheit*, once applied politically, gave rise to totalitarian consequences.

The negating force in the usage of *Menschheit* certainly diminished as the successes of the French Revolution removed, at least in part, the objects of address. As soon as confessional disputes among Christians shifted from the center of politics, and as soon as the legal differences of the *Stände* were equalized, the polemical valency of *Menschheit* was altered: since then, further political use of the expression was meant to employ an empty category which constantly required filling with concrete meaning. It should, therefore, give rise to no surprise that new criteria of differentiation were sought in the domain of a *Menschheit* once held to be absolute and autonomous. *Übermensch* and *Untermensch* were provided with political qualities.

The expressions are themselves prerevolutionary.¹⁰³ Linguistically, they can be placed in the series of modes of life that stretches from animal to angel or demon, between which man is settled as a being

charged with tension.¹⁰⁴ Thus the *Übermensch* appears in the ancient heroic cult, and as a characterization of the true reborn Christian it assumed a (disputed) religious significance. The expression was readily used, above all, in Gnostic, spiritualist, and mystic traditions; but it was also used to lend color to texts devoted to consolidating papal claims of rulership.¹⁰⁵ Luther turned the expression against the monks, and his own followers were scornfully described in the same way: “They walk alone in spirit and are *Übermenschen*.”¹⁰⁶ Here, for the first time in German, the current adjective *übermenschlich* is turned into a substantive. Along the plane of a temporal perspective within which older men can be overtaken by the new, the term appears in a positive form within the pietistic tradition: “Among the new men you are a true man, an *Übermensch*, a man of God and Christ.”¹⁰⁷

To the extent that Christians claimed for themselves the title of true *Menschen*, the consequence was that non-Christians, the heretics and Heathens, were classified as *Nichtmenschen*. The *Unmensch* reaches back to usage of the judgments on heresy. Luther was dismissed in this way in 1521, as “this solitary, not a *Mensch*, but an evil enemy in the shape of a *Mensch*.” In the formulation used by Cochlaeus, “Unicus iste, non homo: sed malus inimicus, sub specie hominis.”¹⁰⁸ Even in the eighteenth century the theological adversary as *Unmenschen* could be applied to the Heathen: “I . . . do not live naturally, like Turks and other *Unmenschen*, but rather spiritually.”¹⁰⁹

Such evidence testifies to the manner in which dualistic figures of negation from the most diverse sources can overlap in the course of history. The *Übermensch* and the *Unmensch* were employed by Christians in variously accepted forms as a means of demonstrating their religious claims to truth and of securing their inner world. From the eighteenth century on, the valency of the old expressions altered. On the plane of “*Menschheit* itself,” they became pure concepts of political struggle. Above all, *Übermensch* underwent, within the same generation, revaluation, devaluation, and reevaluation, as the polemical target required. Ruling members of the *Stände* who colloquially addressed their subjects as *Mensch* were critically described as *Übermensch*. “A time came when the word *Mensch* . . . assumed a completely different meaning; it meant a person bound to duties, a subject, a vassal, a servant . . . and those to whom the serving persons belonged were called *Übermenschen*.”¹¹⁰ Taking this colloquial form of address at face value gave it a republican

aspect: a lord was defined as an *Übermensch* that he might be brought down to the same level as the “men” who were so addressed.

Parallel to and simultaneous with this negative freighting of *Übermenschen* emerged compensatory terms which were supposed to summon forth a new type from the now autonomous position of *Menschen*. The generally successful man became a genius, a god on earth, a man of power, a “more than man,” a lad, a higher being, and so forth, in the same way that such terms sprang up out of the republicanizing *Sturm und Drang* movement.¹¹¹ In the same situation in which the Prince was negated as *Übermensch* or *Unmensch*, the new *Übermensch* emerged, belonging to no class and no hierarchy, since he did, in a quite complete sense, realize *Menschen*. Within this new linguistic figure the cult of Napoleon took up position, no longer stylizing the ruler in a royal manner but rather as leader and as incarnation of the *Menschen* that he led being rendered as an *Übermensch*.¹¹²

On the whole, the German neo-humanist maintained an especially critical attitude toward this linguistic usage. For instance, Herder stated that “all their questions concerning the progress of our species . . . are answered by . . . a single word: humanity (*Menschheit*). If the question were whether *Mensch* could or should become more than *Mensch*, an *Über-*, an *Aussermensch*, so would every line be superfluous.”¹¹³ Goethe also cautiously used the term: saying of Zacharias Werner that he (Goethe) would be an enemy of all those who vainly used the couplet of *Über-* and *Untermensch* and in so doing divided humanity in two.¹¹⁴ “Hardly are you master of the first childish wishes that you think of yourself as *Übermensch* enough / to evade fulfillment of the duty of a man!”¹¹⁵ With that, he placed the expression of the *Übermenschlich* in the only apparently polar semantic zone of the *Unmenschen*. Both were “devoid of God and the world.”

Marx used the categories *Übermensch* and *Unmensch* in an ideological critique to destroy the doctrine of the two worlds, which maintained the religious reflection of *Menschen* in the image of heavenly *Übermenschen* and by means of which the *Menschen* degraded themselves to the status of *Unmenschen*.¹¹⁶ In its place would in the future appear “the total *Mensch*,” not only a personally successful prototype, but a type made socially possible in a world free of domination. We could place alongside him Dostoevski’s “universal man”—the social fulfillment of “the general human association” through which Russian Christians would be able to abolish all contradictions.¹¹⁷

The expression became politically virulent only with the reception of Nietzsche. For him, the *Übermensch* is the man of the future, transcending the contemporary democratic man of the herd, “a higher type, a stronger form” compared with the “average man. My concept, my image for this type is, as is known, the word *Übermensch*.” Man shall be transcended and will become the object of ridicule for the coming supermen. “Not *Menschheit*, but *Übermensch* is the goal!”¹¹⁸

At the moment that this expression was to be politically realized, the polar opposite was clearly no longer man as a backward creature, but rather the *Untermensch*, who was to be exterminated. Into this conceptual couple that was part of National Socialist language entered—considered in terms of conceptual reception—several components: at the apparently scientific level this conceptual couple concerned a physically calculable substantialization, which was then politicized by the concepts of race and type. To this was added the temporal tension of the once-Christian expectational horizon, which had the effect of securing domination in the future. But such derivations are not sufficient to decipher this totalitarian figure of speech.

The nature of the linguistic manipulation involved becomes clearer by analyzing the pair of opposites which was not simply used propagandistically, as were *Übermensch* and *Untermensch*, but which also entered into legislation: the contrast of Aryan and non-Aryan. The Aryan, first a term drawn from linguistics that implied nobility, was politically undefined, and in fact was a concept that was hardly definable politically. “Officials whose heredity is not Aryan are to be retired.” Or with a double negative: “Editors may only be those of Aryan descent who are not married to a person of non-Aryan descent.”¹¹⁹

The term “Aryan” was constituted as a political term by the conceptual field which it negated and to which any opponent could be consigned at will.¹²⁰ The non-Aryan is merely the negation of one’s own position, and that is that. Who might be Aryan cannot be deduced from the concept of the Aryan, nor from that of the non-Aryan. This then defined an elastic figure of negation whose actual arrangement was at the disposal of whoever had the power to fill linguistic vacancies or empty concepts. The concept itself did not indicate that the Jews were specifically identified, but they found, by falling under the category of non-Aryan, that they were destined for potential nonexistence. The conclusion was drawn as soon as the Aryan as *Übermensch* felt himself legitimated in the removal of the non-Aryan as *Untermensch*. According

to the capacity to ideologically freight negations which are themselves not confronted with a politically determinable position, we have here a case of structural application of the conceptual couple *Mensch* and *Unmensch*. The expression “non-Aryan” could be determined neither from the side of the Aryan nor from that of the non-Aryan in such a way that a clear position could be established. From the very first, the linguistic couple was accessible for functional employment by those with the power to affect the regulation of language.

Mensch, from whom the *Unmensch*, the *Übermensch*, and the *Untermensch* were derived, confirmed only an ideological arbitrariness which failed to appreciate what historically follows from the concept of *Menschheit*: that man is an ambivalent creature whose delimitation remains a political risk.

It is only within the horizon of expectation of a *Menschheit* left to its own devices that the formula “friend and foe” can be understood, a formula which is still today ideologically overused. Following upon the substantive emptying of this universalistic and at the same time dualistic conceptual couple in the twentieth century, it was the scientific achievement of Carl Schmitt, to formalize the contrast of classes and peoples and deploy them both functionally and ideologically in their various substantive formulations in such a manner that only the basic structure of possible contrasts became visible.¹²¹ The conceptual couple Friend and Foe is characterized by its political formalism, delivering a frame for possible antitheses without identifying them. In the first place, because of its formal negation, this concerns purely symmetrical counterconcepts, for, in the case of Friend and Foe, there exists a definition of oneself or of one’s Foe that is open to simultaneous use by both sides. These are epistemological categories whose substantial content (determined through historical experience) can serve to asymmetrically load both linguistic fields. However Schmitt might have concretized this contrast from his own position, he has coined a formula which cannot be outstripped as a condition of possible politics. This is a concept of the political, not of politics.

Whoever places peace as a concept overlaying Friend and Foe has to presuppose that, for peace, at least two parties exist who are willing and able to arrive at a settlement. *Non ergo ut sit pax nolent sed ut ea sit quam volunt.*¹²² Not that one shies from peace, but that each seeks his own peace. As long as human agencies exclude and include, there will be asymmetric counterconcepts and techniques of negation, which will penetrate conflicts until such time as new conflicts arise.

On the Disposability of History

Before dealing with the problem at hand, a story (*Geschichte*) must be told. In the year 1802, a morally zealous Briton, the Reverend John Chatwode Eustace, travelled through Italy. He sought, together with an aristocratic companion, to deepen his classical education at firsthand. Ten years later he published the results of his travels.

The Reverend Mr. Eustace had found Italy to be a victim of the French Revolution and was unsparing of learned quotations that should provide his readers with a historical attitude. To this end he offered them long-term perspectives. He cited Scipio who, seated on the ruins of Carthage, foresaw the coming fall of Rome. Naturally enough, he also declaimed Homer's lines from the *Iliad*: *εσσεται ημαρ*, the day that would come when Holy Troy itself collapsed. Drawing directly on an old topos, he argued that the "Empire" had since moved toward the West. Whoever might today consider the "dominions" of Great Britain and their great extent might claim without presumption that the imperium had now fallen to Great Britain. But, added the Reverend, the imperium was moving on; whether back toward the East or onward into transatlantic regions he did not know. No matter; the days of Britannia's glory were also numbered, and their end approached inevitably. This was the view of our witness in the year 1813, when Great Britain was about to rise to the peak of its maritime power. In days to come, the inhabitants of the British Isles, just as the sons of Greece or Italy, would lie at the feet of victorious enemies for whose sympathy they would beg in recognition of the greatness of their predecessors.

With such thoughts in his head, our traveller brought his sympathy to the inhabitants of Italy, a sympathy which did not, however, extend